Q: Now where were we?
A: Well, you were gonna ask me a new question.
XXX Q: And now I've forgot what it was.
A: Well, we were talking as you may recall, about continuing to be an identity among Negroes.
Q: Yes, my question was this. That over and over again one reads and hears that the cutting edge of the present movement is based on new conception of self, the self as Negro, if that is true, how do we square that with the prospect of the loss of this identity -- the new image of the Negro's self, as Negroes.
A: Well, in the first place, I don't believe in a new Negro with an image as Negro. Therefore I have no problem, in reconciling these two views.
Q: But some Negroes do approach this as their own feeling, or as a sociological observation as psychological observation. Some sociologists say this, some say this. Some people talk about themselves. Let me give you individual. When I was at Howard, I told you, in November, a young woman, whose name is Wheeler, really, she's a Phi Beta Kappa, she's vital person, fine orator, this young lady, I can't remember her first name, came on and spoke to 1500 people. Her complexion is, she's as light as mine, or close to it. I was sitting half way back. She was in the auditorium -- saying -- I have a great joy, I have a discovery to report to you, I have a great joy. I am black. And she said, look at you and you and you. Your faces are this color -- pointing around, but your hearts are white, your minds are white, you've been whitewashed, you're not black, you don't have my joy. This brought down the house.
A: This surprises me to some degree.

Q: Swept it like a brush fire.

A: But I believe the daily actions of these people, who responded to that, would support the joy. And you watch every action, the, I think if it were to be, to say it a different way, there is more tendency toward being involved.

Q: You say you're going to Peru next week.

A: Yes, I am. I'm a member of the Board of Trustees of the Institute of International Education. And I'm one of the delegates to the Council for High Education of the American Republics, which will be meeting in Peru from Feb. 23 to Feb. 29 of this year. I'm looking forward to this with great enthusiasm. It will be my first opportunity to visit Peru, /something/, I hope, of the remainder of the civilization of the Incas. But I mustn't take this time to be personal.

Q: I want some personal things before we start, I want to come back to matters of personal experience and personal history, in a, but to cut back to the question of the identity as Negro, that is a problem, apparently, to some people, and the thing reported on, as you well know, by psychologists and sociologists. And it's a key question.

A: Le time make one other comment on it. It's unreasonable, I think, for children to be born in a culture who are exposed to its every aspect, who have very little, of their own, to become anything other than a product of that culture. There isn't enough by way of study devices, techniques, and teaching, resident in the culture in which we are a part, for any long period of time, to maintain the identity of Negroes as Negroes. I'm mindful of the fact that so long as color is a factor in this country, that there will be something
which will set people apart, but there will, that will never, I think, be regarded as anything—anything except a barrier. The color is a barrier.

Q: Other than a barrier.

A: That's right. The culture makes what is striven for, in the example you give, I think, impossible.

Q: I find something abhorring in a way, when I think of the world in exactly alike in all ways. Small differences and big differences, yet alike. Difference in all types of personalities. We're not robots. How can you square this desire for variety of all sorts, with a concept of evening out. I'd have a world where the variety is there, without the variety being invidious in any way. And personal freedom for personal preferences of all sorts. I suppose, what the people's personal preferences, you move towards some wiping out of the line anyway.

A: Mr. Warren, This doesn't bother me. I want to tell you why. In the first place, there are different cultures in the world, that do, as a matter of fact, produce people with very different outlooks on life, and very different senses of values. The children who are reared in those kinds of cultures, are going to inevitably be different from children reared in a culture like the one of which we are apart. That's one thing. Then there is a concept that John Dewey had, with which I completely concur. And it is that no environment, is identical to any two people.

Q: Even in the same family.

A: Even in the same family. Now there is one other thing, that is consistent with the thing, I think, that lies at the basis of all of these things. And that is that to the
extent that this world becomes a one wo rld, with instant communication, and the finest means of its-kind—will—the term, will differences in the world, tend to decrease. So this, in my own view, is a very long way off.

Q: It is a long way off, in my time, a
A: And in mine.

Q: In fact, there's too much variety _______.

So I was not concealing an argument for defense of the race, that isn't my point at all, because

A: No, I certainly didn't react to it.

Q: I don't think you did, I just wanted to make that specific.

But that's not the point, because, on that matter, I would have every man's personal question, how private life, any man's private life, he can do what he wants to do, ______ business isn't mine.

A: This is my own view.

Q: This is always the basis of human individuality and human liberty. Anything less than that, I'm completely against, interfering with personal preferences, association, marriage, anything else.

