

MARYLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY
Oral History Office

MARSHALL W. JONES, JR.
Interviewed by Brenda McCauley

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

OH 8106

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Baltimore, Maryland

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I. This is an interview with Mr. Marshall Jones, Jr. for the McKeldin Jackson Project of the Maryland Historical Society on Thursday, January 29, 1976. The interview is taking place at Marshall W. Jones, Jr. Funeral Home in Baltimore. The interviewer is Brenda McCauley.

Mr. Jones, would you tell me when you first met Mr. McKeldin?

A. I first met the governor many years ago in the late 50's, and I believe I was with my father when I met him because my father and Governor McKeldin were very good personal friends, and I got to know him very well and our friendship continued ^{on} many years on through today.

I. Did you regard Mr. McKeldin as a truly sincerely advocate of Civil Rights and equality?

A. Mr. McKeldin set a moral tone in Maryland that we have had no one to come close to. Even today, we have no moral leadership in the State of Maryland and the City of Baltimore that even comes close to the governor. He just believed in the brotherhood of man and the fatherhood of God. He was a man's man; he was a leader's leader, and he was a great, great human being. He loved everybody, and he showed it, and there's nothing in his life that demonstrates anything less than giving a moral tone that ^{stands} firstclass, heads and shoulders above the crowd. Even today we don't have a Theodore McKeldin, not even in the wings. He was just a great person, a great person.

I. In what capacity did you work with Mr. McKeldin, and would you tell me how you became involved in that position?

A. Well, I was initially in his campaign in 1963 when he won his second term as Mayor of the City of Baltimore. That

year he ran when everyone said that his opponent was going to defeat him. They said that he had done a great job, was a great man, but this was not his year, and he was Republican running in a Democratic city and he could not win. The Afro American editorial stated that this is not the year for McKeldin. In spite of all that we supported him because of the leadership, the moral leadership he has given this town, the kind of person he was and whether he won or lost really didn't matter. We were supporting a man that was a good man; a man who was a leader; a man who was a great humanitarian. Of course, the voters decided he was a better man, and of course he was elected in '63. I worked with him as part of his administration. I was appointed to the Community Relations Committee in '63. In '65 or '64 I was appointed to the Bureau of Parks and Recreation to serve on its board, and in '65 I was appointed to the Board of Supervisors of Elections, being the first black appointed to any election board in the State of Maryland. So I worked to help his program while he was in City Hall, and through the years we have worked with him on community projects, projects that would help to a community and anytime we can give support we were right there. I. Did you see where Theodore McKeldin's own beliefs about equality and Civil Rights might changed some of the attitudes of his white staffers and assistants that he ran into in City Hall?

A. Well, City Hall is an interest place. Most people at City Hall are under a merit system. They're there. They have tenures, and Mayors come and go, and staff people kind of stay around. Now his close staff certainly reflected his own thinking and own personality, and so it was a continuation on the extension of McKeldin. But as far as City Hall itself, as far as the governmental process, they continue normal in their own conservative manner. Obstacles that are placed in front of

a Mayor when he is trying to improve a city are built in obstacles. Civil Service Commission -- built in problems. We had some legal problems. All kinds of problems that we'd never call ^{now} institutional problems. Institutional racism is built into the system, and a Mayor gives the moral tone to change. He gives a moral tone to change, and because his presence, things were improved because he created the atmosphere for improvement. That does not mean that a bigoted department head who had tenure did not continue in their own way, but at least they were allowed quite a bit while he was in office. The city councilmen that he had to deal with on a day to day basis, they didn't change their basic philosophies. Of course, they went along with him if he wanted something done, and they saw it was some benefit to their constituents in their area. He kept the atmosphere conducive to blacks and whites working together for progress. This kind of atmosphere that he created we have not seen since ^{at} ^{not} he was there. His whole life, his whole personality lent itself to people to work together being brothers. This feeling of closeness. This is the kind of person he was. He was just a great person.

I. In the late 1950's when he was speaking at Morgan, Mr. McKeldin made the statement that the progress of America's black population would be like a bellwether for all of the colored people of the world. He said that "how well blacks progressed in this country would set the stage for the economic advancement of colored people everywhere," and I want your response to that.

A. I agree with that particular statement to the degree that all persons of color look toward the United States as a *world* leader. They look at the treatment of blacks as we progress economically, politically and socially. In this country, then the carryover is how the United States government viewed emerging countries in Africa and Asia, I, ^{that} ~~that~~ is fine of what

he said at that particular time. Of course, McKeldin has gone off the scene and our progress as blacks in America has been slowly because of the entire country economically, and we find in far countries today we have less capitalism, but the economic powers of the world still continue to create upheavals because of the basic natural resources in those countries. We still as Americans want to keep the economics and keep the money flowing our particular way. To make this, I guess, more concise, our progress seems to level off, it appears on the rising now. Some of the merging countries are trying to be hampered by the world powers including the United States.

I. Do you remember the events surrounding the 1954 Supreme Court decision? How do you feel that McKeldin's own attitude toward the decision as governor effected the events in Maryland and Baltimore especially?

A. Oh, yes, Baltimore had been working toward integration of its schools, particularly the staff level, and when the transition came it was not as traumatic as it was in some other areas because it was under his leadership.

