

MR. WARREN: No, no, everything is linked together, in a way. But when you actually come down to the rub of negotiation, the job is where it usually gets tough, isn't it?

MR. YOUNG: Yes, and on this no Negro has said to me that he wants to see a white person replaced. What we are saying is this, is that we think there ought to be equal opportunity in unemployment as well as in employment, that we resent very much-- you know that we're 25 per cent or of the 15 per cent/unemployed, and whites are five or-- to 6, and we think that this situation ought to be changed and that's why we're not buying-- I'm not buying the saying that well, the problem of unemployed of Negroes will be solved only when there's full employment for all Americans, because I know there won't be full employment for all Americans in the foreseeable future and in the meanwhile I don't think that we can continue to have this large number of Negroes unemployed.

MR. WARREN: No, the ratio is preposterous!

MR. YOUNG. That's right.

END OF TAPE 2

MR. GUTWILLIG: I wanted to get back to what--

MR. WARREN: Yes, Mr. Gutwillig.

MR. GUTWILLIG: That Whitney and I have talked about before, and that is the fact that the white American, and Whitney, I think will also include the white

liberal is allowing itself to be diverted from the real confrontation, diverted by the Malcolm Xs and the Adam Clayton Powells and by the techniques or tactics of the revolution, the stall-ins, the incident of the Triborough bridge, people chaining themselves to trains, the white liberal for the first time is being confronted. And speaking as a member of that much abused minority, the white liberal, it seems to me that Whitney is right. We're shrinking back with nervousness and fright at the fact of the confrontation.

MR. YOUNG: It's almost as if they were desperately seeking excuses not to participate or some kind of rationale to withdraw. When you consider that only a handful of Negroes are actually participating in some of these extreme activities, this kind of blind mass indictment of the whole race of people is so illogical, and to further use that as an excuse to say not to pass the Civil Rights Bill is so illogical, because if the same standards were adopted for white ~~what~~ people it would mean that because white people bombed little children and churches and because Oswald was white and Ruby was white, then white people shouldn't have their civil rights, the rest of them.

MR. WARREN: This doesn't mean that one should necessarily endorse a particular tactic or particular act or policy, though.

MR. YOUNG: No, this is a question of emphasis and focus, and at the present time there's much more concern and expression

about the acts engaged in by a few Negroes where the best judgment isn't used than they're about the more tragic present plight of Negro citizens produces sometimes this kind of desperate attempt. And the other thing is is that they fail to say that offtimes that it's activities of Negroes and whites. The Triborough bridge is an example of where three educated white people and three illiterate unemployed Negroes were engaged, and yet the whole civil rights movement and all Negroes got blamed and warned. But I have some reservations about why our friends, like Senator Keating and Senator Humphrey and Mr. Javits, the President and all feel compelled to say to Negroes: You are going to be hurt, it's not helping your cause, to warn us, to caution us about restraint. Negroes have shown more restraint than any group of people. Instead of pointing out that we must get rid of the conditions, and I would like to have seen after the stall-ins editorials that would have been commanding Negroes for their good judgment and for following their leadership, and not editorials that were taunting the Negroes for an activity that fizzled.

MR. WARREN: That was bad tactics.

MR. YOUNG: Yes, they said they fizzled, and they got frightened out and it was poor organization, and that the police department was so well organized; and they never once commended Negroes for the great restraint and pointed out again to-- into the general society that this type of

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restraint is so commendable in the face of the great suffering. You see, what's been happening here is that all the Negro community can see and they say this to us, is you propose the Marshall Plan to get better schools and better hospitals and better jobs and all this, and the white community says no, no, you can't do that. And that's preferential treatment. And the NAACP proposed shortly after that a program of mass registration and selective voting to reward your friends and punish enemies. The papers said no, no, no, you can't do that, that's unhealthy, that's bloc voting. And so the stall-in comes along and they say no, no, that's unhealthy, that'll lead to violence. Well, all we're hearing from the responsible white community is what we shouldn't do and what they are against, but the problem still remains and people want to know what are they for, and so Negro leadership at this time, it isn't enough to deplore these other things like stall-ins, it isn't enough to applaud Negroes for having a dignified march on Washington. Negro leaders, responsible Negro leaders must be given some victories, because we stand out in the midst of unemployed people and hold up nothing. You know we're like people in a war without ammunition - we have nothing to hold up to say because you followed this path and this course of action and showed good judgment, you now have in Harlem new schools and better teachers and principals and new housing. We don't have anything, and I don't know how long the white

responsible community figures that it can continue to not give any victories to Negro leaders to hold up to and expect them to continue to be leaders and to influence their people.

