

MARYLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY
Oral History Office

MRS. ELIZABETH M. MOSS

Interviewed by Leroy Graham

The Governor Theodore McKeldin-Dr. Lillie May Jackson Project
An inquiry into the Civil Rights activities
of
two Maryland leaders
during
the mid-twentieth century

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McKeldin-Jackson Project
Interviewee: Mrs. Elizabeth M. Moss
Interviewer: Leroy Graham
Date: July 13, 1976
Place:
Transcriber: Garnette Brant
Cassette I Side 1:1

I: Will you tell us something about your family background? How far can you trace your family history in Maryland?

A: Well, the family Bible goes back to 1838, and that was Great, Great, Great Grandfather Benjamin Murphy. According to the family Bible and the history as was recorded and researched by my father, Great, Great, Great, Great Grandfather Benjamin settled on the Eastern Shore of Maryland and married an English Biddy. And if you remember your history, in those days the black men took the names of the wives, and that's how Benjamin became Murphy. So the first Murphy, as I said, was a Benjamin and settled on the Eastern Shore of Maryland. I gave you a date of 1834. Is that what I said?

I: Right. But...

A: That's not right?

I: Because I just recently read in an Afro article, I think, that...

A: Well, it should be the first Benjamin born January 12, 1763.

I: Right. So you can go back pretty far in this history, but, to be more specific, can we talk about, perhaps, John H. Murphy, Senior, the founder of the Afro-American Newspaper chain?

A: Right. Well, then, of course, there followed the John H. Murphy, Senior, who was the grandson of Benjamin the First; and he was born in ...

I: I think he was born in 1840. Does that sound about right?

A: He died in 1922.

I: Right. He was quite a churchman, wasn't he?

A: Yes. He was a pillar of Bethel A.M.E. Church which still stands at the corner of Druid Hill Avenue and Lanvale Street, and he played the chimes at the church and was active as a Trustee. A famous family story is that during the tenure of the then Reverend W. Sampson Brooks, later Bishop Brooks, they led the drive to raise money to save the mortgage--burn the mortgage and save the church. The story goes that they prayed all night until they collected enough pennies and nickels and dimes to keep the church alive, and it's alive today.

I: Right. In fact, Mrs. Jackson, I think, somewhere around in the 1950's wrote an article ^{wrote} about being a witness to this incident and this was the thing that gave her inspiration to believe that God could accomplish anything through man. Did the two families--the Murphy family and the Jackson family--know each other prior to 1935 when Mrs. Jackson took over the NAACP?

A: As I understand the family history, through the years they had been acquainted. I can remember Mrs. Jackson telling the story of how she sold Afro's when they were a cent apiece and how her father before her sold Afro's. In addition, she was always an ardent supporter of what she called "My Newspaper." That's prior to '35 as well as during the rest of her lifetime when I knew her.

I: Right. Did she get to know well any of the other members of the family besides Carl Murphy? Mrs. Jackson? Did she

get to know, say, for instance, George B. Murphy that well, or Francis Murphy?

A: I think she knew all the members of the family just as we knew members of her family. I think it's interesting that the families which had settled in Baltimore, not just the Jackson's, Mitchell's, and Murphy's, but many, many families in Baltimore through the years can count back four and five generations and so, of course, they know people through schools, through church, and through other activities. It's not unusual, for example, right now for those of us who are over fifty to look at a youngster and say, "Is your name So-and-So? You look like So-and-So." And discover that they were the son of somebody, grandson of somebody you knew in high school. Baltimore is typical for that. It's a family town with large numbers of families.

I: Family town, yes. I remember an article in the Afro when I was doing some research for another project where it was said that Baltimore didn't have so much of a social life as it did have a society surrounding, I think it was, about five families. I can't remember the name^s of the families, but Baltimore has been noted for its family life. Can you tell us about any of the other families besides the Jackson's, the Murphy's and the Mitchell's, who were outstanding and perhaps have a long history in Baltimore?

A: I wouldn't want to start. There are so many of them.

I: So many?

A: Yes. You take the Waters' family, the Kerr family, the Harris family--oh, the names are legion.

I: And these were the people that got involved in NAACP activities? Were the leaders?

A: The Camper family. All of them. Almost everybody worked and contributed and helped in the NAACP drives in those early days.

I: Now we're talking about, say, prior to 1935.

A: The Koger family. Incidentally, you ought to interview Linwood Koger, Jr.

I: Linwood Koger, Jr.?

A: He's an attorney here and he was also one of the lawyers who was a plaintiff in one of the suits. Then later he also served the NAACP as a free lawyer.

I: O.K. I'll keep that in mind. What's the story behind...?

A: I would like to just stop naming just, say, six or seven families. What I would like to say in a general way is that if there has been any success in Baltimore, if we have shown progress in race relations, it's been because there has been many, many family groups which have sacrificed--humble people, people of limited means, those who were better off, those who were rich--who had sacrificed or were willing to give their time and or sacrifice in order to support the cause. And this includes professional people. This has been no separation of those have's and have'not's, I don't think, such as you find in many communities where the people, once they've made it, forget. Baltimore has been fortunate in that we've had people in professional life who through the years have supported important causes for the advancement of our people. I think history will support it and the files of the Afro will show that. The

ministers, the doctors, the people who were real estate dealers, and that kind of thing.

I think about Josiah Diggs, for example, who was very rich, and his wife and others in his family. That's a very old Baltimore family. I think about the Koger's. I think about Dr. Camper who could have sat down on his laurels, but instead worked with the NAACP. I think about Dr. ^{Chissell} Chizzele and his family, and Miss Gussie ^{Chissell} Chizzele for years headed the Special Gifts Committee. But we could name family after family ^{this} in the Baltimore Community.

I: What's the story behind the incident when your father, Carl Murphy, got Lillie May Jackson to be President of the NAACP in 1935?

A: As I understand it, what happened was, at that point in 1935--and you have to know what it was like in 1935--there were no black policemen. We called them colored or black at that time. We couldn't work in the A & P Stores. You couldn't try on in the department stores, couldn't drive taxicabs or public buses or any of those things. Jobs for black people were very, very limited, and things were pretty rough out here even with a college education. About the best you could do was teach school, and even then there were separate salary pay scales for teachers.

It was at that juncture that the NAACP, which had been very active at one time, was in need of rejuvenation, and I don't recall whether it was (I would have to go back and look at it) Mr. Carl as they called him (my father who was publisher and Editor of the Afro-American which he had headed since his father's death in 1922) whether it was he who solicited Miss

Lillie or Miss Lillie who came to him with a problem. My recollection is Miss Lillie came to him with a problem and said, "We've got to do something about this," and he turned to her and said, "You're the person who has the enthusiasm and the ability. Why don't you do something about it?" And out of that came a calling together of a meeting at the Afro office at which the NAACP Baltimore Branch was rejuvenated under Dr. Lillie's leadership. And I think that's about it. Is that the way you found it? I don't remember the incident that brought it about.

I: There hasn't been mention of an incident, but...

A: There was one, and I can find it, I'm sure. There was one very definite incident.

I: And you think that maybe Mrs. Jackson came to your father and then he said...?

A: I wouldn't be sure. It could be either.

I: The other way around?

A: Both Dr. Lillie Jackson and Dr. Carl Murphy were people who had great compassion for people and understanding of problems, and also understood the need to cooperate and work together for the common good.

I: What church was your family attending at that time? Well, your father and yourself, I would imagine.

A: I don't know. I think we may have still been in Bethel, but I think we belonged to St. James Episcopal Church at the time.

