

1. 10/30/63

WELL, REV. PETERS, JUST A MOMENT AGO YOU RAISED A QUESTION IN MY MIND WHICH IS DISCUSSED QUITE WIDELY AND NOT ALWAYS WITH THE SAME OUTCOME -- YOU SAID THERE WERE SIX PEOPLE IN THE STATE THAT WERE THOROUGHLY COMMITTED TO THE CAUSE -- THIS RAISES IN MY MIND THE QUESTION OF WHAT IS THE ROLE, ^{S/} AND YOU ENVISAGE IT, OF ^{the} "WHITE LIBERAL" IN THE MOVEMENT?

REV. PETERS: First I would like to suggest that I have many criteria also of determining negroes who are really dedicated to this struggle and I more or less classify negroes in three general groups -- those who are complacent and lackadaisical and unconcerned about this struggle and view it as a struggle that is really someone else's struggle; those in the #2 category -- the negroes who are willing to give their money and their time for discussions in the north or in the safe areas; and the third group, of course, is that militant group ready to go wherever necessary to do whatever necessary for this cause. They are personally identified with it and ready to die for it, if necessary, though this just isn't their aim. Well, in my mind, the white persons are in this same general breakdown with the exception, of course, I suppose like the persons in #1, are rather not unconcerned about the problem but are dedicated to fight against it. The half dozen persons I mentioned who are really dedicated and whose motives I would not question, are the persons who have gone into the South to make known their feelings. about the matter on more than one occasion and for some reason I can have complete confidence in them whereas there are

2. 10/30/63

many other white persons, of course, who give large sums of money and talk about the problem just to ease their troubled consciences and there are others who simply feel that this integration struggle is right and so they want to have a share in solving this problem, but it never becomes personal with them. There are also those simply hypocritical about it; they will say words that'll please whomever they're with at that particular time. These persons, of course, cannot be trusted to my mind. I hope that answers the question about the persons I feel are really dedicated to solving this problem. Though I mentioned only a half dozen of the hundreds of persons that we have in the state who are -- well, for instance, the march on Washington.

THAT'S VERY CLARIFYING. I WANT TO GO QUICKLY, FURTHER ALONG -- THIS IS IN A DIFFERENT DIRECTION -- IF I MAY. I HAVE READ AND HEARD FROM VARIOUS QUARTERS THAT SAID THAT THE MOVEMENT SHOULD BE PURELY NEGRO; THAT THE WHITE MAN SHOULD HAVE NO PART IN IT. THAT THOSE WHO TRY TO TAKE PART SHOULD BE KEPT OUT OF ANY POINT OF SIGNIFICANT ACTION. THIS SHOULD BE ENTIRELY A NEGRO MOVEMENT. I HAVE HEARD THIS IN SOME HIGH QUARTERS, AS A MATTER OF FACT. MR. JOHNSON?

MR. JOHNSON: I think Jim and I were sort of agreed on this - that we welcome help from all sources that are sincere. I think that almost all of the most respected negro leaders, most of them anyway, would also agree with us

3. 10/30/63

on this point. We are too much in debt already to many people who are white, who have stayed on the front lines in this cause, in both the North and the South. We are too much in debt to some of those in the North especially, who behind closed doors, have made enemies ^{that they might be} of ~~the NABR~~ -- our friends -- and we can't see anything particularly advantageous in saying that all black folks were leading in this thing, they were all in the front lines, they were holding the reins, so to speak, of the horses. We can't say this at all. There is something

I MUST SAY THAT WHAT CONCERNS ME MOST IN THAT WHOLE QUESTION, IF I MAY INTERPOLATE IT, IS THAT IT'S NOT A QUESTION OF A WHITE MAN'S ROLE IN THE MOVEMENT, BUT LAYING THE GROUNDWORK FOR LIVING TOGETHER AFTER THE MOVEMENT IS FINISHED, AFTER IT IS COMPLETED, THAT IS HIS WORK. SO I AM RATHER DISTURBED THAT YOU HAVE TAKEN, WITHOUT QUALIFICATION, ^{the} THAT REALLY THE MOVEMENT ISN'T SOLELY THE CONCERN AND BY NEGROES, AND NEGRO LEADERSHIP. AND THIS ADMITTED COOPERATION.

MR. JOHNSON: Jim has been in Albany, Georgia, he's been in parts of Alabama and other parts of the South, and he has seen, I am sure, as I have seen on several occasions how people, especially those who are going through the thickest part of the struggle, welcome everybody who is their ally. I'm not too sure even that there is any alternate goal in having negro leadership at the front in the long-range program, I don't think where we are trying to build up home

rule for ourselves and everything else, I think we should take the struggle as it comes and welcome the help as it comes, from whatever quarters. I think your interpolation is correct, ~~as typified~~. I think those that hold to that rule -- want the negro to hold the reins, etc., stay in front, etc., I think they are in the distinct minority but these days when you can grab *the press headlines*

they feel there is a difference on the part of the majority. They probably get more attention or --