A: I feel the same way.

Q: That infringes on basic liberties. This, in Jackson Mississippi, I discovered I can't ride a taxicab with a Negro, without being pulled out by the police, and fined for my having ridden in the taxicab. That's not a question of say, ______; it's an infringement on my personal liberties. My personal liberties.

A:

That's right, you're absolutely correct.

Q: It's my liberty that they attacked. Not the Negro man
man sitting in the cab with me. His liberty is being attacked too, but it's mine I'm concerned with there.

A: That's right.

q: First, you have to defend your own.

A: Agreed.

q: And I believe this is the key in the whole business. That the white man is being penalized by the system as well as the black man.

a: This is an inevitable consequence.

Q: An inevitable consequence, and that, I think, is the ______ to go after getting the thing, in a way, the white man is being penalized. Let's change the subject to something else for a moment. We were talking earlier about social process, you talk about the time element in social process of all kinds. I find that when the time element is mentioned, I sometimes encounter sometimes overt, sometimes hidden, ______ concept of time in the process. This is, I read a quotation from a Negro historian on the question of civil rights, and he ______ this matter of social process. And there's no absolute or immediate solution ever to social process. An immediate.

A: He's correct.

Q: I read this to

a: He sounds like a sociologist, though.

Q: Yes, a very brilliant young Negro student, a very brilliant guy -- what do you think of that.

Q: Well, where we are we again.

A: I'll try not to be so ______

Q: That's not the point at all ______
young man -- here again, the idea of the social process, historical process and the notion of Freedom Now. How do we put these two things together.

A: I think this is the real problem. There has been so much said and done, with respect to the whole question of rights, as related to Negroes, about their b-there being sufficient time, and encouragement to look forward to its ultimate solution, without any real reference to program to get it done, that there is an impatience with anybody who says, that this will take time. It has been associated in my own mind, with an intention to do nothing. I think there isn't a student of the problem in the world, who doesn't realize that it is going to take time. But there is one other thing, and I think it's part of the strategy, and that is, in order to get anything moving, you have got to have a NOW approach to it. But this is a starting situation, and not, in my opinion, engaging in the illusion that what is hopped for is going to occur. next. In my opening address for our convocation, this fall, I spoke on the topic that I called, Beyond the March on Washington, in which the very point that I'm making now, was made, and I called the attention of the students, to the fact that the problems that confronted the group as Negroes, were going to take a long time, and a great deal of work on the part of very many people, including them, because certain of the things are not gonna happen in our lifetime.

Q: I wonder what relevance this has. I was acquainted once with some Italian partisans just after the war. Life had become nothing to them, because that was over. Does this have much of a dent, do you think, of the young Negro who's committed deeply to this, five years from now, ten years from now. His vocation is over. Is there some possibility of some
casualties there?

A: Only for those who are making civil rights movement a 
career. And I don't think any organization in this area ought 
to make the perpetuation of the organization, a career, the object 
of their efforts. It is a thing which the organization seeks to 
achieve. For the overwhelming majority of these youngsters, 
I see no real danger, because they will go aboutMix their 
life's work. I think they will be more sensitive citizens, they 
will know when a problem is important, I think, a great deal 
better than they would have known before. They will tend to be 
more active in the political processes in community efforts 
to get things done, but I don't believe that this is going to 
provide any problem for the overwhelming majority of people.

Q: Yes, but for the few casualties that are bound to 
occur in any

A: In any battle, any struggle, right. 

Q: Do you remember, in your life, reading about, the 
opposition to the appoint of Judge Parker to the Supreme 
Court by Hoover, who, I've read into the great watershed 

case, in organizing Negro political pressure, the first time 
it has ever affected—was ever effective. It was 
effective, Judge Parker was not confirmed. The attack on 
Judge Parker was that, as a southerner, he would not be an 
impartial judge.

A: I remember the case. I didn't read about, I 
remember it.

Q: Well, anyway, subsequent events, apparently Rubest— 
that he was 
prove d/ was a very impartial and decent judge.

A: That is absolutely correct.
Q: Now, again—again, with Black.

Has been one of the most able jurists, the Court has ever had.

Q: But there was a vast amount of opposition to him, on the grounds he was from Alabama -- he was a Ku Kluxer.

A: Right. I remember that case.

Q: Now those are stereotypes, on the part of Negroes, on the part of certain white people who have liberal views. Do you think, now, if there were such a case, man from Alabama, man from Mississippi, on the Supreme bench, you'd have this automatic stereotypical response?