I: Is there a story behind the switch from Bethel to St. James that has any relationship with the...?

A: None at all. It was just one of those things. One member went, and just like the other day, three members of our family for the first time, three children in my family joined Bethel A.M.E. Church. Which means for the first time in thirty years, descendants of John H. Murphy, Senior, now hold membership in Bethel A.M.E. Church, and I think that's the way we moved to St. James. One member was inspired, and we then went. We have been very close to St. James as well as to Bethel, because Father George F. Bragg was the minister there for fifty-five years, I think. And if you know the early history of the Afro, he was one of the co-founders of the Afro-American.

I: I thought your move to St. James may have had something to do with the time when Bishop Davis was there, and supposedly Bishop Davis rebuked his ministers from having any activity with the NAACP. Is that true?

A: I don't think that's true.

I: Someone told me that your father may have tried to dissuade him from being so hostile to the NAACP.

A: My recollection is that Bishop Monroe H. Davis, which is another old Baltimore family, and I think it came from some place else, but I mean the ties ^{are} of Baltimore ^{oriented} ~~are~~ in it way back, was a person who worked very hard in those days along with the, in support of the NAACP. A lot of times, just like today, when black people say things, the media, mass media, particularly plays it out of proportion and twists it around, but and if Bishop Davis was provoked with something that the NAACP did-- and I seem to recall one incident and I don't know the details-- it was a passing thing. But when the time came for what you

say, nitty gritty, everybody worked together.

I: Maybe the incident that you are referring to was the, is it the hog meat incident when Bishop Davis was caught selling tainted hog meat out of his residence?

A: I don't know, and I wouldn't like to be on record, really, for even discussing that at this juncture in 1976 with relatives of Davis being here without looking at the record and seeing what we're talking about. I can address myself to the relationship of Carl Murphy, my father, with Mrs. Jackson, with how I came to work with Mrs. Jackson and Juanita, and ^{what} ~~with~~ the Afro's role was in working hand in hand to better the rights of all people, particularly little people in the community. But to go back way back there about something, what I would call a two-bit incident...

I: Well, Mrs. Jackson was involved in this incident then?

A: I don't remember the details of it, frankly, and I would have to see the newspaper article to be sure.

I: It was in the Afro newspaper, and...

A: Maybe so, but I don't remember ever seeing it in the Afro.

I: Right, and in fact, just to sort of clarify, there was an editorial against Bishop Davis for this.

A: Probably so. That's not unusual. At some points you may have found some editorials in which we disagreed with Miss ~~Lillie~~, and we spanked her lightly.

I: Well, I haven't come across any ^{in the period} ~~relevant~~ and I investigated from 1935 to '55.

A: I can recall at some point that there may have been

something we said, "We do not agree with our friend, Dr. Lillie" that something might have happened, which is not unusual.

I: But you can't recall that, specifically?

A: I don't. But, I'm sure that there has been a time. Maybe it was something about insisting that the convention do something. But, in any event, I do know that we did not always agree on everything, but we did agree that there needed to be a job done and whatever our differences were we had to resolve them in order to move ahead.

I: What is your first recollection of Lillie May Jackson?

A: All my life.

I: Oh, you knew her all your life?

A: All my adult life. I was in high school in 1934, so that would be--it would start in 1935. That was my first year of college.

I: So your first recollection of Mrs. Jackson is during your first year of college?

A: Or the latter part of high school. Mrs. Jackson was a truly remarkable woman, and if you lived in Baltimore you had to know Lillie May Jackson, or Ma Jackson as we fondly called her.

I: She was called Ma Jackson back then?

A: We called her Ma Jackson or Dr. Lillie Jackson. Miss Lillie. Not Doctor, until she got the honorary. But Miss Lillie. And, of course, we knew her daughter, Juanita, and we knew about the fact that they were outstanding, her daughter Juanita, her daughter Downs--I've forgotten her first name.

I: Marion.

A: Marion--and they were the young people in the community that we in high school about that time looked up to because they were active in the Young People's Forum and that kind of thing.

I: Were you active in the Young People's Forum?

A: I was not active. I remember attending them, but that activity came before my time. But we admired them and we knew that they were people in the community who were doing something worthwhile and who stood for something, and they were featured in the Afro. So that's how we knew them.

I: You worked for the Afro, didn't you? When did you first start working?

A: I started working at the Afro when I was about thirteen years old.

I: What's the year on that?

A: I would go down to--about 1930, I guess. Yes, about 1929, because I went down to the Afro as a youngster. You know, in a family business like that when you're young, even before when Grandpa Murphy was living, when the paper first started it was printed in the basement of his home on McCulloch Street. The family history shows that everybody pitched in and did some work towards getting the paper out, and the same thing happened in the early days around 1929. My father by that time, as I said, had seven years been the President or Editor of the Afro. His father had died. His brother had died the year before that, two months before that. And another brother had died two years before that, and so we went down to the office to "help out"--and "help out" meant stuffing papers, or *handling* the type, or doing whatever had to be done which we could do. Plus,

as a child I had an Afro route. We lived on Myrtle Avenue in the 1000 block on what is now the site of the George B. Murphy home, and my route took in all the blocks up to Dolphin Street, up Harlem Avenue, Perkins Avenue, out to Pennsylvania Avenue and all over that neighborhood--Dolphin Street. Did I say Dolphin?

I: Right.

A: Perkins. St. Mary's. We all sold Afro's. We were Afro news~~boys~~^{boys}. My father always wanted boys and he had five girls, and he called us all boys.

I: Did you do investigative reporting for the Afro and was it linked with the work involving the NAACP? I understand that that's what Mr. Murphy did. He had put some of his reporters on the stories.

A: Oh, yes. We did investigative work. We went out and tested places to find out whether or not they would wait on black people, or colored people, or whether they hired us. We would interview business people in our communities and try to find out why they would refuse to serve us, and/or hire when they were located in our neighborhoods and we wrote news stories about them and gave the point of view of the citizens and residents, and then we got statements from them. I think that largely because of the Afro, many of these places changed long before the demonstrations and marches came about.

We found one thing early that most people don't like to be shown in a bad light and they don't like their neighbors to know that they discriminate. And many of the people...

I: Were these mainly Jewish?

A: And many of the people whom we found to be lacking in fair employment practices were people of minority groups, not necessarily all Jewish. There were other minority groups which settled in black neighborhoods through (history) that's been true. But not just Jewish neighbors, but the foreign born, people from the Far East, ^{Buen} etc.

I: Well, that's a new light on that.

A: But, I think it's important, though, what the Afro did was, because we were a black newspaper, because people realized we were interested in the people and that our main concern was reporting the news by and about black people, educating them, informing them, explaining to them what to do, where to go for help. That it was not unusual for the Afro office to be flooded with calls, letters, visitors, asking, "What can I do? This has happened to me? How do I do this? Where do I get relief?" That was a part of the Afro service and it's been a part of the heritage we've received, and it's being carried on even today. We've been a repository for providing information and giving service to people, telling people what the news means to them. So that you often see stories in the Afro which talk about a news event from a black person's point of view as opposed to what it is in the daily paper. You read, for example, in a School Board happening. In the daily paper you may read that it happens this way. But when you read it in the Afro, it comes out entirely different because we've talked from the black perspective and point of view and given the black person's input.

I: Did you pose as a Defense applicant when you wrote a story, I think it was around 1943 or something, and you were refused, and there was a rather light-skinned black who was given...?

A: We organized what was called the ^{CITIZENS} Assistance Committee for Justice, if that's what you're talking about.