I. Then you feel that McKeldin was personally responsible for the lack of trouble here?

A. I believe that he created the atmosphere so that we had less possibility of confrontation because of his own dynamic personality. You could go back and talk about the days he was the governor, when at the State Office Building they had the black employees eating at a different cafeteria than white employees. He said, no, that would not be, and just by his writing a statement it was cleared up right away. He continued as governor and mayor to make ^{it} possible ^{for} a change of color ^{to} ^{come about} balance without a lot of confrontation. So, because of his leadership, yes. If you want to select one man you have to select Theodore Roosevelt McKeldin as the man who ² sat the stage for

peaceful change.

I. Baltimore has not always had black motormen. Do you remember the transition when blacks were first hired and was McKeldin responsible?

A. He may have been governor at the time, but I was a youngster ^{then} ~~been~~, and I don't specifically remember. I remember the change. I remember the talk about what people weren't going to do. They weren't going to ride the bus. The black man wasn't going to take their money. The black man couldn't drive the bus. I remember it vividly. What year was that?

I. I'm not sure.

A. I don't remember if that was early 50's or late 40's.

I. Early 50's or late 40's.

A. Early 50's? Well, I think he was governor in '52. So that may have come about when he was governor, or he may have been mayor. I'm losing my time now.

I. He was governor from '51 to '59.

A. All right then, okay.

I. Yes, he was governor then.

A. Yes, when he was governor, but I am sure his moral leadership had a lot to do with this, with the change.

I. Now, in 1968 and the middle 60's when the city was really torn apart -- riots and all -- do you feel that McKeldin played a part in quelling the hysteria?

I. Well, if you recall, McKeldin was elected in '63. He was out legal office in '68, and we had a young mayor coming in, Tommy D'Alesandro, III, and as he was going out ^{he} you could see ^{and} ~~that~~ he was quite concerned about the divisive forces that were not only in the white community ^{but in the} and black community because blacks were becoming more militant and more violent. They were not interested in sitting down, talking and ^{meeting} ~~meeting~~, and he saw this. And as an older ^{man} who has been in the forefront of racial change he was disturbed by the violent nature that things were

becoming, and I think that he got to the point that he thought that he could not cope, and I think that's one reason why he didn't run for another term. He thought ^{that} with a younger man in office might be able to relate more to the young people, particularly the young blacks who were coming up, who had no appreciation of what had been done in years gone by. What happened a young man got in office and he tried to cope and meet, and they just wrecked him. The blacks were most violent and irresponsible to the young mayor, and of course when King was assassinated the whole town just went ablaze. But at that time, the influence of McKeldin was sort of ^{sort of waning} waned.

I. And in republican party politics do you feel that some of the positions that McKeldin took on Civil Rights sometimes cost him support in the republican flanks.

A. Mr. McKeldin always had trouble with republicans. Always. Always had trouble with republicans because he was a very (we use terms like liberal), but I like to use the term that he was a human being, and his concerns were for people, republicans, democrats, unregistered, the poor, the rich, the haves, the have-nots. That made him a statesman and not just a politician. But he was always in trouble with the republican party nationally and locally.

I. Do you feel now that all of his detractors, people who might have been detractors, ^{are now} more or less McKeldin people?

A. Would they be McKeldin people at this point?

I. Right. Do they now?

A. No, they have just gone further and further into the conservative ranks, more and more. Anti people. Anti poor, anti this and that. And I think a lot on this. We call it republicans, but some of them are democrats. I think what has happened to the country is that as we come to ^{time} the Civil Rights years, like the decade of the '60's, there is a tendency for

people to shift their influence and their thinking from being moderate liberals caring for the poor and downtrodden to being more selfish, more conservative. The blacks have made enough progress. Let them pull themselves up, and you don't have that feeling in the country that we ought to do a lot for the poor. We have done enough for them, and now it's time for them to join the rest of us and make it on his own. I think this is the way the country has gone, and whether they're republicans or democrats, I think the record of the President, President Ford and I think the record of the Congress, indicate that this country is shifting from pro Civil Rights to anti Civil Rights. How should I say It? They are just more conservative now. They are not concerned about a lot of things that they were concerned about in the 60's.

I. Do you feel that a leader like McKeldin then might be out of place today?

A. McKeldin was out of place 50 -- 30 years ago. He was out of place because he was so far ahead. People never got the message. When I say people, I mean the people in leadership positions that we can make it as one, as one people in the following of God. We are one people -- the whites, the blacks, the Jews, the Gentiles. This is the message. This is the message from the Bible, the scripture. This is the message that America has never gotten, and it doesn't look like we are going to get it. We can do it together. We, as a people. So McKeldin was way ahead, and he is still ahead. I don't think that this country is going to accept the McKeldin position -- one for all and all for one, and let's get on with this business of living and doing and caring for one another. We just will not get it.

I. Do you have any personal anecdotes about Mr. McKeldin, times when you met him, pleasant exchanges?

A. Everything about McKeldin was pleasant. You'd go in his office and he would ask you how was funeral business. I'd say

funeral business was fine, and he'd say hey, you know you're a nice fellow, you're a fine undertaker. It seems like you would have a lot of business in the black community. You're a leader; you're aggressive; you're young. Why don't more of them call you? He was always interested in my progress. He was always concerned that the black leadership didn't do a lot of things they should have done. He'd say to me well, look, gee what are the black ministers doing? Why don't they get on this issue? Why don't they do something? You know, I shouldn't say this, but you know black people have got to do more for themselves. He did what he could, but he realized all the time that he was a white man. He also realized too that being closely associated with the Jewish community they did for themselves. I don't think he ever got it together on why we, as blacks, didn't really look out for each other and take care of each other and do those things that he knew would make things better. I think that's the thing that a lot of people who are pro any group have difficulty in grasping -- why we don't do somethings that we can do for ourselves. I think that just bothered him somewhat. McKeldin spoke at all the black churches. He could come in and in five minutes have them falling in the aisles, and I wish I could remember some of the things. But I know he could just get in the pulpit and just take the Jewish people out of bondage to the Red Sea, and have them on the other side. By the time they got to the other side, he'd have the whole congregation in tears, in bitter tears. He had a sense, he had a spirit about him that just was phenomenal, and his whole life was an extension of his learning, his Bible teaching. Should have been a minister, really, but he could do it, relate the Bible to what's going on today. He was a great guy.