A: No, I don't think so. I think there would be a tendency now to look at the man's record. Just as I think there is going to be a great deal of Negro support for President Johnson. I certainly intend to vote for him. And not only intend to vote for him, but intend to work for him, within the limits of my little time, make my little financial contribution to the _____.

I think that there are many southerners who have demonstrated beyond any question that they can be as impartial and fair as any human being. The thing that I wish for myself, as much as I wish he---- for anything in the world, is to be treated as man, and as an individual, and this I hope for, for other people as well as for myself. I think this is becoming to be, a very real part of the Negro attitude.

Q: There's been a real advance in destroying the Negro's stereotype of the white man, and the white southerner, even in the present moment of this friction and_____

A: There is no question in my mind, for example, I think that Kefauver, in Tennessee, could have run for any office, had he lived.
Q: Yes, yes. And had the Negro vote.

A: And had a large part of the Negro vote, he would have certainly had the Negro vote in Tennessee. And much of the south.

Q: Well, speaking of stereotypes, we know, we know what the white stereotype what—she of the Negro is. How would you describe the Negro stereotype of the white man, forgetting southern white, but just white man in general.

A: That's too big. Too big. I think the Negro tends, I better say, tended, more acturate way to put it, to divide white people generally into two classes. Southern whites. Northern whites. This is not easy, I might also add, because we were prejudiced human beings, northerners, and some of the most liberal men in our country were southerners.

I think that the stereotype of a white southerner was one who not only thought of Negroes as being inferior, but who was prepared to support that, by any way, or means at his disposal.

The inner conflict, reflected this as you asked the questions of Negroes back in 1955, '56.

Q: I was talking the other day to a very prominent lawyer in a southern city, a Negro, high intelligence and good education,
fine education. He's very active, is an attorney for one of the
organizations, with the ______ nonviolence. Identified with that.
He said, maxmaxx despite everything, I find myself drifting toward
his position where no white man seems redeemable. There might be some
individuals here and there, but they're not really ______. I'm almost
a Black Muslim, I'm actually reading their literature now.

a: I think it's nonsense.

q: He said, I'm forced into it by my experience, in the
maxmaxx south, in the last few weeks. It's against my principles,
and against my human values, I'm being forced into it.

a: Well, my own experience is very different. And I maxx
don't want this to sound holier than thou, but I'd like just a
second to tell you a little bit about my own background.

q: I wish you would.

a: I grew up, having been reared in the main, by a grandmother
who had been a slave, who had a basic distrust for most white people,
I remember
and this is one of the things that she told us children
Feed
on many occasions. Frank all white people with a long spoon. Keep
them out of your business. Be polite to them, but stay out of their
way, don't expect you to bow and scrape. But this is the way our
maxmaxx family has to live. And we survived. I went to Hampton
Institute for high school because there wasn't public schools for
Negroes within 150 miles, I finished elementary school.

q: Where was that?

a: This was in ______ County, North Carolina.

And my teachers in that school, in the Academy at the Institute,
with maxx a few exceptions, were all white teachers. My first
real face to face contact on a day by day basis, with people who were
maxx beyond any question, interested in my welfare and teaching,
and who did everything they need to do, to inspire me to be a man,
to develop a character, to be a good student, and to aspire for a
career of service. And they themselves, demonstrated what they
were talking about, themselves. I'm sitting here now, and--all-through--
the---------in the office of the President of the University,
which is a product of that same kind of concern, and I know
that almost every one of the major institutions for Negroes and
I'm speaking of the private ones, were built by people who
believed in them. I worked with them. I worked with them here,
interracial faculty, our board is interracial, many of my friends, and
this---------this sounds like the old thing, that we hear so
much, but I know numbers of white persons as individuals, _______,
nothing that has happened in these four years, has shaken my faith.
On the contrary, it has confirmed it. And I think that I can document
it if it were necessary. The mere fact that so much has been
-segregation--desegregated in the south. The mere fact that the southerners
didn't really put up a fight against the civil rights bill in the
House, not a real fight, is in part, an admission that they couldn't
do anything about it, and I think it also represents as one of
the men said, _______ that this is a time to look at this
problem dispassionately. If I assumed for one moment, that all
white people, as he put it, are in this category, I couldn't
say one blessed word, if all white people put me in the same category.

Q: Recently Adam Clayton Powell, talking about the
N.A.A.C.P., and Jack Greenberg.

Ax: No, I worked with Jack Greenberg, in one case, as one
of his expert witnesses. And I was one who wrote him a letter
and said that he was a superb choice to succeed Thurgood Marshall.
I still think so. He's an able lawyer, and if the N.A.A.C.P. is
going to be successful, it's going to involve people of
+________, not in these aspects, but if the aspirations that
the Negro minority have, are going to be realized, because the people get concerned, not ______.