I: That may be a part of it. Go ahead, what you were going to explain.

A: We had a Citizen's Committee--the Afro and the NAACP worked together as a part of its role of serving people. The Afro cooperated with the NAACP and other groups in the city, churches, ministers, etc., in formation of the Citizen's Committee for Justice. As I recall, one of the things that we tried to do was to expose where there was job discrimination and try to reason with those involved, both public officials as well as private employees to make a change.

I do recall that, for example, the Telephone Company was advertising for switchboard operators and black people who went down were turned away. We did work together and prevailed upon a light-skinned applicant to apply and get the job, and then the black person went right behind them and was refused, which made a news story which let the public know that the Telephone Company had two policies for hiring. And it helped to bring about a change.

I: Was that when you got the...?

A: Before that we had a Citizen's Committee which cooperated with the campaign just to get jobs in the A & P. That was

before the Citizen's Committee. It was in the forties. Back in the thirties we had to campaign just to get jobs in the A & P. You imagine that the corner store was the A & P in the center of a black neighborhood. For example, I remember particularly the one right down the street from what is now Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church at Madison and Prestman. That store was manned by a white person and black people, the only thing they could do was move the crates. So there was a man by the name of COSTOWNA who came here. There was a campaign on in which we all cooperated.

I: But, the Citizen's Committee for Justice--that group, in a sense, handled the March on Annapolis in 1942. Right?

A: That's right. But it also worked in other areas, too; but the main thrust was on the March on Annapolis and it grew out of the killing on Pennsylvania Avenue of a black soldier in uniform, as I recall.

I: Your father has been given credit for mapping a lot of the strategy by some recent interviewees. I was wondering, can you relate anything of the inside strategy and plans relating to the March on Annapolis in 1942?

A: I was there and I was a part of it and I helped write and I sat in on meetings and helped coordinate it, and that kind of thing, but the details I would have to go back and look at. I do know that we put emphasis on the fact that we were going to be non-violent and that as he often said, "A soldier is no good if he gets himself killed," or a demonstrator is no good. And I remember when I went overseas as a War

Correspondent. And the rest of the War Correspondents for the Afro the same thing happened. He said, "Now we're sending you over to cover the war. We don't want you to get in action. A dead War Correspondent is no good." That was the kind of message we got as we planned the demonstration that we were not to make the news, but really to report it.

I: It's interesting that you said your father was a non-violent advocate. But wasn't he beaten sometime around the First World War because he wouldn't move off a bus? I got that story from a Dr. Camper.

A: What happened is, he was on a ferry. At that time the ferry was traveling from here to the Eastern Shore or something. It's a matter of history, because it was one of the first civil rights suits. He was told to move off of the white side or they couldn't go on the white side to use the bathroom or get something to eat, or something. And he subsequently did file suit, and I don't remember whether he won it or whether he got nominal damages. That was that time.

And another time he was cutting grass at home when-- we were among earlier residents in Morgan Park. We built a house out there, when Morgan Park was a woods, and he was cutting grass and my mother had an automobile accident. When she called home he explained to her that she should have a lawyer and not to talk. So the policeman came to the home, and when he didn't respond--he called him "boy" and all that sort of thing--he yanked him and put him in the paddy wagon, and arrested him and took him to the Northeastern Police Station.

I: Can you give us a date on that last incident?

A: I don't know, but it's a matter of record. But the case went on up to the Court of Appeals, as I recall, and the then Judge O'Dunne threw the case out, and in essence said that there is a difference between disorderly conduct and disturbing the peace, and that he found that in this instance that the only person who was disturbed was the policeman. There was no cause for the arrest and awarded him one-cent damage, on appeal. They won that case.

But the black--well, I guess more than anybody else the black male even now seems to me gets it harder from policemen, who don't have a respect for people. They decide that everybody is a criminal, and that's why our jails are more filled with black people and why we ought to be really concerned about judges in this city. And all over the country, for that matter, for the terms that they propose on black youngsters for misdemeanors, etc. This, well, life plus fifty years and all that--as Judge Howard's report showed sometime ago, there is a great discrepancy in the way justice is administered in our courts.

I: Would your father have approved of the recent reversal of Supreme Court, I think, reinstating the death penalty? Would he have seen it, maybe, as a move ~~to~~ racially motivate, not necessarily racially motivate but would have come harder upon blacks and poor than whites, do you think?

A: I would imagine so, although you don't like to think what a person would say in this important time. He died in 1967, but if you look at the history of his philosophy and where he's--I mean he was way ahead of his time in many things, that more than likely he would see it as another form of repression.

I: Now, in making the March on Annapolis non-violent, was it a matter of strategy or was it a deep-seated philosophy held by your father, say like King's approach on non-violence or Ghandi's?

A: I think that it was a part of his whole philosophy. He had always said that you must act in good temper and that you had to be patient with people who don't understand or who have not grown up sufficiently to know that people are human beings and they have certain rights which are protected by our Constitution. That's what he taught us all his life. When he was a Professor at Howard University--was a Professor of German at Howard University before he came to Baltimore. His family importuned him to come to Baltimore on his father's death and take over the Afro because he was the only one who had gone on to college. He was a graduate of Howard University in 1913, and he went to Harvard University, then to the University of Jena in Germany. And he was then Head of the Department at Howard University, Department of German. When he came home one summer, he tried to get enrolled in Johns Hopkins University, and we have correspondence in the family folder showing how Johns Hopkins President returned the letter to Mr. Murphy and said they regretted they do not take colored. The marvelous thing about that is that he lived--at that point he said that things will change. He said to us often when we were insulted racially, and to other people, and in Afro editorials, and in group meetings, "Things will....."

"But in good temper, because even some of the people who appear to be against you, if you do it in good temper, are likely to be moved to change." That was a part of his philosophy. So I started to say he lived, fortunately, to see things did, indeed change, although when we were younger we couldn't see it, and to see a daughter finish with a Master's Degree from that same Hopkins University.

I: Was that yourself?

A: My younger sister, Frances, who is now a Professor at The University of Buffalo. And then to see me--he did not, however, live to see me get the Honorary Citation from the Hopkins Chapter of Phi Delta Kappa, citing me for leadership in this community two years ago. This shows on the ^{VITAE} ~~detail~~ sheet here, and in my acceptance speech I said exactly what I've said to you, that Baltimore is a town of contradictions, but that we've made progress because there have been people of good will of both races who have been willing to work together.

And I think it is largely because of the Afro-American newspapers and largely because of the leadership of a person like Dr. Carl Murphy and those on his staff who worked with him and who were dedicated to working with him; and to people like Dr. Lillie Jackson and those pioneers in the NAACP who were willing to take hours, inordinate time, late-at-night phone calls for help--were willing to take the time to listen to people and to tell them what to do. And when you think about it, it's a marvelous story. I'm going to write it myself one day.

I: Now, your father and Mrs. Jackson cooperated a lot. I've just recently come across a story that--well we were under the impression that Mrs. Jackson was never opposed for re-election to the Presidency, but supposedly she was, but it was your father who always presided over these meetings and the people were rather intimidated when he would walk in and preside, and they would never go through with their plans to nominate somebody else for the Presidency. Can you give us any background?

A: I don't think that's exactly so at all. I think it depends on who was saying it and who was there. I think what they must be saying is that when Dr. Murphy and Dr. Jackson were together that even those who may have wanted to see Mrs. Jackson move suddenly came to the realization that they were getting ready--if they were, I have no knowledge of this--to repudiate people who were carrying the load, who had been willing to work day and night.