I. You felt that perhaps his religious beliefs had a great influence on his political activities?

A. Yes, indeed. There were some things he just would not do. He would not sell the taxpayers and the citizens for a small personal gain for himself. He just did not do it. He just believed it wasn't right, and he lived on what he received as governor or mayor. But he was a great public speaker, so he had invitations all over the country to come speak. Of course, he was able to subsidize his small income as governor and mayor, and it worked out very, very well for him. I remember in 1964 we were in San Francisco at the Republican National Convention, and we were trying to get Rockefeller nominated. The Goldwater people were in charge, and I have never seen a man visually shaken at the tactics, the resolutions ^{that were passed} in his past and the whole atmosphere of the Republican Convention, because he said if this represents the thinking of the people of America, the world would be in for some hard times, and we are in those hard times now. Terrible times, terrible times. What else can ^{we} you say about him? About the greatest human being in this century, Governor Theodore Roosevelt McKeldin. He was a moral leader with an unshakeable commitment to justice and equality of opportunity. His great credit, in our everlasting benefit, he was able to translate that commitment into public policy and into programs which warranted the support and respect of the voters of Maryland. He was a great guy, tremendous.

I. One more thing. As a member of the black community, do you feel that Theodore McKeldin's activities and policies that he pushed through that were of immediate benefit to the black community have been in vain for the most part?

A. No, no. They just opened doors, and of course, once you open doors and you get people in leadership positions, you never go back. We make progress in State employment and equal opportunity and full participation in government and politics

to a degree that no administration can go back on. It's just that the progress that he started has not grown to the point where all Maryland citizens are treated fairly and equally in terms of its relationship to government. Too many public jobs, State jobs, that are still in the hands of the white community, and we get in slowly, slowly, very, very slowly. The governor, present governor, has a cabinet of 11 secretaries and we had one, the Secretary of Social Services and Welfare. I think that gentleman's a judge now. But I don't think we have one black since McKeldin has been in office. There is no way we had less than two. But the progress that he got started, we haven't gone back, but we certainly haven't made the progress in this enlightened time that we should have made. The majority of the community continues to say that you don't need any more advantage, in spite of the fact that most black people in Baltimore today are democrats. They support the Democratic Party, but when it comes time for jobs and job opportunity, being in college related positions, we don't have it. We just don't have it. But that's Maryland, that's Baltimore, and part of it is, that in business and in government if you don't have the leverage, you can't make progress. If every, if 95% of black people are democrats then the white leadership only has to deal with a few people. And when we have some competition in government and politics, we might make a little progress. McKeldin helped Republicans to have a little leverage, and in my instance I served on the Board of the Supervisors of Elections and was just appointed last year for another two year term. The only reason I am there is because we do have a Republican Party in Baltimore, and we continue to send the governor, present governor, a list of four blacks to be appointed. We kept sending them the black list. We knew if we'd send one white man on the list, the white man would have been appointed, except for today. You

have to have leverage, and if it's a Republican Party versus a Democratic Party, you've got to have some kind of party, and as long as blacks continue to be in one party in Baltimore City, then you're only going to get the scrapings and the crumbs from the table. But McKeldin when he was alive just gave us the images of ^{the} Republicans that we could make some progress, and as indicated earlier, I was the first black appointed to the Election Board, ^{with a} republicans and democrats ^{to} totalled. Only because we had a man who was republican and we had a little leverage to make some ^{inroads} headway. But as a people, as a black people we must keep the competitive system alive because its to our advantage, but without the competitive system we will never, we will never make great inroads in Maryland.

I. Getting back to that speech that McKeldin made in the late 50's at Morgan, he said that if the 1970 census did not show a decrease in the crime rate, and an increase in the intellectual and economic advantage, that that would be in the light of a (these aren't his words exactly) sort of a grim warning for the black community in this country and other parts of the world. Do you feel that the 1970 census perhaps fulfilled McKeldin's promise with all his hopes?

A. I think so.

I. Yea?

A. Really. The clouds look ^{better}, but in every cloud is a silver lining. Blacks can help reduce the crime rate. Blacks can raise the educational level. Blacks can do a lot of things for themselves. Like that first Monday in February, some local black business supported that bus to take citizens free to Annapolis to observe the General Assembly Session. It's just a small thing, but 10 or 12 black businessmen free-bused 48 people to go down to participate. That's just one thing. There are a lot of things we can do for ourselves with our own resources

and our own talent, but I'm always reminded of the fact that since Roosevelt's time, as president, this country has given so much. And as blacks not having, we receive food, we receive clothes, we receive ^{the} help ^{of} with the New Deal. And of course we haven't gotten the New Deal, we've got President Johnson's great society programs, and blacks have been looking toward government for everything, and now they are pretty much indoctrinated to looking to government to do everything for them. This is why we vote in the Presidential Election and we ~~will~~ vote in the local election. Things we can do for ourselves is have full registration of our citizens to