REV. PETERS: At the same time, I would like to explain that it's very important that the persons who are leading are definitely dedicated to the principles involved and the persons who seem to be suggesting black supremacy are probably ~~entertaining~~ *claiming* that only a negro understands a negro. I would trust myself in a demonstration under the leadership of *Casper* ~~Coughlin~~, Forsberg, or Shapiro or McGuire, as quickly as I would any negro leader because I am convinced of their dedication to the solution of the problem. However, there have been problems in the upper echelons of the NAACP where *Elyton* ~~President~~ Powell for instance, suggested that certain legislation that he was trying to present, the NAACP was against. And of course this bit of ~~insight~~ *understanding* that many of us are not aware of the details of, this causes truly some of the problems but by and large the statement which, up to a few moments ago was true, that we are not seeking all negro leadership -- there was a problem

as you know, in the march on Washington, when one of the Bishops who was taking part in the program said he would not go on if John Lewis' speech was read as it was written. Well now, this was not acceptable to John Lewis, but when other negro leaders had this same feeling, it was done but I doubt seriously if his speech would have been changed just on the basis of the Archbishop who made the statement. I think this shows that in this ^{struggle} ~~trouble~~ the most important thing is not whether the person is white or black, but how deeply concerned he is about this question. I know many negroes/^{whose judgment I would trust} ~~I can't~~ trust in a demonstration and I ^{sure} ~~sure~~ hope this should be the spirit of it all. I think the White Liberals have many reasons for their support and the reasons ^{do not} ~~do not~~ really interest me as long as they are really dedicated to solving the problem. Then, of course, you'll say they may be communist-inspired. As a negro, I am seeking my freedom from the injustices that have been cast upon me and if a person is only trying to help me, ~~trying to help me~~ ^{sub} ~~keep~~ this freedom, whatever his personal reasons are -- of course it's impossible for me to explore his mind -- until he admits he is a Communist, I want that support.

I SUPPOSE THE ^{AP} POINTMENT OF MR. GREENBERG PROVOKED THIS LINE OF DISCUSSION MORE FREELY THAN ANYTHING ELSE THAT HAS OCCURRED -- IN THE DEFENSE DIVISION ^{REAL} OR ^{THE NAACP} ~~DEFENSE AGENCY OR WHATEVER YOU CALL IT.~~ THAT RAISES ANOTHER QUESTION -- HOW DEEPLY DO YOU THINK ANTI-SEMITISM

6. 10-30-63

APPEARS IN SOME QUARTERS, ~~COMING FROM NEGROES AND OTHER PLACES BY~~
~~NEGROES~~ -- HOW DEEPLY DO YOU FEEL THAT IS GROUNDED. DOES IT APPEAR
AROUND HERE, FOR INSTANCE. ARE THERE ANY ANTI-SEMITICS AROUND HERE?

REV. PETERS: I don't think any of us have seen evidence of any degree
of anti-semitism in the integration movement or in any
other areas of negro life that I have been aware of.

MR. JOHNSON: I want to follow through on that because sometimes
you find yourself ^{at tea or lunch} with a group of friends and they ^{tossing the ball}
have brought up this question quite often and it ^{with some good Jewish friends & they}
^{bring up the question set you} seems to me that it's growing, etc. ^{and I just want}
~~and I just want~~ to say I don't see any around here. I don't hear ^{it} from
the common people -- I only hear from the persons I ^{my own kind at from some}
integrated with 20 years ago who talk about the Jew
having a store and all that ~~and that~~ and making all the
money. Maybe somewhere in Harlem or somewhere else
around the country there is and I am wondering if
somebody is trying to make it a problem, and if it is
a problem, I wish someone would give it study - some
thorough study and have someone point out things
definitely. I doubt if our people really know what
a Jew is.

*And this is, mind you
wonder if we
are doing in a
vacuum around
here*

REV. PETERS: In further comment on that also, here in Bridgeport
we've had problems. We have been wrestling with the
problem of slum housing and in a few instances these
slum landlords happened ~~to~~ be Jews and the rabbis have
let us know that they will take a stand with us against
these slum landlords whenever necessary. Mr. Ribicoff

7. 10/30/63

came from Washington about a month ago and he talked to ^{a group} clergymen because we were dissatisfied with the speech he gave ^{condemning the March on} Washington, and right after the march on Washington he spoke to 50 clergymen in New Haven ~~and he was~~ explaining his position and he explained ours and the rabbi was right there with us explaining his disappointment as well as our grievance. ^{More degrees than I've seen or know} ~~There was not a bit of anti-semitism in this thing at all, not in this struggle, nor in the general negotiations. There was none witnessed or experienced.~~

ONE EPISODE I WAS REFERRING ^{TO} THE SECRETARY OF THE NAACP IN PHILADELPHIA, HIS NAME IS ~~HE~~ WAS REBUKED BY

~~GROUP OF~~ THE NATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR STATEMENTS HE HAD MADE ABOUT ^{Jews or} LANDLORDS AND MERCHANTS IN A NEIGHBORHOOD WHICH IS PREDOMINANTLY NEGRO -- A SORT OF HARLEM, I SUPPOSE.

MR. JOHNSON: That was why I said ^{we may be coming from it some.} ~~there may be some of this in Harlem.~~ I was brought up in Philadelphia. ^{There} Here we did have a feeling about the Jewish merchant on the corner -- we talked about it -- many negroes felt that ^{that Jew} ~~the merchant~~ on the corner got all the money, etc. etc. ^{in the big} I doubt if ~~many of the large cities or most of them can make a~~ ^{business do make the mistake of talking like this} statement like this, for the most part, I would ^{But for the most part there} ~~say that there is no real increase of this kind of~~ feeling. ~~Most of the people in Philadelphia are pre-~~ ~~judiced against anti-semitism.~~ I think there may be some of this in the country though I think it is more in the respectable clubs. They may have an underhanded

*We should typed
the ...*

campaign to pit the negro against the Jew, I don't know. In most places where I hear of anti-semitism, it comes from the white man, not from the negro. For example, I have a friend -- we were together every day in school and I knew this fellow liked negroes ^{and I felt} ~~but~~ ~~we just didn't get along and after a while, I found out~~ ~~we talked about it and after a while, I found out~~ ~~he just didn't like me.~~ ~~Finally we exploded and we~~ talked about it and after that we got along together.