Actually, Dr. Jackson, with her monies that she had made, to accumulate, could have sat at home and done like a lot of other people in the community, rested on her laurels and been comfortable and gone on vacations, etc. Dr. Murphy could have done the same thing, but they didn't. And the people a lot of times who opposed Dr. Jackson, because she did talk a lot, and she was a very unusual personality, but you couldn't take away from her the fact that she labored day and night. You had to admire her as a truly remarkable woman.

I: Right.

A: They were not willing to do that, and I am sure that if Dr. Jackson thought that there was somebody who could do that, she would have been willing to relinquish the role. I don't think it was a repudiation because he walked in or that he intimidated anybody. I think it was out of respect for him. Those people knew that if he was there that the Afro-American Newspaper, that he himself were willing to work with them and provide the leadership that the community needed, and we had not seen anybody surface who was willing to do the same thing. And I was there and I know.

I: When were you appointed to the School Board? Was it in 1960, I think, or '61?

A: Yes. I was appointed to the School Board in 1960.

I: Right. Did you ever cooperate with Mayor McKeldin on any issues relating to blacks and civil rights, or even Mrs. Jackson or your father? Say, for instance, in the matter of the black principals ^{and} other schools besides where there were predominant blacks?

A: Well, I don't know whether it was cooperation of my father and Dr. Jackson. As a member of the Board, by that time I had matured to the place where I could think on my own, and in 1960 I was forty-five years old, I think. How long ago is that? I'm 59 now.

I: Oh, about 15 years.

A: I mean at that point I was a grown woman, and if you look at your VITAE sheets you will see that I've done a number of things. So serving on the School Board, while many

thought it was a great honor and all, it was really a very, very arduous task. But you felt a commitment, because when I went on the Baltimore City School Board, there were no black principals of any high schools in this city except Dunbar, Douglass and Carver; and there were no assignment of black principals to other schools. And the public schools were still predominantly black in 1960, and that was six years after the Supreme Court Ruling. As a citizen and as a mother of two children three children at that time in the Baltimore Public Schools, I felt I was representing other parents of children in the city and it was incumbent upon me to express their viewpoint, and the opposition to the continuation of segregation in assignment of pupils and assignment of faculty.

I: Why did the Baltimore School System accept so readily the 1954...?

A: May I finish that sentence?

I: O.K.

A: Assignment of principals, assignment of faculty and also in the curriculum planning for the schools. We felt, those of us who were black on that Board, I was the first black woman appointed to the Baltimore City School Board, and the first woman with children in the Public Schools appointed, and that is where I was coming from. I think the fact that I had worked in the NAACP, that I had worked in the community, had participated in a lot of civil rights activities including covenants and a lot of stories involving civil rights actions including covering of a lynching on the Eastern Shore of Maryland as a young reporter,

that I had a sensitivity to and empathy for people. And therefore that was where I could make a contribution as a parent. The fact that for a long time I did not go ^{FOR} to any of the personnel actions because the Administration refused to name black principals was designed to call attention to this failure as late as 1960. And now today it is just a complete turn-around. It's a matter of fact people are assigned on the basis of ability, and the schools are almost 70% black.

I: Can you account for the ease with which the Baltimore School System accepted in 1954 the Supreme Court mandate to integrate the schools?

A: Yes. Because the NAACP and the Afro, and Carl Murphy and Lillie Jackson, and all others associated with them at that time, including Thurgood Marshall who was then an NAACP lawyer, and W.A.C. Hughes, Jr., who was a Baltimore NAACP lawyer, and others concerned with public education, including Dr. Martin Jenkins whom they brought here to do a survey. Have you seen the survey of the Baltimore Public Schools, which indeed, showed that there was this rank discrimination in assignment of people and principals, etc.? And the fact that there was the Strayer Report which showed these inequities, and the fact that there was a meeting between the NAACP and other interested citizens under the guidance of the Afro, with school officials saying, "You can do this. You are men of good will. You are members of minority groups yourselves, ^{SOME} both of you. You are outstanding citizens. Let's move ahead and do this."

I: Was this meeting held here?

A: Right. The first one was held in the Afro office. In fact, the first \$2,000--well that's another thing.

I: Go ahead.

A: But in any event, the meeting was held there and the strategy was planned with Thurgood Marshall, etc. And out of that came a meeting of the school officials who came to the Afro office, and then subsequently they went back; there was a meeting before the Board of Education. I can remember Martin Jenkins speaking or Dwight Holmes. One of them. I don't remember just exactly. But, in any event, they had developed this kind of understanding. Well, they were willing to try, and that's how--was it Polytechnic, was it City College or Western? But, in any event, there was the opening of the Poly A Course, as I understand. Wasn't that it? For black youngsters.

I: Yes. That was in about 1952.

A: Now, then. That had already been done. The Supreme Court had under consideration the Brown vs. The Board of Education and the other case which had been merged. And there had been frequent conferences in the Afro office among counsel including Thurgood Marshall. And, in fact, Dr. Murphy was a part of the team which met with the lawyers, with the NAACP lawyers as they prepared to go to the...

I: You mean on the 1954 Decision?

A: ^{Right.} Meantime, anticipating that the Court would rule in our favor, the Baltimore people--the NAACP, the Afro under Dr. Murphy, and others sought to prepare these school officials who had already shown goodwill by opening the A Course for there is

no point in waiting for the Supreme ruling; why not get ready in advance? So Dr. Fisher, as I remember, was the Superintendent at that time. I can remember him coming to the Afro office with all these papers and he was sitting down talking, "Well, you can do this." I can remember seeing Juanita saying, "You can do this." Working out plans so that when the ruling came, a lot of people said to me all over the country, "How did Baltimore move so efficiently?" When the Court handed its Decision, already everything was moving. That's how it moved. Because there had been this foresight in planning and there had been established a rapport between the school officials who wanted to do the right thing, but needed the prodding of the NAACP and the black newspaper which had influence in the community. It didn't just happen.

I: Right. I would imagine.

A: It took a lot of long hours of planning and meetings, and coercing, and doing things in good temper. Back to that same thing. Good temper.

I: Good temper.

A: And with logical arguments and with the papers and the supportive data, and then the plans whether you can do this this way under Plan A or you can do this under Plan B, providing the options, etc., so the people could act, so they didn't feel they were back in a corner. But they had options which they were provided. And the people that they were dealing with were people of stature. The black people of this community were willing to work with people of stature who had no selfish interest. They were not interested in advancing themselves, but

rather in advancing the cause of education for all children in this community. I started to say that in the case involving Donald Murray vs. The University of Maryland--see, you got to '54 before we got to '36.

I: Right.

A: But the '54 preparation for school integration is nothing new because Baltimore NAACP leaders along with the Afro had early had experience in dealing with this whole matter of discrimination in education. We had been instrumental in having a special educational report prepared, as I just said, and at that time Dr. Martin Jenkins, who later became President of Morgan, was at Howard University and he was on assignment to do a special study, which is part of the record, to show the inequities of the schools, etc.--the University of Maryland, and that kind of thing.

There was one other study, and I don't remember who did it. The first monies for that study was put up by Carl Murphy, \$2,500.

I: Do you mean for the Jenkins' Study?

A: I don't know whether it was for the Jenkins' Study, but for the studies which were made to support the position, at ^{that} the University of Maryland...

I: The Graduate Schools, and things.

A: Yes. Should open its doors. At that time, I think Thurgood was one of the lawyers. W.A.C. Hughes and Linwood Koger, and the other people from Washington. I can't remember their names from Howard University Law School.

I: I think Dr. Ransom?