As you notice the crime statistics and you see where a black female has four times a greater chance of being raped than a white person living in a white community, it's black against black. Black men on drugs; black men drinking too much; black men robbing, stealing. These statistics are used by the powers to be to show that we need more guns and more ammunition. And all it is, is we justify repressive actions by the state and by the federal government by our own ^{own} needs. We, as blacks, have got to show the kind of leadership that McKeldin showed, and then if we do this, I think maybe some of our young people will respect our leadership a little bit more. It's easy to cry racism, white racism; it's easy to say black, black, black, black, black. But it's very difficult for leaders to say, hey, look ~~you're~~ ^{we're} not up to snuff. Let's do somethings in our community to make it a better place to live. We have congressmen, we have state senators and delegates. We have all kinds of leaders. When you read the literature, it's all black first and American second, and we put the responsibility on the white community to be more responsive to our needs. Maybe we need to be a little more responsive to our own needs, and as we do that ^{then} I think we can have a better impact on what the majority of the community does in terms of legislation and in terms of government, and in terms of private business. I'd like to see a black Theodore McKeldin and white Theodore McKeldin ^{and} get them together, and say, hey, we can get the job done. But I think it's only going to be done when the black community realize our own shortcomings and realize that we need to call it as we see it. And the crime that's among us, let's see how we can straighten it out.

I. ^{So you feel} Do ~~you~~ think that Theodore McKeldin, in recognizing the importance ^t ~~that~~ crime statistics and economics statistics ~~and~~ ^{would be} what ~~have~~ ~~was~~ more ~~of~~ a realistic than, let's say, other liberal politicians?

A. Right. He was very practical, he was very practical. He, well, I guess when you have a spiritual being about yourself

and your spiritual being is translated into your actions, you live by the Golden Rule, do unto others. That's really not what I wanted to say. Am I my brother's keeper? Yes, he was his brother's keeper. So everything he did, and everything he said reflected itself. I'm really lost to talk about liberalism, and all this because a guy can be liberal and he votes for some legislation that's going to give a million dollars to the poor, and if you don't watch him, he's got a consultant that gets \$800,000 in payroll, okay, and \$200,000 going down to the poor. So he out saying I'm a great liberal, what am I doing? But that's where a lot of people found themselves. Talking of good game, but in the actual producing of things that are going to be beneficial, programs, it just didn't relate. It didn't relate to theory, hypothetical, to the practical. But McKeldin had the ability do this, and this is why he was on top. Governor twice, mayor twice. A republican in a democratic state, in a democratic city. He had to have that touch, because people would have seen through him if he was just a liberal per se. *see the end of the tape*

I. About the inflammatory issue of open housing, McKeldin's stand on that was rather clear and that would seem to cause more friction than any other issue, and I'd like to have your comments on McKeldin and his position on open housing. *not read*

A. McKeldin believed that a person should live where he wanted to, where he could afford to live. Everybody should have decent housing. That was his position and wherever he could he fought for that policy. He didn't change his speech from the white community to the black community. Now, by McKeldin taking the leadership, it meant that everyone else in government had to move up to that particular position, the real estate industry, the Maryland legislature, the City Council, the federal government. He says all men are equal under God and under the law. So, the leadership that he gave to it had some effect on the changes that have come about in open housing.

But I don't think his position created any violent responses because people always knew exactly where he stood. There was no question about it. So, you agreed with him or you didn't agree with him. If you didn't agree with him, you went on about your business. I do know when he was ^{the} governor in the State House, he never closed or locked the State House door, and at one time they wanted ^{from} to lock the door because he had taken the position on the Civil Rights, and the Klu Klux Klan burnt a cross on the State House lawn. They should did. But he said, no, my door will be open. Just take that cross away from here, and that was the last incident. He believed. He never backed off it, and once people understand and know your position they will respect your position. But if you change, hot and cold, and your actions indicate that you really aren't for this particular thing, people can sense this and they act accordingly. He was just so far ahead of the ^{pack} times that you either liked him or you didn't like him, and the guy on the street liked him. ^{He loved him.} He always told me this. You go to a hotel or a restaurant, any place, on a train, always know the man at the door. He said he can do more good than these folks ^{you} who are going to meet there. Know the boot-black or the doorman, know the waiter, know the waitress. Know the little peoples. You stick with the little people and they'll keep you on top. And they kept him on top cause he was true in his beliefs. What else can you say about Theodore Roosevelt McKeldin? A leader ^{among men!} only. We need some McKeldins in Baltimore today.

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Interviewee: Marshall Jones, Jr.

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Q: Mr. Jones would you tell me when you first met Mr. McKeldin?

A: I first met the Governor many years ago in the late 50s, and I believe I was with my father when I met him. My father and Governor McKeldin were personal friends. And, I got to know him very well and our friendship on through many years until this day.

Q: Do you regard Mr. McKeldin as a truly sincere advocate of civil rights and equality?

A: Mr. McKeldin set a moral tone in Maryland that we had no one to come close. Even today, we have no moral leadership in the city of Baltimore, in the state of Maryland that even comes close to the Governor. Who just believe in the brotherhood of man, he was a man's man, he was a leader, he was a great, great human being. He loved everybody, and he showed it. And there's nothing in his life that demonstrated anything less, his moral tone was first class. Character show above the crowd. Even today, we just don't have it in Howard County. In many ways, he was just a great person, a great person.