THIS IS A VERY COMMON SITUATION, AT LEAST IT IS NOT TOO RARE IN MY EXPERIENCE, TO FIND A PERSON WHO IS ANTI-SEMITIC AND PRO-NEGRO AT THE SAME MOMENT. THAT IS NOT UNCOMMON AMONG WHITE PEOPLE IN MY EXPERIENCE. IT'S ILLOGICAL, ANYWAY. CUTTING BACK TO THE QUESTION WE TOUCHED ON EARLIER ABOUT THE WHITE MAN IN THE SOUTH -- DID YOU NOTICE IN YOUR EXPERIENCE IN VIRGINIA AND WASHINGTON AND THROUGH THE SOUTH -- IS THERE ANY DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE YOUNG PEOPLE -- THE NEW GENERATION -- AND PEOPLE NOW MIDDLE-AGED AND OVER -- OR DO YOU FIND ABOUT THE SAME PATTERN -- ABOUT THE SAME PROPORTION OF

REV. PETERS: I have found in the deep South, especially in cities where we have tensions dealing with our problem, that the only persons near you were usually from somewhere else and were in the struggle -- that this was one of the problems in cities under tensions like Birmingham, Ala., Jackson, Miss. and Augusta. The line of communication between whites and negroes is severed so completely until there isn't any way to see ~~how~~ ^{who} the Liberals are or what age the Liberals are in the community. Of course I know this doesn't ^{get at} give us

the age question ~~but when it comes to these tense~~
~~in the south it's different.~~ In the North, I still
can't pinpoint any specific age. I find Liberals
of all ages and persons with ^{fully} different attitudes
of all ages. I think the weight would be toward the
college set but I can't make it any more specific
than that.

MR. JOHNSON: I want to go back to about 12 or 13 years ago, to an
experience in the South -- especially at the University
of Virginia and at William and Mary. We spent about
three or four days on the campuses of these universities.
Students came from all over the South - Georgia, Mississippi
^{for a debating session} and everybody stayed on the campus. ~~EP~~ We had eight
or nine days there we would have loved it. This group
certainly was far more liberal than their parents.
In fact, we even saw students of these cities were
different from the teachers. The kids who were hob-
nobbing with them and debating with them, expressing
thoughts and views. These kids had a real sincere and
honest, outgoing spirit, ^{the} democratic spirit. If they
had a chance, you felt that they would break their
molds ^{then and} all of the way and I think in the present struggle
some of them had broken those molds and had sat at
lunch counters and have left college campuses and gone
to negro colleges as expected. They were different
from their teachers and we realized that some of their
teachers were ready for it too. I have generally felt
in the large cities of the South especially where the

colleges are and the college community is, there is a great reservoir of strength and support for the cause of the negroes' freedom and democracy. In the North, I ^{have} found it different, ^{especially} in communities like Stratford, for example, where there is not as much, believe it or not, communication as there is in some cities in the South. In many ^{cities} cases in the South, ~~the~~ whites ^{don't} ~~may~~ ~~not mix~~ with the negroes, and so forth and so on, and there may be lines of ^{demarcation,} ~~democracy,~~ but here sometimes the lines are even sharper. I don't know your community but like in Southport and Westport maybe I guess ^{the} they hold true; or take Lordship, for example, I probably could make a survey there and find far more prejudice than I would in the South in many cities, among persons of the young group. In a few instances where the churches are taking hold and trying to open channels of communication and channels of understanding, ⁺ Jim is going in and so am I, to speak to the youth group, ~~There~~ we get questions that let us know that the white young person of today has not come to grips with this problem -- they haven't begun to think about what they see in the headlines. I think they are a more reserved generation because they don't understand the problem and I think there are far more communities like this in the North than I could find in the South. I'd like to explain this more fully but I don't know how to do it.

11. 10/30/63

THERE IS THE QUESTION OF THE PHRASE THAT HAS BEEN RAISED MANY TIMES FOR ~~THE~~ FORTY YEARS IN VARIOUS FORMS, ~~IT~~ ^{IT} APPEARS IN OSWALD SPENGLER, AND IT APPEARS IN OTHER PHRASING IN FRAZIER'S GREAT WORK. THERE IS THE GENERAL ~~MOVEMENT~~ ^{SHIFT} OF THE RACE QUESTION OVER TO AN ECONOMIC AND CLASS QUESTION. THE CLASS QUESTION ABSORBS THE RACE QUESTION. IT BECOMES THEN A MATTER OF ECONOMIC JUSTICE PRIOR TO ^{THE} ~~A~~ MATTER OF RACIAL EQUALITY -- ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY RATHER THAN RACIAL EQUALITY AS A KEY TO THE PROBLEM ^{OF} RACE. I WONDER ^{WHAT} ~~HOW MUCH~~ THAT QUESTION EVOKES IN YOUR [^] MIND

MR. JOHNSON: I think it is unfortunate, although I'm afraid it might be true; that maybe this is some form of saying the same thing eventually about economic matters, motivation and everything else. I think this is unfortunate but probably true. I might cite some of the appeals that are made in this struggle for people to do the right thing. It is not always on a plane of racial equality but more on a basis of, look here, let's run the gamut on this struggle of economic equality. If I ^{cite} ~~quote~~ this correctly, I think this is also reflected in the negro in America who has achieved an economic sense eventually and forgets in a sense, the ^{racial} ~~original~~ struggle, ~~about~~ the fact that we should want all of our people to be free. I thank God for men like Jackie Robinson and others who over and over again say, Look here, you think I've got it made, but I haven't got it made as long as there isn't racial equality for all people, ^{and} many people will not experience for many years to come, I feel, this