A: Ransom was one, and Tucker Dearing, and people like that.

I: But, this was, like, from '36 to the early forties?

A: In spite of it. It took a lot of work, a lot of stories, a lot of investigative reports. The ~~Statement~~ ^{where} for example, I noticed in the ^MUNES History they talked about how Curley Burd who was then President of the University of Maryland? Talked about, "Oh, let's hurry up and integrate and do something about the University of Maryland and the Eastern Shore." Down in Princess Anne it was called then, "Because if you let them in out here at College Park, they'll be in school with our girls!" "Let's let the Niggers get the education," and that's exactly the kind of atmosphere which you were dealing with, yet these people were able not to get mad at that man but to catch him at his own game. Constantly working and finding ways. They served on the ^{Marbury} Commission.

Are you familiar with the ^{Marbury} Commission?

I: Just vaguely.

A: Made a study of education. Recommended merging of UMES with ^{MORGAN} Baldwin, or something. I've forgotten. But, in any event, they were part of the structure in which they were able to have input, and it was out of that--and they were able to talk back. The most significant thing, I think you ought to understand is that the reason of this progress is because you had those two people, particularly, Carl Murphy and Lillie Jackson, who were not afraid to speak. Lillie Jackson didn't owe anybody and she wasn't employed by anybody, and she could speak freely. The Afro didn't have a million dollar building, but we paid cash, and that was one of the things we established sometime ago--we paid cash for everything we got. So that we didn't have to worry about the man holding the mortgage on us, and we wanted to

print a story that might offend some big persons in town. If they had their feet in the black man's neck we went ahead and printed it. So you were not beholden to the white man, and that's a significant point. The most important thing is that there were people who were willing, and there were others in addition to Lillie Jackson and Carl Murphy. They were some white people who were willing to join the vanguard. They couldn't have done it alone, and while they may have been considered conservative white people, the fact that they did, indeed, bend and/or change and do what was right was, I think, a tribute to Lillie Jackson and Carl Murphy, and all the other people who worked hard with them--which is all a part of the philosophy of working in good temper, and not getting mad and getting violent but rather trying to sit down with people who are interested in the city and its people.

I: Right. Because I would imagine you did have great pride in the city, being a long-time resident, your family?

A: I think there were a lot of black people, or else they wouldn't have been here. They were willing to remain. And as I say, in the case of Lillie Jackson and her family, they could have gone some place else, but our roots were here. We've been here for five generations, just like the other people who worked.

I: What was your father's relationship with Judge Sopher? I guess they had a long relationship?

A: Well, you see, the history of Morgan is also tied in with the history. It has a rich heritage in this city, because Morgan was originally a church school, and, as I say, ever since I was a child I can remember being a part of Morgan because we

early moved to the Morgan Park area when it was woods. Back in 1934 when I finished high school, it was the last February class at Douglass High School. My father was a firm believer in those days that you didn't waste any time, so everybody else in the class went to a Dawn Dance except me. That morning, the day after graduation I was up and had to walk the six blocks from our home to Morgan to spend that half-year in Morgan until I got ready to go to Howard University.

But through the years he had been intimately involved in the development of Morgan College as a first-rate institution because he loved Morgan.

I: Well, what was his relationship with Judge Sopher? Can you characterize that relationship? Did they cooperate on some of these suits that were brought by the NAACP before the U.S. Courts?

A: No. What happened was, Judge Sopher was a very distinguished man on the Morgan Board, and a Judge, first in the lower courts of Maryland and subsequently he was appointed a Federal Judge. He served on the Board of Trustees at Morgan College, and Dr. Murphy was also a member of the Board of Trustees, and in fact, at Judge Sopher's death, succeeded him as Chairman of the Board of Trustees, mainly because he was one of the architects of Morgan. It was Dr. Murphy whose love of Morgan transcended just going to Board Meetings and passing by. We used to say, we had a family joke, that we really never had a father growing up because he spent his time planning the buildings and working with the architects and overseeing the architects, and meeting with the President of Morgan, and meeting

with the Trustees, other groups in the community, and then going to the Afro. By the time he got through with Morgan and the Afro, we saw very little of him. It was a family joke.

In any event, Judge Sopher was a member of that Board and I think they developed a kind of professional kinship, because they both were men of good temper who realized that the future depended on people working cooperatively. Now, whether their philosophies were the same always, no, not necessarily. Judge Sopher was a white man with a different background. Judge Sopher was the man who ultimately on that Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals who ruled, as I understand it, I told you in the case of the University of Maryland, wasn't it? Yes. Wasn't it Sopher? Right.

I: And the Pratt suit, I think, too.

A: Pratt suit, too.

I: There were three or four.

A: Tax suit, too. They suffered their experience, and with his background, it would be what I would say we converted some people. And it may well have been that he was converted all along, but the times did not allow white people to come out and speak out.

I: How about Sidney Hollander? I understand that he was close.

A: Sidney Hollander is another story. Sidney Hollander was of the kind & like Lillie Jackson and Carl Murphy. Sidney Hollander was beholden to nobody. He could afford to speak out. Sidney Hollander worked and opened his home. I can remember

Marion Anderson came here, and I can remember when we had a fellowship house and we were picketing just to be able to go into the Lyric Theater, when we were going downtown to talk to the department store people about serving black people. It was Sidney Hollander who was willing to stand up and be counted. For that reason, Sidney Hollander was, what do you call it, not outlawed, but what?

I: Ostracized?

A: Ostracized by many people in the Jewish community.

I: Oh. Did you get any other cooperation from the Jews? Were there any other prominent Jews that cooperated with the civil rights activities?

A: Oh, gee. I imagine. I would have to refresh my memory, but I'm thinking about, for example...

I: Those who really stuck their necks out? You're trying to recall those who really stuck their necks out, I guess?

A: Well, I was just telling them in a meeting, he was sitting there a moment ago like a woman like whose son is at Morgan. Oh, what's her name? At Morgan? I can remember, she was working with, cooperating with May Gelman, and there are a lot of other people. May Gelman, for example, who was cooperating, working in, I think, the Citizen's Committee for Justice, and some other groups. And there were other white people. The black people in this community could not have done it alone. There were a number of white people who may not have been as vocal as a May Gelman, willing to picket with Ada Jenkins and others at Fellowship House and Lyric, and all, who would may not have been willing to sit at a NAACP Banquet, who would not have

been willing to meet at the Afro office, but who called and gave their moral support and offered guidance and tips, and when the chips were down and it came time to vote, they voted with us.

I: What was the fall-out, I guess, when there was conflict between the Afro and the NAACP and Jack Pollack's forces, especially when you were trying to get blacks elected in the Fourth District. Did this affect the relationship of some whites to the NAACP and your father? Whatever?

A: I don't know that it did, and if it did it would have been the same people who weren't going to support us anyhow. The time had come in this community when we needed black representation in the State Senate, and Mr. Pollack, who was a member of a minority group already had many people and already controlled jobs in the Court House, as he does in many instances today, didn't see the handwriting on the wall. He did us a favor when he didn't see the handwriting on the wall, because what happened was that we black people got together and we registered votes that we never had before, and we beat him. We got Harry Cole elected. I think that was the first one. Then we did it with Verda, and we've been doing it ever since. That's one reason, the significance of this NAACP drive, right now, is to do the same thing. If we get out there together so that Jack Pollack cannot do what he did the last time with ^{Martin Allen} ~~Martin~~.

I: Can you recall any particularly striking incident relating to the Pratt Suit or the Sandy Point Suit or the opening of the Recreation?