MR. WARREN: That's clear, I should think. Let me change the subject back to something else for a moment. Let's cut back into history for a moment. You remember Nierdahl's theory of what would have been a good reconstruction of the South after the Civil War: First, two elements being 1/ a compensation to slave-owners for emancipated slaves, to be paid to the Federal Government. Second, expropriation of land from planters but payment for the land. Third, distribution of land to the freedmen, but-- not as a gift but a long-termed financial arrangement plus a lot of other things too. How do you react to those three things? Do you have an emotional reaction to them or

MR. YOUNG: I think they were very sound. I think that there was a planned procedure there that made sense, that would have tended to make the white Southerner feel that he wasn't giving up all and getting nothing in return. I think it was realistic, as far as giving the Negro a chance to catch up. I think the tragedy was in the Tilden Compromise in that situation where he-- they withdrew the troops from the South.

MR. WARREN: That's ten years later.

MR. YOUNG: That's right, but that was the thing that really broke it down. I think they were still on their way until that Tilden Compromise.

MR. WARREN: Excuse me. In general, society was. There was certainly better relations than there was after.

MR. YOUNG: Well, you know the average story-- picture you get in reading the history books is that the Negroes who were serving in positions of increasing power even in the United States Senate and the Congress and all this, were illiterate, vicious people who had been put in there by the carpetbaggers to embarrass and to be vindictive toward the South. It was a way of ridiculing and all, and this just isn't true. Many of these people were very skilful people, very able people, and as you know during that period there was no thought of the separate schools and separate restaurants.

MR. WARREN: That came very late.

MR. YOUNG: This came much later.

MR. WARREN: You don't have any-- what I'm getting at is this, now. Either you've got to have no emotional resistance to those who oppose us--

MR. YOUNG: No.

MR. WARREN: This is not always true, of course. That is, some people-- white people or Negro -- we'll say no less condoning a moral wrong, you see. Well, that's an insult to me even when I say that you have to have the slaveholder compensated for an emancipation. This evokes some deep-seated emotional reaction sometimes, not always--

MR. YOUNG: But slavery had not been by the society at that point adjudged morally wrong. It's like saying now

that smoking, you know, is morally wrong; now that we now know that it's harmful and will lead to an early death. It may be now, but it was not during the period.

MR. WARREN: We're not legally wrong, anyway.

MR. YOUNG: That's right, that's right.

MR. WARREN: Morally it may be something quite different. Let me ask you just for a quick chip-shot view of several characters from American history: What do you think of Jefferson?

MR. YOUNG: I'm really not familiar enough with the writings--

MR. WARREN: What I'm getting at is-- about there is that here is a person who is a slaveholder, you see, and author of the Declaration of Independence. This creates some complication of feeling sometimes.

MR. YOUNG: Yes.

MR. WARREN: What about Lincoln?

MR. YOUNG: Well, I have mixed feelings about Lincoln. I've read both sides of Lincoln: one that he was basically disinterested in freeing of the slaves and was driven into this because it was necessary in order to save the Union, but if he could have saved the Union without freeing the slaves, that he would have done and he is purported to have said something similar to this.

MR. WARREN: He said it.

MR. YOUNG: That's what I understand. I-- On the other hand, I'm inclined to feel that by reading this man more in

depth, that he basically wanted to free the slaves, basically had real decent impulses, and if he made such a statement it was what he felt to be the political and tactical thing to do. But it's difficult for me to believe that a man who could do and say some other things that he did do, did not have some basic repulsion to the concept of slavery, and so I'm willing to still accord to this man the honors and the credit for being the emancipator.

MR. WARREN: He would say things like this too, of course. "I will say," says Lincoln, "that I am not nor ever have been in favor of bringing about in any way the social and political equality of the white and black races," and so forth. Well, that was after the Emancipation Proclamation, things like that. I mean what does it signify in terms of feelings, your feelings in regard to historical process.

MR. YOUNG: Yes, I recognize the limited contacts that the white people, any white people had with Negroes of that period, and probably they were victimized by the kind of anthropology and other things they were reading which at that point would suggest basic inferiority, and this was the framework from which they were speaking. I think it's unfair, as it is today, for Negroes to judge Booker T. Washington in today's context, you know, as against yesterday's situation, and I think you'd have to judge Lincoln in the context of his climate and his contacts and his knowhow, and in that context I still would give him this kind of credit.

MR. WARREN: You were saying that we can't deal with moral problems in absolute; we have to deal in terms of historical context.

MR. YOUNG: That's right. I-- let me tell you a little story I once heard. A group of Negroes were trying to get a mayor of a certain southern city to employ Negro nurses, and after a great deal of effort he finally said, "Well, now look, I can get those nurses in there, if you will promise me you don't care how I do it." And they said all right. And he said, "Now don't get angry with me when you hear anything-- when you hear how I do it." And they said no, we just want Negro nurses in there. Then he said publicly, he went to the hospital people and ✓ he went to the Legislature and he said, "I think it's a doggone dirty shame ~~that~~ that our fine white girls from nice homes and nice backgrounds have to rub and scrub and wash the private parts of these black Negroes."