Q: In what capacity did you work with Mr. McKeldin? Can you tell me how you become involved in that position?

A: Well, I worked with him, initially in his campaign, 1963, when he won the second term as mayor, in the city of Baltimore. That year he ran when everyone said that his opponent was going to defeat him, they say that he had done a great job, he was a great man, but this was not his year. He was a republican running in a Democratic city, and he could not win. The Afro-American editorial stated that this is not the year for McKeldin. Despite of all that, we supported him because the leadership, the moral leadership again giving his town. The kind of person that he was. Whether he won or lose really didn't matter. He would support him. He was a good man, a man who was a leader. A man who was a great humanitarian. Of course, the voter decided that he was a better man, of course he was elected in 63. I worked with him as part of his administration. I was appointed to the Community Relations Commission in 63. In 63 Or 64, I was appointed to the Parks and Recreation Service. In 65, I was appointed to the Board of Supervisors of Elections. And the first black appointed to any elections board in the state of

Maryland. I worked to help his program while he was in city hall. And through the years I worked with him on community projects. Projects that was helpful to the community. Anytime that we can give support.

Q: Did you see that Theodore McKeldin's belief about equality, civil rights, change some of the attitudes of his white staff members and assistants that ran into at city hall?

A: Well, city hall is an interesting place. Most people at city hall are under a merit system. There, mayors come and go, and staff people kind of stay around. Close staff certainly reflected his own thinking, his own personality. And so, it was a continuation, or extension to McKeldin as far as city hall itself, as far as the governmental process. They continue on their own conservative manner. Obstacles that are place in front of a mayor, when he is trying to improve a city. Built in obstacles, the Civil Service Commission built in problems, you had some labor problems. All kind of problems that we know call institutional problems. They say institutional racism is built into the system and the mayor gives the moral tone to change, he gives the moral tone to change, and because his presence, things were improved. Because he created the atmosphere for improvement. That does not mean that bigoted department heads continue, did not continue their own ways, but at least they mellow quite a bit while he was in office. Now, the city council had to deal with him on a day to day basis. They didn't change their basic philosophies. Of course, they went along with him if he wanted to get something done, and they saw it some benefit to their constituents in their area. He kept the atmosphere conducive to black and white working together for progress. This kind of atmosphere that he created, we haven't seen since. It's just not there. His whole life, his whole personality lend itself to people working better, feeling that closeness. That was the kind of person he was. He was just a great person.

Q: In the late 1950s, he was speaking at Morgan. Mr. McKeldin made the statement that progress of black American population will be a bellwether for all of the colored people of the world. He said how well blacks progress in this country, would set the stage for the economic advancement of colored people everywhere. I want your response to that.

A: That, I agree with that particular statement to a degree that all persons of color look towards the United States. It looks at the treatment of blacks, as we progressed economically, politically, and socially in this country. Then carry over is how the United States government view emerging countries in Africa and Asia. I think that's fine what he said at that particular time. Of course, as you know McKeldin has gone off to see our progress as blacks in America economically has been slowed, because the entire country, economically, we finding foreign countries today have less capitalism. But the countries today have less capitalism. But the economic powers of the world still continue to create upheavals because of the basic natural resources in those countries. We still as Americans, work to keep the economics, keep the money flowing. I guess to make this more concise as our progress seems to level off. It appears that some of the emerging countries

are trying to (inaudible) the world powers including the United States of America.

Q: Do you remember the 1954 Supreme Court decision? How did you feel that McKeldin's own attitude towards the decision, as Governor, affected events in Baltimore?

A: Oh yes, specifically in Baltimore. Baltimore had been working towards integration of the school at the staff level. And when the transition came it wasn't as traumatic as in some other areas because of his leadership.

Q: Did you feel that McKeldin was personally responsible for the lack of trouble here?

A: I believe that he created the atmosphere so that you had less possibility of confrontation because of his own dynamic personality. You could go back and talk about the days he was governor in the state office, where they had black employees eating at a different cafeteria than white employees. He said, "No that cannot be." He continued as governor, mayor, to make it possible for change to come about without violent confrontation. So, because of his leadership, if you want to select one man, you have to select Theodore Roosevelt McKeldin as the man who set the stage for peaceful change.

Q: Baltimore did not always have black bus drivers. Do you remember the transition when blacks were first hired? Was McKeldin responsible?

A: He may have been governor at that time. I was a youngster then. I don't specifically remember the change. I remember people talk about what they won't do. They weren't going to ride the bus and black men couldn't take their money. That black men couldn't drive the bus. I remember vividly. Which years was that?

Q: I'm not sure.

A: That was early 50s or late 40s?

Q: Early 50s.

A: Early 50s, I think he was governor in 52, so he was governor. I'm losing my time now.

Q: He was governor in 51 and 59.

A: I'm sure his moral leadership had a lot to do with the change.

Q: Now in 1968, the middle 60s, when the city was really torn apart with riots. Did you feel that McKeldin played a part in quelling the hysteria?

A: If you recall, McKeldin was elected in 1963, so he was out of office in 68. We had a young guy

coming in as he was going out. He could see, he was quite concern about it. The divisive forces not only in the white community, in the black community as well. Blacks were becoming more militant, more violent. They were not interested in sitting down talking remediating, and he saw this. And he was an older man who has been at the fore front of racial change. He was disturbed by the violent nature that things were becoming, and I think that he got to the point that he felt that he could not cope, I think that's one reason he didn't run for another term. He though another man in office might be able to relate more to the younger people, particularly young blacks who were coming up who had no appreciation of what have been done in years gone by. What happened, a young man got into office and he tried to cope and meet. They just wrecked him. Blacks were most violent and irresponsible to the young mayor. Of course, when King was assassinated, the whole town went ablaze. At that time, the influence of McKeldin was sort of waned.