A: Oh, those were the exciting times!

I: FEPC?

A: Oh, sure. You know, I could take all afternoon. But those were exciting times, because you were making history.

I: Oh, you were aware that you were making history? You were very conscious of it.

A: Yes, you were making history. I don't know that you were as aware of it. I mean, actually, we were fighting to keep the Man's foot off our necks.

I: You were actually running scared? But you people were...

A: No. I'm not talking about running scared. I mean, think, you have to understand the times. Actually, we are talking about a time in which we couldn't drive buses, we couldn't eat anywhere, we couldn't try on, you couldn't drive a bus, you couldn't work downtown except as a doorman or a janitor. You couldn't work in the--we finally had gotten in the A & P by then. We couldn't even go to a public supported beach. What had happened is, when I say the White Man's foot in your neck, you couldn't work in City Hall. You couldn't get jobs as principals in the schools. You only had to be teachers or assistant this or...Eventually, it all came down on you, so you had to get up and stand up and fight. Be willing. We had plaintiff after plaintiff. We didn't have a hard time getting plaintiffs.

I: Didn't a, I think it was, D. ^{Arnett} ~~Arnet~~ Murphy file a suit, on his own, I think?

A: The brother of Carl Murphy. Yes. He and Dallas Nichols, who was a lawyer, and a man by the name of William B. Dixon who was a real estate man. And D. ^{Arnett} ~~Arnet~~ Murphy put up the money,

and they filed suit and won the right to play on the golf course. And that's been the history of this town, and that's what I try to tell my youngsters and other young people. When we talk about the needs to support the NAACP and why we must support this ^{Pettibon} ~~particular~~ drive we're working on, and ^{the rest} ~~the rest~~ of the vote, things are so much better now for you all in this generation than they were for us, because we couldn't go anywhere.

I: Can you remember or can you characterize your father's relationship with ^{Marse} Maurice Calloway?

A: ^{Marse} Maurice ^a Calloway was another unusual person in this community who was a well-to-do real estate man and a Republican leader, and he had a political acumen. He knew how to get to the Republican leaders. At that time we were in a Republican Administration. Mr. Nice was Governor. And they had great respect for him because he could deliver his precincts, and Mr. ^a Calloway cooperated fully with the NAACP and the Afro in the campaign to open jobs and ⁱⁿ they provided ^{ing the} a place where we could train policemen, men to be candidates for the Police School once we had the March on Annapolis. I tell you somebody you ought to really talk to, it's Philathea Carter. She's the sister of Walter Carter, the slain, the dead civil rights lawyer. Her name is Philathea Carter Hall. She lives at 1900 Ruxton Avenue. She's got a silent phone, but I can get it for you. But she and I had a picnic the other day talking about just what you were asking me about, about ^{Marse} Maurice Calloway. She recalled two or three incidents of what ^{Marse} Maurice did and about what

we were going to train them. In other words, when we picketed and they finally said, "Yes, you can get the police jobs," they wanted us to make instant policemen. So we were determined they were going to make it. ^{Marse} Maurice provided the place for them to...

I: That was about 1937, wasn't it? Or '35? I just spoke recently to Mr. Wilson and he said, ^{Edward} (~~Edwin~~ Wilson?) he ran the school.

A: Yes. He ran the school. And Philathea was the secretary in the office, and she had just come here. She had come here to take a job in the State Government and had been turned down. And that is another story. But as a result of her being turned down, she and Mr. Murphy and Mr. Call^away worked together and got the job. I think eventually she didn't get the job. She was trained in Business Administration, had a Master's and all that, and they turned her down. But eventually a black person did get the job as a result of their efforts. That's what she was telling me about. I can't remember all of these things. ^{This you're} She ~~was~~ talking about forty years ago.

I: Were you aware that Mr. Wilson was a ghost writer for ^{Marse} Maurice Call^away when Call^away did his Afro column?

A: I wouldn't have been surprized. A lot of people had ghost writers. The more important thing is that the ^{Marse} Maurice Call^away name and the intuition he had, the ability that he had to relate to people and to know the issues. He was a politician and to know what to do was important. Now, whether he could write it, he could tell somebody about it, and if you knew him

and could hear him talk, it was a beautiful thing. His widow still lives here.

I: Oh, his widow still? Is she?

A: Oh, she's all right. I saw her. She works in the YWCA. I don't know where she lives, but she's in the phone book, I'm sure. It's G-allaway. Incidentally, you are talking about a family that have grown up in Baltimore and all. There is the Cab Calloway family that has been here for generations, and people have been--Callaway's working. The Thurgood Marshall family have grown up in this city. So there are not just the Jackson's, and Murphy's, and Mitchell's, there are a whole lot of families. And it spans the economic ladder. I could name you families in this city which you will consider poor, who still live in the inner city and have for generations.

I: Can you characterize at all Mrs. Jackson's relationship and your father's relationship with people like, some important women like Frances Murphy, Sarah Fernandez^{IS}, Sarah Diggs, Ida Cummings?

A: The Cummings Hall at Morgan State University is named for Miss Ida Cummings, who was the fraternal leader and long-time teacher, and matriarch of a family. Her brother was one of the first City Councilmen in Baltimore City. Her family still lives here. It's another large family. Who else did you ask me about?

I: Mrs. Sarah Fernandez^{IS}.

A: Sarah Fernandez^{IS} was the second Woman's Editor of the Afro-American whose husband, well, I just told you was Josiah Henry who was a real estate man who provided the money and the help in work in NAACP. Mrs. Sarah Fernandez Diggs was an ardent

* Mrs Moss Confused Sarah E. Fernandez with Sarah Fernandez

worker in the NAACP. She annually raised the highest number of memberships, or something.

Miss Ida Cummings through the Elks, S.E.W. Harper Chapter of the Elks, which she headed, gave support and so did all the other Elks.

McKeldin-Jackson Project
Interviewee: Mrs. Elizabeth M. Moss
Interviewer: Leroy Graham
Date: July 13, 1976
Place:
Transcriber: Garnette Brant
Cassette II Side 1:37

I: +Head of the Women's Cooperative League. What was her relationship with your father and Mrs. Jackson?

A: I don't know about the relationship with them. All I know is that there were many people in this community who worked hard, side by side with the NAACP and cooperated with the Afro and called on the Afro to help them in their endeavors. Mrs. Fernandez^{is} is one of those people. Now there was some incident. I don't remember whether she was turned away from something or she had a problem getting the League established or accepted, but the Afro supported her in the drive to help build up the Baltimore League, and so did the NAACP and Mrs. Jackson. Now that's Mrs. Sarah Fernandez^{is} and that's, incidentally, another old family in this city which has been here for four or five generations.

I: Right. I know something about them.

A: Just like the McMechen family. He was the first black member in modern times to serve on the School Board.

I: Can you relate....?

A: His name was ^{George} W. F. McMechen, for whom one of the schools was named. He was a lawyer, and his family still lives here.

I: Can you relate anything about him being appointed to the School Board? Any information that may not be already known?

A: The Afro used to carry in its Loggerhead on the Editorial Page what it stood for. One of the things it stood for

x Sarah E. Fernandez

was black representation on the School Board, and through the years it campaigned with every Mayor and eventually McMechin was named. Thirty or forty years before there had been a black person named, a Reverend Mr. Garnet, for whom the Henry ^{Howland} *
 Howland Garnet School is named. But he was a minister, and after he had been appointed, he turned it down saying he thought it was a conflict. You probably saw that in here somewhere. Did you see those ...?

I: Right. I saw that, I think it was there.