Q: XX In Mississippi I was told by several ______ working with the civil rights movement, Negroes, these are all ______ there's been real difficulty in getting acceptance of white volunteer workers who came and worked with the Negro group in Mississippi. That they'd had to, we very delicate about this.

Several—Several facets flowed into this. One, ______ and another, ordinary envies, jealousies, not of power, but

A: Could be power.

Q: Sometimes power, right. ______ I was thinking beyond that, simply human envy. This man comes, he can go again when he wants to — I'm stuck. Envy his mobility.

A: I know.

Q: Another thing — that the attempt of some of these young white college students, or slightly above that age, who have fallen in love with the idea of entering into the Negro world. Who appropriate the language, certain attitudes, which are supposedly—supposedly Negro's. For instance, the language of jazz, the language of certain exclusive Negro expressions, this has causes a real resistance and a contempt. For these whites, what are they trying to do, move in on us, and ______. A real resistance, and Robert Moses told me, that a man said he's blow up the table in a conference, right in ______ two of these people, 15 minutes of blind ______. A real problem.

A: I wonder if I can explain the problem.

Q: I wonder if you can.

A:

To the best of my knowledge, no, the movement here hasn't
had a lot of white people in it, but it's had some.

This is a little bit different perhaps in this area, because it's part of the tradition.

Q: It's a longer tradition and a longer exposure to this sort of relationship.

a; That's right. For instance, we've had in summer program, 17 white persons right now, from other colleges, and more demands for this than we can supply in numbers. So that our youngsters definitely have not taken I remember one young man I wish I could think of now, who was the most, perhaps the most respected demonstrator among all the, because his courage was beyond any, and his devotion to the cause was beyond anyone's. He was beaten badly in that situation. I think this was, but this young white boy was seriously beaten. I tried to get him, I said, he said -- I made my will.

He said, "I'd make out my will before I left here. I know that I am going to run into difficulties. I think I will." He went. And I didn't want to or his parents.

Q: I suppose the difference between Mississippi, say, and Nashville, is simply a longer exposure, tradition.

A: The differences go deeper than that.

Q: Tell me how.

A: First of all, the educational level is different from ours. You have, well, Tennessee has never been, I don't think, I'm including two western counties on this, first of all, it's been a more highly industrialized, more highly metropolitan state.
It has had very many more institutions of higher learning. The level of education, I think, has had a lot to do with this. Its political leaders, and I don't know whether this is an accident or not, you know more about it than I, has not in the main, built total careers on segregation issues, as has been the case so often in Mississippi politicians. And you cannot preach the hatred, and the segregation in the sense, campaign after campaign after campaign, to semi-literate people, and expect them not to believe it. They do. Now, there have been very few campaigns in this issue. The last one, that involved the issue, was the gubernatorial, no senatorial campaign, involved Kefauver and _______. And _______ beaten in Memphis, from the area from which he comes, this is another, the kind of thing that _______. But the difference I think is serious.

Q: The Memphis the other day, he came out with strong editorial supporting the Civil Rights bill. Very strong editorial, after it had been passed in the house. Said it must be passed in the senate now, without delay, or there'll be very bad trouble. This is a mandate from the people of the United States, and got to be done now. This from the Memphis paper. Some people may say -- well, local politics behind this. Maybe there is. But would this indicate some change?

A: Oh yes, I think perhaps 10 years ago, this would not have been possible. But there's a great political change going on, in Tennessee now, and Memphis politically -- particularly.

Q: You mean the young Negro lawyers active in politics?

A: I mean more than that. Take Tennessee as a whole, for instance. Some 64% of its eligible Negro voters are registered in Tennessee.
q: As opposed to 3 in Mississippi.
A: I didn't know it.
Q: 4, maybe, or 5. It's low
\text{as \ldots something of that sort. But politicians cannot ignore this, it can make a factor. For instance, rand \\ on the potentiality that lies here and the inevitability of the participation in the \\
Also, I think there is enough statesmanship on the part of editors, in a number of state newspapers, to see that anything else is short sighted politics. Tennessee is going to be a state, as \\
politics. A \text{state where industry can come, with assurance that there is going to be \text{racial peace, and people who as the power structure of the state and the city, who are gonna build good schools, have good relations between the racial groups and the minorities, in other words, it's a healthy atmosphere, and I think this pays off. For the entire state. There are people now taking notice.}

Q: Well, here, nobody is going to Jackson, Miss., to build factories right now.
A: If they do, I think they definitely should be pressured.
Q: They should be locked up.
Have you noticed any antisemitism among Negroes in Nashville.
a; I have not.
Q: It's true in some places, of course, very spotty, but it's true in some places. True in Harlem.
A: I can see why it would be \text{in Harlem, but I've encountered none. We have had over the \ldots highly \text{respected citizens in this community, a Jew for the president of the Council, and I know he's going to get a substantial number of votes, because he's highly respected. \ldots being}
Jewish has nothing to do with it.