*This is the
fact!*

12. 10/30/63

sense of equality but I think they all have a sense of pride ~~and humor~~ that can be ~~depended on~~ even if they don't have a dime in their pockets. I think it is unfortunate that it is on this plane and that this is certainly a part of our American way of life.

accepted for what they are

REV. PETERS: I'd like to look for a moment at the other side of the coin here. The negro is on the bottom of the economic totem pole. Some may say someone has to be but why the negro and yet segregation has caused this. Here in Bridgeport where negroes ^{are able} ~~used~~ to get good jobs in many cases, if you go through the factory you will see that the negro is still on the bottom. He may be making \$2.50 an hour, but this is still the low level in that ^{particular} place and the suggestions ~~or words~~ that the negro is the last hired and the first fired isn't a joke. It's a reality, ^{that} ~~and~~ brings into focus a lot of problems for the negro and these are economic problems. You might remember a few months ago they were demonstrating in New York at the Downstate medical center construction site, I believe it was, for jobs and as one of the ministers told me at one of the mass meetings, these are jobs that pay from eight to twelve thousand a year for men who wear overalls, and we want our share. The negro hasn't been able to get the job, and in many ways this in itself is a caste system. This has made it impossible for many negroes to rent, for instance, the kind of apartment they would like to rent. We have our problem here with the slum landlords. Why?

Because a negro doesn't make enough money to get an apartment in the north end. They require that you make 4 times the monthly rent in salary, so he goes to the slum landlord who will allow him to rent even if his monthly rent is $1/3$ or $1/2$ of his total monthly salary. ^{the slum} Some landlords have no limitations. Segregation then, does have its companionship with economics, and the negro, as you also know, has found many ways to work economic boycotts to get what he wants. I know this isn't exactly your question but the negro has realized that economics go to the heart of this and so negroes have used their buying power to gain jobs for negroes. You see this whole economic structure came out of the difficulties in the deep South. A man who now owns one of the largest shoe stores in Columbia, S.C. went into a store some fifty years ago to buy a pair of shoes. He tried them on and the clerk started to wrap them up and he said - well, that isn't the pair I want and the clerk said when a negro puts his foot in a shoe here it is wrapped up for him -- nobody else is going to want it. The man started his own shoe store. Economic pressure then is the one thing that has caused business in the South to be far beyond negro business in the North and they run rather close together -- the economics of it all -- it becomes a caste system: a second-class system of citizenship; the negro being second in class in the type of job he can have; and this restricts his housing

abilities, this restricts his educational possibilities and many other things. Economics have a lot to do with it. And this is why the F.E.C. section in the Civil Rights Bill is so important. This is also why the March on Washington wasn't just for freedom but for jobs also, because we feel this is really the first step to full integration.

SOME PEOPLE, OF COURSE, GO SO FAR AS TO SAY THIS IS THE KEY -- THE KEY TO IT ALL. THERE ARE EMOTIONAL DIFFERENCES THOUGH THAT CAN BE TAKEN AROUND THAT POINT AS YOU TALK TO DIFFERENT PEOPLE -- SOME PEOPLE WOULD ~~EXEMPT~~ ^{RESENT} THE INTRODUCTION OF ECONOMICS ^{into the} ~~AS~~ QUESTION AS SOMEHOW BEING IRRELEVANT TO ~~THE MATTER OF~~ THE DEFINITION OF ~~THE~~ QUESTION OF PERSONAL EQUALITY.

MR. JOHNSON: I think I happen to be one of those who sort of resent it. ^{get to have} ~~We are going to have to face a stubborn fight~~ ^{fact} ~~but~~ it's there, and for the average man in the street this is the meaning of equality -- the fact that he can get the job he wants, go into a store and buy what he wants and buy the house that he wants, etc., earn what the white man can earn at Avco who is doing the same work and if he has the same talent, etc. This is what is, but what I think we ought to keep before the people is the man as an individual, as a person, a man as a human being, etc. I am going through one of the worst phases of my life watching these stupid debates and the stupid things coming to us through TV about civil rights. ^v We have gone pretty far,

we've done pretty good, we've got a good bill. [“] ~~A bill~~
~~is never good~~. It's simply expedient but not good. I
 think you could call it right -- it may be communicably
 sound or communicably expedient, but whatever you want
 to call it, it can't be good and I think in terms of
 another plane -- unless it recognized the stubborn fact
 that a man's a man for all of his skin, all of his
 color, all of that. The negro ^{can't} ~~could~~ not be satisfied
 with any kind of bill that says -- on this street you
 can go, in this store, and the next one maybe you can't,
 that one you can and the next one you can't, because
 the government says so. There is something about this
 whole business that doesn't touch me at all, that I
 feel is so hypocritical, that the negro instead of
 getting happier, ~~he~~ ought to be getting more bitter
 than ever before in the next 5 or 6 years. We ought to
 be really fed up to our noses right now with the kind
 of political footballing that goes on -- they say --
 "look now, you are making progress but slow." This is
 against the person and this is against the sense of
~~the image of~~ ^{the image of} ~~limited~~ God that I know is in me and I know as a human
 being and the sense of dignity I've got, I feel that
 anything -- political expediency, economic equality --
 anything except to say that I am in the image of God
 and that I was created in this inalienable right and
 should have had it yesterday.