A: But what I'm trying to say is the fraternal groups--the Elks, the Masons, what's that other group? Mr. Nichols' group. He was part of the Teachers' Organization, the Black Teachers' Organization. Not the Reindeer, but the other fraternal group. But, anyhow, you see the success of black people in any community like Baltimore is that its civil rights groups and its churches, and fraternal groups, the leaders of those groups cooperate. And that is what builds your base. And the Afro was able to develop support of these groups under the administration of Dr. Murphy and those of us who followed him, so that we didn't have a problem of getting a program of it if it was right. Because the newspaper had the reputation of not being interested in glorifying itself but rather in improving the community and helping people. So there was no problem, you ~~could~~ any time get a meeting together in the Afro office on any issue and you could have representation from churches, ministers groups and Baptist groups, and ministerial organizations, fraternal groups, colleges, etc.--a wide spectrum. That's been true all through the years.

* mistaken on name of think?

I: Would Mr. Murphy chair these meetings, or what? Or would he just turn over his ...?

A: He chaired the meetings. You see, we've come out of a church background, if you remember, it's a fact that the pastor, Reverend William T. Alexander, the pastor of *Sharon* Baptist Church, and Reverend Bragg, Father Bragg, the pastor of St. James Church, were the two people who had the church newspapers, and my grandfather's was a Sunday School Newspaper. They merged them all together to make the Afro-American. So it's not unusual that you've had cooperation through the years from churches because you came out of a church background.

I: Well, do you think Baltimore is a--the structure of its sort of civil rights movement is different than ^{or} from other cities, say, from New York or Philadelphia, in this...?

A: I'm not familiar with what they are in other places, but I....

I: In Washington, D. C., in particular, because I--that city it seems never...

A: Well, I don't know. My mother marched for women's suffrage. She was in my father's class at Howard University; she took German, and was a teacher in the Washington schools. I can remember the stories about how she marched with Mary Church Terrill and the rest of them for women's suffrage. Then she was one of the women who co-founded Delta Sigma ^{Theta} ~~Beta~~ Sorority at Howard University. So on both sides of the family we've always been (in our immediate family) we've been marching for one thing or another. And then in early days here, as the mother of five daughters, she was active in PTA's, helped

organize PTA's, and Women's College Club, and study groups, and Crownsville Hospital Auxiliary where there is a building named in her honor. So, on both sides we've had this kind of leadership in the family which has inspired other people.

I: Did the Urban League take over the leadership in the civil rights movement, say, from ¹⁹⁵⁰⁻1957? Some of the interviewees seem to think that the...

A: Under Dr. Templeton?

I: I don't--well, I...

A: Let me just say that when Dr. Templeton was head of the Urban League, he was very much a part of the civil rights movement and the organization, and worked closely with the other groups.

I: Well, they didn't necessarily assume the leadership or do the most important work?

A: Not to my knowledge.

I: Can you recall the statement by Francis W. Woods about, I think, it was 1940? He said it was no time to unduly press for advantages during the war, and I think there was an editorial. Both an editorial from your father and Mrs. Jackson came out.

A: Probably so. There was a difference in philosophy, and at that point in time, if that was the statement that was made, then it was rightly so that the newspaper and the NAACP would have differed.

I: No. They agreed in criticizing Dr. Woods for this.

A: I said that the NAACP and the Afro would have differed

from Dr. Woods. You will have to remember the times. Dr. Woods was an employee of the Baltimore Public Schools at a time when the schools were separated and his job depended on the white power structure. And he was named to head the black public school with an office out of the old School 130. Are you a Baltimorean?

I: I've been here since '52.

A: Well, the School 130, Booker Washington High School on the back of it, the part near Madison Avenue, was what was called the Headquarters for the Negro Division of the Baltimore Public Schools. And as Dr. Woods said that, and the Afro and the NAACP disagreed with him, he probably said it out of the fact that he was employed by them and he had to enunciate the viewpoint of the Administration. Nevertheless, Dr. Francis M. Woods turned out to be one of the outstanding Administrators and in his time did what I think was a yeoman job of trying to operate under a great disadvantage.

And I think it's important that that be included when you ask those kinds of questions, because here in '77, we're all inter-married. We're all parts of the same family, and I would not like it to be said that I said that Dr. Woods, whose grandchildren are also my great-nephews, was wrong. I'm not saying that. I'm saying that in those times he did what had to be done and what he thought was best. But that, if there was published disagreement about it, I don't think there was any open disagreement once they all sat down together. And I think there must have been a realization that he was an employee of the System, and part of the System at that time. We've come a long way since then.

I: Can you relate anything about the fight over Laurel Cemetary? Did Mrs. Jackson get involved in that fight at all? And your father?

A: I don't remember. You said Laurel was going to be destroyed or they were going to move it, put a white cemetary there, or something?

I: Now it's a place where Two Guys is on Belair Road.

A: I think the Afro had a ...

I: Mr. Frisby was involved in trying to preserve it.

A: Intense story exposing it. I think eventually they did move the bodies some place else.

I: Right. Carroll County. I've seen the place.

A: And then, of course, the Afro also took the leadership in exposing the Route 40--how asinine that discrimination was on Route 40, and that was one of the most exciting exposes we did, because we hired costumes and a limousine and dressed up our reporters in foreign robes and sent them out to test the restaurants. You've probably seen that.

I: Was Robert ^{Bell} ~~Beiton~~ one of those, who is now a judge, I think?

A: No. It was long before his time. George Collins was one, and he can tell you some interesting stories about that. We dressed them up in robes and they went on down, and how the white help and the waitresses and everybody came to ask for their autograph; and they posed as the Ambassador from Gabon, and a fellow by the name of Herb Mangrum, who is now with the U.S. Agriculture Department was another one. James Williams who is on the National Urban League Staff was another one of the

reporters, and it was a lot of fun until some smart alec Sun reporter called one of the costume places in town and exposed it, but by that time we'd got our story. We'd been all up and down Route 40 and all downtown in the hotels and everything. It was very exciting, and the Afro won an award from the Maryland-Delaware Press Association for that series. It made national headlines.

I: Well, did the Afro and the NAACP shell out a lot of bail money for young protestors in the sixties?

A: Yes, I think they raised money. And provided the lawyers. Many of the lawyers served for nominal fees. I can remember Tucker Dearing particularly, and W.A.C. Hughes, and some of the others volunteered their services. There were some white lawyers, too.

I: Because there were some of the opinion that maybe the NAACP waned in the sixties under Mrs. Jackson. There was some opinion that she may have held on too long. I don't know if it's true or not.

A: Oh, you'll always find people to criticize, and after you get all of the work done and do all of the dirty work, do all of the groundwork, well, somebody will come in and say, "Well, you should have done it this way." Well, where were you? You know. You were out partying.

I: Can you tell us anything about how she got that Honorary Degree from Morgan. I think there was, supposedly, some opposition from the Trustees? Some members of the Trustee Board. Mr. Wilson told me recently there was some opposition, just weak opposition at that, he said.

A: I don't know why people can remember all sorts of negative things. I think the main thing is she got it, the college bestowed it on her. She worked hard for the college. She deserved it, and I don't think the record shows that there was any opposition. My recollection is that there was enthusiasm in response to the honor bestowed upon her. A standing ovation, as I recall.

I: Can you recall anything about the Druid Hill Speedway when they, the city...?