Q: In the Republican Party politics, do you feel some of the priorities McKeldin took on, civil rights, sometimes cause him support in the Republican ranks?

A: Mr. McKeldin always had trouble with Republicans. Always, always had trouble with Republicans. Because he was a human being, his concerned was for people. Republicans and Democrats, unregistered to register, the poor, the rich, the haves, the have nots. That made him a statesman, not just a politician. So, he was always in trouble with the Republican Party.

Q: Do you feel that now, all of his detractors, people that might have been his detractors, are now more less, McKeldin people?

A: Will they be McKeldin people at this point?

Q: Right, do they now...

A: No, they just gone further, and further into the conservative ranks. More and more, entire people. I think a lot of this, some of them Republican, and some of them Democrats, I think what happened in this country as it comes with civil rights years. The decade of the 60s, there is a tendency for people to shift their influence. They can be moderate liberals, care for the poor and downtrodden, to be more selfish, more conservative that blacks made enough progress. Let them pull themselves up you don't have that feeling in the country. We ought to do a lot for the poor, there time to join the rest of us, I think this where the country has gone. The Republicans or Democrats. I think the record of the President, the record of the Congress; indicate that his country has shifted from pro civil rights to anti- civil rights. How should I say, it's just more conservative. They are not concerned about a lot of it.

Q: Do you feel like a leader like McKeldin might be out of place?

A: McKeldin was out of place, 30 years ago. He was out of place because he was so far ahead,

people never got the message. I say people, I mean the people in leadership position, that we can make it as one. As one people, we are one people, the whites, the blacks, the Jews and gentiles. This is the message. This a message from the bible, from the scripture. This is a message that America has never gotten. And it doesn't look like we will get it. We can build together, we as a people. So McKeldin was way ahead. He still ahead. I don't see that this country is going to accept the McKeldin position of one for all, and all for one. Let's get on this business of living and doing, caring for one another. We just would not get it.

Q: Do you have any personal anecdotes about Mr. McKeldin? Times when you met him, pleasant exchanges?

A: Everything about McKeldin was pleasant. You go into his office and he asked you, "How is your funeral business," I said, "Funeral business is fine." He said, "hey you a nice fella, a fine undertaker, it seems like you would have a lot of business in the black community," Your leader, your aggressive, your young, why don't more of them call you?" He was always interested in my progress, he always concerned that the black leadership did do a lot of the things they should have done. He said to me, "Look, what are the black ministers doing, why don't they get on this issue, why don't they do something?" "You know I shouldn't say this, but, you know, black people got to do more for themselves." He did what he could but he realize all this time that he was a white man. He also realized by being closely associated with the Jewish community, they did for themselves. I don't think he ever got it together on why we as blacks didn't really look out for each other, take care of each other, and do those things that he knew would make things better. I think that's the thing about a lot of people who are pro any group have difficulty in grasping. Why we don't do some things that we can do for ourselves. I think that it bothered him somewhat. McKeldin spoke at all the black churches. He can come in five minutes and have them bawling in the aisles. I wish I could remember some of the things. But I remember that he can get on the pulpit and just take the Jewish people out of bondage to the red sea and split the red sea on each side, by the time it got on the other side, he had the whole congregation in tears, in bitter tears, he had a spirit about him that just was phenomenal, and his whole life extensions of his learning, his bible teachings. He should have been a minister. But he can relate to the bible to what's going on today. He was a great guy.

Q: You felt perhaps his religious beliefs had great influence on his political activities?

A: Yes, indeed. Some things he just would not do. He would not sell taxpayers for personal means for himself. He lived on what he received as governor or mayor. But he was a great public speaker. Of course he was able to subsidize his small income. It worked out well for him. I remember in 1964, we were in San Francisco, to the Republican National Convention. And we were trying to get nominated and the bulworth people were in charge. I never seen a man who was visibly shaken at the tactics, the resolutions that was pass. The whole atmosphere of the Republican Convention. This represents the thinking of people in America we would be in for

some hard times. And we are in some hard times now. Terrible times. What else can I say about him. About the greatest human being in this century, Theodore Roosevelt McKeldin. He was a moral leader with an unshakeable commitment to justice, equality, and opportunity. His great credit and our lasting benefit he was able to translate commitment into public policies and into processing that with the support and respect of the voters of Maryland. He was a great guy, tremendous.

Q: And one more thing, as a member in the black community do you feel that Theodore McKeldin activities and politics that he pushed through was an immediate benefit to the black community, has been in vain for the most part?