16. 10/30/63

HOW MUCH DIFFERENCE DO YOU THINK IS THERE BETWEEN SAY THE SON OF A SEMI-STARVING AND DISPOSSESSED MINER IN THE EASTERN KENTUCKY COAL FIELDS, ^{where} ~~WITH~~ STARVATION ALL OVER THE PLACE AND WHERE THE CHILD HAS NO CHANCE, OR LITTLE CHANCE OF EDUCATION, ~~WHERE HE HAS NO POLITICAL INFLUENCE AND NO CHANGE TO RECEIVE POLITICAL INFLUENCE -- IN POVERTY --~~ AND THE NEGRO CHILD IN SIMILAR CIRCUMSTANCES. NOW LET ME SAY I RECOGNIZE THE DIFFERENCE -- I SHOULD LIKE TO HEAR YOU SPEAK OF THE NATURE OF THE DIFFERENCE.

REV. PETERS: First, the white child has, even in the circumstances you describe, certain advantages over the negro with things set up in our country as they presently are. The first thing this family would do would be to apply for state welfare or its equivalent in that state. Now, there are some places where the negro is treated equally in ^{welfare fields} ~~a similar field~~ and there are some places where he is not. In the District of Columbia for instance, the welfare program is operated or handled and supervised by some Southern Senators who have gone to great lengths to harass the negro in particular, even those who must have welfare; they have gone to great lengths and have had many persons put off for minor violations or ~~violations~~ of minor infractions of the rules. Now this white lad, or his parents, would come in contact with this, and then there is always the underlying possibility that he could find a way out of his miasma and that if he does, he becomes a totally free man, while the negro, no matter what height he has reached -- a Ralph Bunche, or others --

he can't get out of this. You see the hope is there, at least. It's like being in service -- the enlisted men complain about the privileges that the officers have. The only difference, in this racial situation, is that the negro can never be discharged from this service. It's a service ~~and~~ life he must always live with and forever complain about ~~and~~ unless our cries are heard, complain forever about the injustices of it all. I know this doesn't answer all of the questions that have been raised about the political situation of this poor lad in Kentucky and the comparisons of it all but if he has no political influence certainly the negro doesn't in similar circumstances. Even a negro in better circumstances has a limited degree of political influence. I would think then that the two lads are equal|basically ~~in the matter I mentioned about welfare, with~~ except the white boy hoping to get out of it and some day become president of the United States. He can hope for this, and hope is rather important in the lives of many people.

MR. JOHNSON: I don't know if I can add anything to this but I think, too, that somewhere along the line of this negro child's life, he always runs into the possibility of saying to himself: this is happening to us ^{first} because we're negroes. Right or wrong as that may be, ~~it's so~~ ^{not involving me. But} and may be due to situations ^{now} somewhere along the long because he gains knowledge of the American scene, he gains know-
ledge of his religion. Whether it is so or not, he will

identify that his suffering ^a as a part of the overall picture and he is suffering because he is a negro and this and that wouldn't have happend to him if he had not been a negro and his family had not been negro. I feel this wouldn't happen to a white fellow who wouldn't have to cross this line in his life -- he faces the real facts -- that it is because of a situation that existed in a coal mine, etc. This, ^{question} of course, is as tough ^{over} as in economy and I don't know ^{that} ^{might be} how I put myself ^a into it.

CAN I GET SOMETHING THERE ASIDE FROM YOUR REMARKS -- THAT SOMETIMES HE BLAMES ON THE FACT OF HIS BEING A NEGRO, THINGS THAT ARE NOT ACTUALLY RELATED TO MATTERS OF HIS RACE. THEY ARE MATTERS OF EITHER HIS PERSONAL BAD LUCK, OR MATTERS OF BAD TRAINING THAT MIGHT BE TRACED BACK TO ^{his being a} THE NEGRO, ALTHOUGH NOT DIRECTLY, OR FAULTS OF CHARACTER OR MATTERS OF JUDGMENT, ^{and} ~~NOT~~ THIS BECOMES ~~AS~~ A KIND OF BLANK ⁺ EASY ALIBI UNDER THE GUISE OF SELF-PITY, ^{a device for} ~~IN~~ AVOIDING CRITICISM. IS THAT WHAT I WAS GETTING FROM YOUR REMARKS?

REV. JOHNSON: I think so, and right away voices will come up saying: "well, I know cases that ¹ --- but I think this is true. On one side I can see the white man and I think this still holds -- I have had some interesting conversations in the South with white fellows in railroad stations and cracker barrel stores. They'd say, you're apt to feel that because you're a negro you are the son of ^{How} and this thing was doomed on you. On the other side of the fence I have heard negroes cry:

✓ I was born black so I must have been cursed and there may be something wrong with him that even goes back to heredity. In this kind of situation you get all kinds of weird things coming out of it. You get those who feel that -- white is right and black is wrong -- though they may ~~not~~ be black. So, humorously enough, we have had situations where Jim and myself, we can speak to our people and say something and they look at us like we're nuts. A white man can come in and say the same thing to them and their heads go up and down. It's like two ^{different} hands coming with the same truth. I think we not only blamed some time, things as you put it, that we should not have blamed and have self-pity, but by the same token, we turn the thing over and we see life also in a warped way. This, I think, is true.