A: Yes, and Dr. ~~Cizelle~~^{Chissell} was the plaintiff in that case. They lost it, but they did--I think it was Dr. ~~Cizelle~~^{Chissell} put the money up. I was just looking at that the other day. And the interesting thing about it is, the reason I'm familiar with it is because the same lawyers and the same Attorney General who represented the state in the Patterson case were the prosecutors who represented the city in that case. Larry Gibson and I researched it the other day and got the original thing, and I ran it in the Afro on the Editorial Page the same week that we ran the story when Dr. Patterson was on trial. You will see the picture of the two men. The attorney is now the Attorney General, and the lawyers for the city who ~~also~~ also the people who were in that case. But more important, they were also the people who lost the Fort Smallwood case. I ran their pictures and the ~~because~~ because the Supreme Court turned them down in four words, "We refuse to review." Or something like that. So there were two articles that ran at the same time on the Editorial Page of the Afro last year during the height of the Patterson trial.

I: Did you get Dr. Bryson appointed to that Inner Harbor?

A: I don't know anything about Dr. Bryson. He is on it?

I: Yes. I thought that maybe you...

A: Well, I think what happened is that the Mayor asked for recommendations. How long has he been on it?

I: I don't know. He just said that--he just mentioned it in passing himself.

A: Well, I think somebody asked for recommendations and we suggested--well, I do think we had an editorial in which we suggested people who were eligible. They said they were looking for people who had experience in finances, and the Afro suggested...

I: Dr. Bryson. Can you recall anything of the March on Annapolis by Morgan students in 1947? I think Clarence Blount was the leader of that. Did your father and Mrs. Jackson have any influence on that march?

A: I'm sure they did, but I don't remember the details. I remember the students marching, and I remember they wanted to see the Governor, and they wanted to--I think this was for getting the student fees or something like that returned. For saving the school or getting more money for building...

I: Right. Just general improvement, I guess.

A: You see, all of this goes--after awhile it all goes together and you finally have to go back and look at the files. So when you ask me situations, "No. I don't." Because for the last forty years I don't know of a thing in this city that has not involved, up until their deaths, Mrs. Jackson--Dr. Murphy in '57 and Mrs. Jackson in '69? Uh?

I: Mrs. Jackson in '75.

A: '75?

I: Right.

A: Up until their deaths they were not involved inactively some cause but the newspaper through Dr. Murphy and those of us who worked with him. Dr. Jackson and those who worked with her. And nobody could do it by himself. That's why I say that. But it was their leadership, their guidance and wisdom which helped us.

I: Well, maybe you can relate something on how, I guess, your cousin, Howard H. Murphy, was appointed to the State Board of Public Welfare.

A: He had been involved, as I understand it, for a number of years on the Board. For a long time we didn't have any representation on the State Board, and he was on--was it the Rosewood Board? No, the girls' school.

I: School. Right.

A: Barrett School for Girls. Oh, that's another family, The Whyte, *Violet* Hill Whyte family which has been around a long time. *Violet* Hill Whyte was on that Board, too, and the Afro through the years had campaigned for representation, and he served on that Board with distinction. He retired from the Board about two years ago and they gave him a testimonial luncheon or something. That was another plank in the Afro's masthead--representation on all State Boards and that kind of thing, and we still campaign for it.

I: Well, your cousin's appointment came during the Administration of McKeldin when he was Governor, and then George

Douglass was appointed to the Board of Examining Moving Pictures and Machine Operators. Dr. Jenkins was appointed to the Board of Control of Southern Regional Education, and Harry Cole was appointed in the Attorney General's office.

A: Well, that was nothing compared to what they should have been.

I: But these things definitely had the backing and the push of your father and of Mrs. Jackson?

A: Why, I think what they did, what we all did is when the time came, and usually that's the way the white man operates. He'll say, "O.K., you've been fighting for this. Whom do you recommend?" Well, you try to look around for the best people, and those happened to be the best people. In the case of Howard Murphy, the reason why he was selected was not because his name was Murphy but rather because of his experience through the years on the Barrett School for Girls where he had been a member of the Board, and President of the Board, and worked and tried to improve ^{the} ~~facilities there~~. In the case of Douglass, his family had run the moving picture business for years. He knew it upwards and downwards. He had trained every motion picture person in town.

I: You mean white and black?

A: I'm talking about black people. And if you wanted to be a movie operator you couldn't get training except in Mr. Douglass' family. He had a shop there on McMechen Street, and he was willing--just like in the case of the morticians. Everybody talks about how Charlie Law was willing to train everybody,

and Kelson. That's another family, a long family here, the Kelson Cunard family. I say it would take forever to start talking about families in Baltimore which have contributed. George W. Kelson for whom the new school up there is named. Kelson Funeral Home it used to be; it's now the Bailey Funeral Home--Vernon Bailey Funeral Home.

George W. Kelson was a man who was a professional undertaker. I think he succeeded his father. He and a lot of other funeral directors in town, pioneer ones, were willing to train younger people who are now successful morticians today.

Well, you've had a lot of that. You talk about Douglass. Yes. Why not Douglass? He was a man who knew the business. He trained other people.

I: Kelson--is that spelled K-e-l-s-o-n?

A: Kelson. George G. He is deceased now. One of the biggest funerals you ever saw in Baltimore.

I: Was McKeldin insincere then? Or was he--how can you characterize McKeldin's attitude as it relates to civil rights and blacks? Some people said he was insincere and some said he was genuine.

A: I think Mr. McKeldin, I would describe him just like I would describe anybody else. You had to look at McKeldin's actions and moves. Some people thought he was too slow. Some thought he didn't do enough. The Afro frequently said so, but we didn't give up on him because he was making steps in the right direction. ^{would say that he was not} ~~I'll tell you what is sincere--if that news boy would just retire.~~ And I think the assessment of McKeldin, as I see it, is contained in the editorial I did on his death. I would have to refer you to that.

I: Do you have any final statement to make about Lillie May Jackson, your father, the NAACP, civil rights, any similar type of matter?

A: I only would like to say that I don't think that we've had progress in Baltimore. It's faster in many areas because there have been people like Lillie Jackson, Carl Murphy, and other pioneers who were willing to take the time and to sacrifice the hours to expose injustice, corruption, to sit down and reason with people, for instance, in an attempt to keep their eye on the goal--and that is to make Baltimore a better place in which all of us could live in harmony.

There has been some progress, but I don't think we could sit down on our laurels. There is need for even greater involvement today by the people in this generation who've had it made. They have not known what it is not to be able to work, not to be able to buy clothes in the stores, not to be able to walk down the street without being stoned, or move in a house without having vandals tear the windows out because you're black. I can remember just moving in ^{Jafayette} Parkin Avenue. I can remember the 500 block of Prestman Street when black people moved in there. 500 block of Prestman Street. I can remember Druid Hill Avenue. And so they don't know anything about that. They don't know anything about the black ^{sides} signs and the white ^{sides} signs in the Court House: Black Women, you know, Negro Women, White Ladies, Black Men, White Gentlemen. In our lifetime we've seen that change.

They don't know anything about not being able to sit at a counter and have a hot dog. They can't remember the time

that when you went downtown after you won the right to sit down that they took all the stools out so you wouldn't have to sit down, rather than to serve all people. And the fact that those of us who are over fifty have been able to maintain our equilibrium and sense of balance and have any hope is a tribute to the leadership that we had, because many of us were impatient and felt that progress was too slow.

But the message, I think, is for young people today to understand they have a responsibility and their parents and grandparents were willing to sacrifice and do that without all of the fine things they have and the jobs that they can now walk out and get. They ought to be willing to take some time and work in some of the organizations like the NAACP and in the Register to Vote Drives, and register and vote themselves, and inspire other young people to do the same thing.