A: Oh no, no. It just opened doors and of course once you opened doors and get people those leadership positions, you never go back. We made progress in state employment, equal opportunity, full participation in government, in politics, to a degree that no administration can go back on. It just that the progress that he started has not grown to the point where all Maryland citizens are treated fairly and equally. In terms of its relationship to government, too many public jobs, state jobs that are still in the hands of the white community. And we get in slowly, very, very slowly. The present governor has a cabinet of eleven secretaries, and we had one secretary in the social services, now he is a judge. If McKeldin was in office, there is no way we have less than two. But the progress that he got started we haven't gone back but certainly haven't made the progress in this enlighten time that we should have made. Of course, the majority community continues to say, you don't need any more that you have. Despite the fact, that most black people in Baltimore, Maryland are Democrats, they support the Democratic Party. When it comes time for jobs, job opportunities, being in policy making decisions, we don't have them, we just don't have them. But that's Maryland, that's Baltimore. Part of it, in business, in government, if you don't have any leverage you can't make progress. If every black, if ninety-five percent of black people are Democrats then the white leadership only has to deal with those few people. If we would have some competition in government, in politics we might some competition. McKeldin helped Republicans to have a little leverage. For example, I served on the board of supervised elections. I just got appointed last year for another two year term. The only reason I'm there because we do have a Republican Party in Baltimore. And we continue to send the governor, present governor, a list of four blacks to be appointed. We kept sending him the list, blacks on the list. We knew if we would had one white on the lists that white man will be appointed. It's as simple as that. You have to have leverage and if it's not the Republican Party versus the Democratic Party. You gotta have some kind of party. As long as blacks continue to be in one party in Baltimore city, then you only going to get the scrapings, the crumbs from the table. McKeldin when he was alive, he gave us the image of Republicans that made some progress. As I mentioned before, I was the first appointed black election official. Republican in a

Democratic town. Only because we had a mayor who was Republican, we had a little leverage to make some inroads. But as a people, black people we must keep the competitive system alive, because it's to our advantage. But without the competitive system, we would never, we would never make great inroads in Maryland.

Q: Going back to the speech that McKeldin made in the late 1950s in Morgan. He said that the 1970s census show a decrease in the crime rates, an increase in the intellectual and economic advantage. Those aren't his words exactly, sort of a grim warning for the black community in this country. Do you feel that the 1970s census, perhaps fulfilled McKeldin's promises, fulfilled his hopes?

A: I think so. The clouds look bad, but in every bad cloud, there is a silver lining. Blacks can help reduce the crime rate. Blacks can raise the educational level, blacks can do a lot of things for themselves. As a matter of fact, on the first Monday of February, some local black businessmen are supporting a bus to take citizens for free to Annapolis to observe the general assembly session. It was just a small thing, but ten or twelve black businessmen, three buses, forty-eight people go down to participate that's just one thing. There are a lot of things that we can do for ourselves. But I'm always remindful of the fact that since Roosevelt's time as president. This country has given so much, as blacks not having, we received food, received clothing, and we received the help of the New Deal. Of course, we gotten the New Deal, President Johnson's Great Society program. Blacks have been looking towards government for everything. They have been pretty much indoctrinated in looking forward to the government into doing everything for them. This is why we vote in a presidential election, and will vote in another election.

OH 8106, Marshall Jones, Jr.

Tape Number Two: SIDE 2

Q: As you noticed in the crime statistics, and you see that a black female has four time greater chance of being rape then a white person living in a white community. It's black against black, black men on drugs, black men drinking too much, black men robbing, stealing. These statistics are used by the powers that be that we need more guns and ammunitions. All it is, we justify repressive actions by the state, by the federal government, by our own needs. We as blacks have got show the kind of leadership that McKeldin had. If

we did, I think some of our young people would respect our leadership a little bit more. It is easy to cry racism. It is easy to say black, black, black. It is more difficult for leaders to say hey look, we are not up to snuff. Let's do some things in our community that make it a better place to live. We have Congressmen, we have state Senators and delegates, we have all kind of leaders. If you read the literature, it's all black first and America second. We put the responsibility on the white community to be more responsive to our needs. Maybe we need to be a little bit more responsive to our own needs. As we do that, I think that we can have a better impact on what the majority community does in terms of legislation, in terms of government, in terms of private business. I like to see a black Theodore McKeldins, a white Theodore McKeldins get together and saw we can get the job done. But I think it's only going to be done until the black community realize our own shortcomings and realize we need to call as we see it. The crime is among us, let's see how we can straighten it out.

Q: So, you feel that Theodore McKeldin in recognizing the importance of crime statistics, economic statistics, was more of a realist than other liberal politicians?

A: He was very practical, very practical. Well, I guess when you have a spiritual being about yourself, and your spiritual being is translated into your actions, you live by the golden rule, do unto others, that's not really what I wanted to say, am I my brother's keeper, yes, he was his brother's keeper. So yes, everything that he did, everything he said, reflected itself. I'm really unsure talking about liberalism. Because a guy can be liberal and he votes for some legislation that was going to give a million dollars to the poor, if you don't watch him, he got a consulting firm, that gets you 800,000 a year in payroll and 200,000 going to the poor. Then he goes out it and says I'm a great liberal. That's where a lot of people find themselves talking a good game, but the actual producing, things that are going to be beneficial to progress. It just didn't relate. They don't relate the hypothetical to the practical. McKeldin had the ability to do it. That's why he is on top. Governor twice and a mayor twice. A Republican in a Democratic state, in a Democratic city. He had to have that touch because people would see through him if he was just a liberal person with a lot of hot air.

Q: About the inflammatory issue of open housing. McKeldin's stance on that was rather clear. That would seem to cause more friction than any other issue. What are your comments on McKeldin and his position on open housing?