Q: The same thing. The Jews have been by and large, liberals in their effect on society, and have actually been philanthropists who have given money to civil rights causes, both Negro and white, at the same time, have ________ curious split of intense anti-semitism in some cities, Philadelphia, for example.

A: I can understand Harlem, the landlord is Jewish, and they own a lot of the business in Harlem, and the Negroes hate landlords, I don't care what color they are, particularly in a situation like New York, with all its problems. I don't know as much about New York as I know about Nashville, although I've been in New York.

Q: I was talking to a very very bright, brilliant young woman, I guess you'd say, who's a law student, at law school, and second in her class in the senior year. She's a Negro. She and I had lunch. Started our conversation by saying, I have great hopes of the arrangement in the south, finding some light here, after this crisis has passed, in relationship to the southern whites. She said -- I was born and raised on a farm in Virginia, and I've lived in several parts of the south, and I've been in a lot of southern jails this year. She feels that we are on the verge of some sort of ________ reasonable community. She said, ________ as far as the great northern cities, where there is no human recognition. Here there's recognition, even at the point of a gun.

A: I don't go that far.

Q: After that, there's a possibility of a human recognition.

A: ________ more spokesman in northern cities, in the region, than has been southern Negroes. And I'm not sure that I know the reason for it. I know a little bit about the social situation in
Chicago, Detroit, and the riots that have occurred there.

It remains for me to see, or I have to see, how rapidly the northern sections of the country respond to the problems that it's made, before I can make a judgment.

What is the response of the New York City Board of Education to the de facto segregation.

Q: Please talk about that.

A: What would be the responses to the problem.

But that problem, to my mind, is not serious, as the problem which gives rise to it. One of them, is segregation in housing, which is the problem.

Q: Behind the school problem.

A: Behind the school problem, and the other is employment.

Or to put it more accurately, unemployment, which throws into the streets, of cities like Detroit, Chicago, New York, large numbers as pointed out so well in his book, unemployed and the unemployable Negro. It is going to be difficult for anybody, just what this group is going to be capable of. Because of the frustrated dissatisfied, disappointed, bitter group of young people. And I think, though I use the term, responsiveness, we've got to be there's got to be a fairer approach to employment opportunity there. There's got to be, I think, a breakdown of the segregated housing pattern. This is, these are the things that should have been attacked. The de facto segregation with schools, is an academic matter, is you know. I'm not by any means sure that the method of dealing with the problem, is to bus one group from one community to the other.

Q: You can't do it in Washington, anyway.

A: My feeling is that the job is to build in each of these communities that school that recognizes at the outset, that you're
dealing with a problem, different from, a problem involving educating middle class white children. They're terribly overcrowded, some of the teachers are bitter, by virtue of the fact that they're assigned there in the first instance; I've seen textbook problems that are a disgrace; I have seen a lack of guidance in counselling sensitive to the problems of these youngsters. I've seen some of the poorest teaching I've seen in situation like this. If you start from the assumption, I don't care what the minority is, that this is a group that is partially deprived, you can't assign teachers on the same basis, whatever it has to be in terms of enough people to get a job done, if these people are going to be anything but drags upon the economic system. That's enough, I've talked too long to this point.

Q: Method is going to do much good. Some Negroes in the north have told me that they regard as a tactic, a pressure tactic, not as a solution. A way of dramatizing the problem.

A: Yes, but think one of the things that ought to accompany every pressure tactic, is a clear goal. If you disagree with what is now being done, what is the proposal that you are struggling for. You're going to articulate it. So that everybody understands what the objective is, because how else can you elicit the support of people, who, if they understood it, would.

Q: Well, some people say that the best tactic, is gaining a great deal of support, related to the realistic view of what should be the objective.

A:
Q: Well, I'm gonna thank you. I must go
A: I know you're gonna stay for lunch.
Q: I wish I could stay here for the lunch you offered me.

END OF TAPE TWO

STEPHEN WRIGHT, FEB. 15.