REV. PETERS: I want to say I think your statement was very well put and this is very true. There are -- while they are not in very great or large number or vast majority of them in any sense -- there are negroes who, let's say for instance, with a limited I.Q. will blame all of the things that happen to them on the fact that they are negroes. Well, that is not true. Here is a man that was perhaps inferior from his birth -- I believe persons are born superior to others and some are born inferior to others and in varying degrees all between and this has nothing to do with race. There are those who can attain a place intellectually in ^{any} their race but here is a fellow who even if he had gone to white

schools, if he had had perfect opportunity, would not have made it. He has limited possibilities and yet this person will say: this has happened because I am a negro. So this is a very real problem but it is not as widespread as it might seem ~~like~~ we are suggesting or he might have suggested in the statement about when we speak. It is not as widespread as that but it does exist and they all point to the fact that there are persons who will believe words from someone else quicker than they would from someone in their own race. This probably in slavery time would be someone like Uncle Tom -- people like him who had extra privileges but yet there were negroes who would cut each other's throats to gain a better position. This brought about a distrust -- if a white man said something they believed him while if a negro said something they may or may not have believed him. This does ^{not} exist in a large degree in this day but there are evidences of small instances of it. I think your statement - your opening statement about this was very well put and I would endorse it.

logic?

AGAIN PICKING UP SOMETHING YOU SAID, REV. JOHNSON, SOME YEARS AGO I READ A STUDY BY DR. ^{Charles} HOWARD JOHNSON, LATER OF FISK UNIVERSITY, WHOM I CAME TO KNOW SOME LITTLE TIME BEFORE HIS DEATH AND DISCUSSED THIS A LITTLE WITH HIM. THE STUDY I AM THINKING OF POINTED OUT THE SCALING OF VALUES ^{accendy to} ~~YOU APPLIED TO SAVE~~ COLOR. EXACTLY WHAT YOU WERE SAYING. SURVEYS WERE MADE TO ASCERTAIN THE PRESSURES TO MAKE COLOR A VALUE IN ITSELF AMONG NEGRO CHILDREN IN SCHOOL, AND HIS POINT WAS -- I FORGET HIS PHRASES -- THAT THIS IS THE BASIC TRAGEDY OF BEING A NEGRO IN A

21. 10/30/63

color
WHITE COUNTRY -- THAT ~~THE~~ VALUE IS ABSORBED SYMBOLICALLY AND METAPHORICALLY INTO ALL MATTERS.

REV. JOHNSON: It comes back to me now that Dr. McNeil of Detroit, who has also died since -- ~~I think~~ ^{it} it was in the Book of Revelations. One time he was preaching about symbols there - the white stone, the white robe, the white everything, and I thought he was -- I don't just know the word -- I thought he was anti-God, anti-^{Biblical} political or something when he ~~passed~~ ^{took} all of those things and threw them out and changed all the colors of them because of the value put on them in this country and he said, ^{when I get to Heaven I going to put on} no, I would rather have my black robe and I insist on black shoes.

REV. PETERS: I was in a class in that mood, I don't know who it was or when it was but it was someone left-handed at Howard and he said that man's concept of God was based largely on things around him and in these days of white supremacy no one imagines a negro God and in these days of masculine supremacy, no one imagines a female God. We picture God as a white man inevitably in our thinking. I just threw that in --

YES, INDEED. CUTTING BACK TO SOMETHING YOU SAID EARLIER ABOUT THE MATTER OF THE POSSIBILITY OF SELF-PITY, OF USING RACE AS AN ALIBI IN OCCASIONS OF SELF-PITY, COMMENTS BY PEOPLE LIKE FRAZIER AND OTHERS, OF THE LACK OF SELF-CRITICISM IN THE NEGRO PRESS HAS BEEN A DEFECT OF THE PRESS. IT REFUSES TO APPLY THE STANDARDS OF CONDUCT OR PERFORMANCE TO OTHER NEGROES THAT WE APPLY TO A WHITE

OR THAT WHITES WOULD APPLY TO EACH OTHER; THIS BEING A DEFECT THAT IS POINTED OUT FAIRLY OFTEN AND MOST RECENTLY FRAZIER WAS SPEAKING ABOUT IT.

REV. PETERS: You might say that while there is this degree of self-pity we mentioned, I don't want to make any mistake about the fact that the negro in America has a difficult time. He can walk in and apply for a job and they say no. He doesn't know why. He can't get a decent education. He is given an inferior education, given an inferior home, inferior job and then the white man will look at him and say -- you are inferior. I don't want to make any mistake about the fact that many negroes suffer so much because of segregation until many times they are not sure. Is it segregation that is beginning to mean so much or my own lack of ability? A real question arises. The negro press in a sense, in a dramatic and oftentimes scandalous way, the negro press dramatizes the misbehavior of negroes in the community. They play up many instances of scandalous things like cutting, stabbing and things like that and to my mind this is exposure and this exposure should cause the negroes who are not acting in socially acceptable ways to change. Maybe this is a way-out approach but I feel that Jet Magazine showing the ridiculous things that it shows in its "Man of the Week" section that people are talking about, shames many negroes into not doing this type of thing. This is just an opinion that you might disagree with. I hope you will.

23. 10/30/63

REV. JOHNSON: I think much of what you say is true. I think this criticism of the negro from the negro press in many ways may not be meant as criticism and is meant as sensationalism in reporting and trying to sell newspapers. I have also been sort of proud of a lot of our writers especially on the Courier staff and some on the Tribune staff for the way they prodded our people and criticized, etc. I have been proud in the South of some men who have written down there like Willie Mays Hancock and the press, who have been quick to sort of try to put down the rule to some of the negroes as to what he has to do, etc. I think there has been this criticism of ourselves, etc. and I can't, of course, appraise those who have appraised the newspapers from a realistic standpoint because I don't know how and I think there has been real criticism. Whether they have gone far enough, I don't know - I can't say.