MR. WARREN: That's a famous story.

MR. YOUNG: Yes, and they agreed with this and immediately passed a law saying that there must be Negro nurses. This is what I'm talking about. I say a part of this might well have been in Lincoln's-- at least I'm willing to give him the benefit of it, you see.

MR. WARREN: Yes. Well, you've made-- you've clearly answered my question. What about Robert E. Lee?

MR. YOUNG: I'm not that much of a student of-- the Civil

War, is something that-- the past is really something I don't deal with too much. I should, I suppose, more.

MR. WARREN: These are very highly emotional issues, of some course, to southern people.

MR. YOUNG: Well, they're apparently for those who find security only in the past, like the white who uses the Confederate hat and the Confederate flag and all. It's like th adult who wants to revert back to his mother's womb. This was the only period of security he knew in his life, when he felt adequate. I think one reverts offtimes to the past and the past's symbols when they feel incapable of meeting the challenges of the present. I think it's good to know something about the past including Plato and everything else, when it can be useful in dealing with the present, not as a refuge and an escape.

MR. WARREN: Let me read you a quotation from Merdahl's collaborator--

MR. YOUNG: Arnold Rose?

MR. WARREN: Rose, it must be Rose. Yes. "The whole tendency of the Negro history movement-- not his history but his propaganda-- has been ~~to~~ encourage the average Negro to escape the realities, the actual achievements and the actual failures of the present. Although the movement consciously tends to build race pride it may also cause Negroes unconsciously to recognize that group pride is built partly on delusion, and therefore may result in a devaluation of themselves for being forced to resort to such self-deception."

MR. YOUNG: Max Yes, tried to point out that I thought that this group pride and solidarity was understandable--

MR. WARREN: Yes, good.

MR. YOUNG: -- at this moment and is positive as a counter-balance to the inferior feelings that the environment had caused Negroes to suspect that they had given to the-- as a result of the treatment and all the symbols and signs that suggested their inferiority, and I thought that this growing pride was to be expected as they observed a number of things happening that happened even before Montgomery and Tuskegee, the emergence of African nations and all this. But I do think it's temporary; I would hope that it's temporary, because unless this new group pride and solidarity doesn't-- which prompts this current aggressive thrust for equality, if it does not achieve this and this pride is not used by the society to accomplish true equality, then I think it can degenerate into a kind of chauvinism and nationalism and to a devaluation of the group's ability. But I think this is left largely in the hands of the responsible white society, how it will utilize this newly found pride and not get frightened by it but see it as a positive thing to build on in terms of education of Negroes and everything else.

MR. GUTWILLIG: Whitney has a he's interested in where he says this country is a problem-oriented society, that the white community sees everything

in terms of problems rather than solutions. This is what he's touched on here.

MR. YOUNG: Yes, again, we're seeing integration, integration by too many white people is seen either as something to be abhored and fought, resisted completely, because it will bring in its wake all kinds of problems, or either it's seen as something that's to be delayed until, say, the day after I die, or else it's something to be grudgingly tolerated as if one takes castor oil, it's inevitable, I know I've got to take it and it's probably good for me but I don't want it. And I mean this is consistent with the American inability to think deeply, and to look for easy solutions, and we are largely-- we react to crisis, we don't benefit from past experiences. We wait for accidents to happen on a corner before we put up a green light or for the bridge to fall down before we repair it. We don't act; we react, and again we-- a people that sees everything as a problem, not as an idea to be explored but as a problem to be dealt with and grudgingly to be met at a real personal sacrifice, and that's why I think we've got to begin to think of integration not as a problem but as an opportunity for a country to prove the validity of its system, of its economic system, of its Judaic-Christian convictions, of its democratic way of life. The Negro is a barometer of the validity of all of these now, and it's the first real test that this country has had, because in

the final analysis, as Franklin Roosevelt said, the test of a country in all of these systems that I've mentioned, is not to what extent it can give more to those who have, but to what extent it can give to those who have not; and unless this country is able to meet this challenge, then a serious question can be raised about all these institutions and its validity, because too many Americans think of-- when asked what does being an American mean, will talk about refrigerators and cars and will not talk about basic freedoms and opportunities, and this, I think, is going to-- is a real test of all that we hold very dear. If it doesn't work for the Negro in this country, then it's not likely to be the most appealing and attractive article for 75 per cent of the world's population that's non-white, that's shopping around for some ways of life to adopt.

MR. WARREN: That's clear, I think. You know I don't want to keep you longer. There are other things I'd like to ask you but it is five o'clock and I don't want to--

MR. YOUNG: I hope you have the basic--

MR. WARREN: Well, this is fine.

MR. YOUNG: Good

END OF TAPE

April 29th, 1964