A: McKeldin believed that a person should live where he wanted to, where he could afford to live. Everybody should have decent housing. That was his position whenever he could, he fought for that policy. He didn't change his speech for the white community or black community. By McKeldin taking the leadership it meant that everyone else in government had to move up to that particular position, the real estate industry, the Maryland legislature, the City Council, the federal government. He says, "All men are created equal, under God and under the law." So, the leadership that he gave to it had some effect of changing open

housing. I don't think his position could warranted any responses because people always know what he stood for. There was no question about it. You agree with or you didn't agree with it. If you didn't agree with it, you go about your business. I do know when the governor was in the state house, he never closed the state house door. I remember one time, he taken a position on some equal rights position and the Ku Klux Klan burnt a cross on the state house lawn, they sure did. He said, "My door will be open, just take that cross away from here." And that was the last incident. Once people understand and know your position, then they will understand your position. But if you change, and your action indicates that you are not really for that position you advocated for, people can sense this. He was just so far ahead of the time. You either liked him or you didn't like him. He always told me this, "if you going into a hotel, a restaurant, anyplace, or the train. Always know the man at the door. He can do more good than those folks you are going to meet with. Know the doormen, know the waiter know, the waitress, know the little people, you stick with the little people and they will keep you on top." And they kept him on top because he was true in his beliefs. What else can we say about Theodore McKeldin? We need some McKeldins in Baltimore today.

Interview Evaluation

Marshall Jones Jr., recollection of Governor Theodore McKeldin provides valuable insight about one of Maryland's celebrated statesman. Jones, Jr., describes the foundations of McKeldin's views on how government should respond to the issue of race, equality, and public policy. The interview infers that McKeldin stances on contentious issues, such as open housing, desegregation, and so on, made him an anomaly in Baltimore's political scene. As emphasized by Jones, the state of Maryland benefitted significantly from McKeldin's stewardship. In addition, McKeldin's genuine concern about the welfare of blacks in the state of Maryland provides a stark contrast of the racial tensions that plagued the era.

Jones recollection of McKeldin dominates the conversation in the interview. There is no mention of other individuals who were prominent during McKeldin's tenure as mayor and governor. Jones was willing to talk about anything that was pertaining McKeldin, and was clear and concise certain dates an events. If one wants to understand who McKedlin was a person and statesman, then this interview would be invaluable reference.

Time-Stamp Index

1-5mins: Marshall first met Theodore McKeldin in the late 50s. Jones's father and McKeldin

were personal friends. His friendship continued on many years. Marshall proclaims that McKeldin set the moral standard that remains to be unfulfilled until this day regarding Maryland politics. Marshall worked on McKeldin's 1963 campaign as mayor for Baltimore. Marshall describes that some doubted that McKeldin would win the election. However, due to McKeldin's leadership ability, and his humanitarian values, he was elected. Marshall was appointed to the Community Relations Commission. In 1965, he was appointed to the Board of Supervised Elections, becoming the first black to be on the board. McKeldin's close staff reflected his attitude regarding civil rights, but there were still obstacles that were apparent in city hall. McKeldin created the atmosphere for improvement in terms of racial relations. Although some staff members at city hall didn't change their basic philosophies on civil rights, it abated their attitudes due to McKeldin.

5-10mins: Jones discusses McKeldin's statement on why the rest of the world looks at the progress of blacks in America as a signifier of whether the country follow its ideals on democracy and equality. Baltimore transition of desegregating schools was less problematic compared to other cities. Marshall credits McKeldin for creating an atmosphere that made it more conducive to make a smooth transition to desegregating Baltimore public schools. McKeldin made it possible for change to come about without violence.

10-15mins: During the 1960s riots, McKeldin foresaw the divisive forces within the black and white communities. And saw how militant the black community was becoming. He thought a younger man in office would relate more to younger blacks. When the young mayor came into office, blacks made no comprise to the young mayor. As pointed out by Jones, the influence of McKeldin was waning

15-20mins: McKeldin always had trouble with Republicans because his concern was not strict to a particular party. Some of McKeldin's detractors moved further into the conservative ranks despite McKeldin's influence. The United States' shift from pro-civil rights to anti-civil rights signifies that the leadership that McKeldin provided is desperately needed again, and can provide a blueprint for aspiring politicians in regard to civil rights. A more conservative environment has taken place since the 1960s. McKeldin was far ahead of such thinking, and saw that everyone, regardless of race, sex, and class, were in it together. Marshall doesn't see the country accepting McKeldin's position of compromising and unity among people from diverse backgrounds.

20-25mins: Marshall recounts McKeldin's personal attributes and personality. McKeldin questions why some black leaders didn't do a lot of things they should have done for the black community. Furthermore, McKeldin mentioned that blacks have to do more for themselves, but realized that as a white man he could only do so much. But wondered why blacks did not do certain things that would make things better for their own community. McKeldin spoke at all the black churches and captivated them by his thorough knowledge of the bible. McKeldin's religion influenced his politics greatly, McKeldin refused to sell out the people. As credited by Marshall, McKeldin was a great leader who never comprised on his ideals.

25- 30mins: McKeldin's policy that was geared towards the black community was not

made in vain. Progress in state employment, full participation in government, is evident. However, the progress that he got started has not reached to every citizen in Maryland. Marshall mentions that blacks are still locked out of certain jobs. But the progress that McKeldin started has not been reverted, but much work still needs to be done.

30-40mins: Marshall laments that blacks show the kind of relationship that McKeldin showed in order to make changes in the community. However, blacks should be more responsive to their own needs, and stop putting the responsibility on the white community. The real change will come once the black community realizes their own shortcomings. McKeldin was very practical and took on positions that were unpopular and never back off on a certain position. People sensed that, and continued to support McKeldin as mayor and governor.

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