LET'S SKIP OVER TO ANOTHER TOPIC FOR A MOMENT. IT IS RATHER HARD TO PHRASE, THIS TOPIC, WITHOUT DECISION. IT IS SOMETIMES SAID HISTORY OWES THE NEGRO SOMETHING. NOW WHAT I'M GETTING AT IS THIS: IS THIS METAPHORICALLY SPEAKING -- SAY THIS RACE HAS BEEN ENSLAVED AND DEPRIVED BY THE PRESS AND THEREFORE IS THEN AN INJUSTICE? OR - IS THIS A WAY OF SAYING THAT BECAUSE OF PAST DEPRIVATION THERE SHOULD BE PRESS RESTITUTION MADE? OR - IS THE ONLY RESTITUTION JUSTICE? YOU SEE WHAT I'M GETTING AT (very faint -- something about human rights)

24. 10/30/63

REV. PETERS: Well of course there can be no restitution for 100 years of segregation, for the horrors of slavery -- there can be no restitution for blood that has been spilled can't be gathered back up. It can be replaced for a man who is yet living but in this case there can be no restitution for it. However, when it comes to the persons who are asking for extra advantage, I think it falls in the same line with those who are asking for quota systems in jobs. Now the persons who are making these requests won't admit it but they have somewhat quietly shared this feeling - some that I have talked with. And I really believe that this is the answer to it. They don't expect 10% or 25% negroes hired on a certain construction job, but the hiring pattern has been so segregated for so long until this is more or less of a gimmick, this is more or less of a trick if you might call it that, though I think it's a very --

25. 10/30/63

I REMEMBER THE LAST TIME WE TALKED ABOUT LOMAX -- LOMAX'S BOOK. SINCE I WAS HERE, I HAVE GOTTEN THE BOOK THAT HAD BEEN ON ORDER AND I HAVE READ IT. I REMEMBER YOUR VIEW OF THE BOOK - THE VIEW OF BOTH OF YOU OF THE BOOK, AND IT SEEMS YOU WERE IN AGREEMENT ABOUT IT. I READ IT WITH SOME CARE AND I AM VERY CURIOUS TO KNOW, WHAT WERE YOUR POINTS OF OBJECTION? I AM NOT PUTTING MYSELF IN THE ROLE OF DEFENDER FOR THE BOOK -- I AM SIMPLY CURIOUS TO FIND OUT ON WHAT POINT YOU FIND YOURSELVES IN COLLISION WITH HIS PRESENTATION.

REV. PETERS: I didn't quite finish the book and this isn't fair but I read enough I think to -- Well, his candid appraisal of Martin Luther King, Jr. as an opportunist, he said King was -- Perhaps the most critical of his general statements were about King's theological training, then he was so rash as to question the theological institution of our country.

IN WHAT SENSE? CAN YOU DEVELOP THAT?

REV. JOHNSON: He had a tirade against King's theological training itself. He went back to King's boyhood, the kind of era he was brought up in, in a sense the kind of training that few had gotten, toying with people's emotions, etc. That he was the kind of man in this kind of movement who did not have real organizational ability and in a sense was riding the crest -- an opportunist, that in a sense he had no real control over many situations, etc. and so on. That he was more a follower of the tide. We also felt that his sense

of criticism of the general negro minister, of what we even consider the genius of the negro ministers. He felt this was a long drawn-out thing, falling aside. You got the feeling that this man was looking at the negro minister as he was looking at a minister such as King, who was incapable of being an intellectual but had to be a pseudo-intellectual and I certainly thought that some of the statements that seemed to bear this out said that here was a fellow who was not really a scholar, not a real genius. Now it just so happens that King and I are contemporaries and we went to school together at Crowther. This man was brilliant -- brilliant at a time in Crowther Seminary when they had on the faculty such men as Morton Scott, Insman and men like Pritchard -- men who were real scholars and the school itself was known not for its making of ministers but for the training of scholars. And with that kind of situation and with those teachers, King was #1 in the whole school. He received a fellowship to go to Boston University to study for the ministry and he studied there. Here's a man like Lomax, who I know was never in any top school. There was a minister here in Stratford, for example, who was a jailbird here in town. In other words, he was not in the fight for freedom or anything. He was known here as a fellow who deadbeat people, who was a liar, who was a Baptist minister himself who used the same sort of creed, the same sort of talent in the pulpit

that King has to use and uses better and he looks on this fellow as a pseudo-intellectual. This sort of thing really burns us up too because he knows backgrounds, he knows training, he knows sincerity and we know that when it comes to having a mind, this King has the best and he can lead anyone he wants to lead and come out with a real understanding of it. But the pseudo-intellectual we felt was Lomax with the kind of stuff he had in the first 50 or 60 pages, writing as though it were his own, making brief acknowledgments in the introduction, etc., his indebtedness, etc. It was almost all phrases, the great masses of it. He took the Magazine listing a catalog of things. This fellow didn't bother to check on hardly any of the information he had. I have yet to find where Lomax is in the deal anywhere in this fight for freedom. I think he's a pseudo-participant in this whole struggle. I think he's the real opportunist and I think our people will know that.

REV. PETERS: This too - in his criticism of the Baptist Minister in general, the negro Baptist Church in particular having negro Baptist ministers for administrators -- #1 - having been a negro Baptist minister himself, although he never mentions that fact, incidentally, he should have explained that while negro Baptist ministers are not able to be the kind of administrators they are capable of being, this is because of their tremendously heavy work load, it is because no other person like a negro who comes to his minister, no

other person comes to his minister for the things that the negro does. We serve really as real estate agents, job employment agencies, counsellors, everything -- whatever their needs are. He is aware of this and this, in many cities does create problems in administration but it has been definitely proven that where the negro ministers can allocate their work, i.e., hire a man for this, that we can do as much administrative church work as anyone else and I think this was a criticism that was unfair from a man who knew better. I think his criticism of King's administration of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference was untimely and perhaps unfair. He is constantly being criticized for the size of his staff but he doesn't hire people to sit around in an office. A lot of people do send in donations and don't get receipts for their contributions. This is true but this is because the staff is out working on voter registration, working in all other areas of the struggle, not equipping a well-run office and Lomax should have known this. These are facts that are obvious and available. I could imagine him, on the other hand, criticizing a budget of hundreds of thousands of dollars because he did have a well-run office. Well, you've got to take your choice. I think King has made the wise choices in all the things he has done and Lomax, who was aware of this, in his criticizing, I think was unfair. These were some of the criticisms of the book. Also, NAACP has made a long

list of all the inaccuracies in describing the NAACP policy. We can get you a copy of it.

WELL, THAT BRINGS UP ANOTHER QUESTION -- LOMAX SAYS THAT THERE IS SOME EVIDENCE OF A CRISIS IN NEGRO LEADERSHIP NOW. HE WANTS TO DISCOVER THE POWER IN THE MOVEMENT. OF WHAT MOMENT IS THE COMPETITION OR STRUGGLE FOR POWER GROWTH OF LEADERSHIP -- WHAT'S THE NATURE OF IT? THERE'S BOUND TO BE, OF COURSE, A DEBATE ABOUT POLITICS -- PEOPLE DON'T AGREE ON POLITICS. IS THERE MORE THAN THIS HERE?

REV. JOHNSON: I'm going to ask Jim to take the first shot. He was down in Richmond, Va. two weeks ago at the SELC's conference and the report he brought back to me, especially about the --

REV. PETERS: Of course there has been an inter-service rivalry in the Civil Rights warfare also but a lot of persons have blown it up and made it more pronounced than it is. For many years the NAACP has been the organization and incidentally, all of the Civil Rights people belong to the NAACP, but the NAACP has been the organization that is taking the slow, almost conservative, legalistic approach. Lately the on racial equality which is about 22 years old and the LCLC, which is about 7 years old, have taken on a more exciting, direct-action approach and because of this and because of their differences of opinions, the white press in particular has made a great deal of these differences between the organizations and the negro press to some degree but

not as much as the white. Well, Albany, Ga. was the first place where all of the organizations worked together and then of course, the meetings leading up to the march on Washington were a dramatic example of the fact that they were going to work together and I was in Richmond at the SCLS conference last month where the principal speaker was Roy Wilkins and the theme of the convention was the theme of national CORE and that is -- freedom now -- and Roy Wilkins in his opening remarks said -- Martin, there are a lot of people who don't want to see us on the same platform but we are fighting for the same thing and we are going to be together at least until this war is over. I think this says in clear form that we are ^{really} not/struggling for power. On the local scene there may be questions from various negro leaders but in Cambridge, Maryland Gloria Richardson, although she's not well -- she's connected with SMCC's organization, she is a leader and in Englewood it seems to be Joe Burke. In other places, other leaders, but we are all fighting for the same thing and any of the national leaders could come in and speak to these local groups. I was at the funeral of the children in Birmingham who were killed in the bomb blast at the 16th Street church and who gave the only statement besides the minister? Roy Wilkins and Martin Luther King. At the funeral of Medgar Evers, who was an NAACP leader, who was there? Farmer, King and Wilkins. We are all together really

in this struggle and so the struggle for negro leadership is a small one. It is not as much -- who is going to do is as -- Will it be done? that means most to the average negro.

REV. JOHNSON: I just want to add briefly to that, that I agree wholeheartedly with what Jim has just said -- our differences are overplayed by leaders. Jim and I have sat in cars on long rides and saw some of these leaders and heard them talk intimately. There has been no more dissension than you'd expect to find normally in any such situation, I don't think. I admired what Adam Clayton Powell said when he called King the #1 man. King is the kind of man who can accept this humbly. He may get the greatest applause but he isn't fooled. He knows, for example, that in Birmingham for example Jim, there is Constance Baker Martin -- he needed her to fight this local thing. There are so many aspects that each group needs the other and there are groups that, in a sense, have become specialists in certain things and some day we are going to have some demonstrations that will show this country more than the march on Washington how little these arguments are. People struggle for power, I think, because it brings the prestige they need but all of these leaders can get all the press releases they want, they can get press notices, etc. and believe me, there is no money at the top. This is in the sight of God and every man's life, so to speak, is on the spot.

I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE YOU BOTH SPEAK ABOUT THE QUESTION OF UNIONS, IF YOU WILL AND DISCRIMINATION AGAINST NEGROES IN UNIONS. THIS, I MUST SAY, CAME TO MY ATTENTION RATHER LATE. I WAS NOT AWARE OF IT UNTIL A FEW YEARS AGO AND I ASSUME THERE IS A MINIMUM OF THIS, NOT KNOWING A GREAT DEAL ABOUT UNIONISM IN THE NORTH.

REV.

PETERS:

There are no negroes in the plumbers' and electricians' unions in Bridgeport and this includes all of Fairfield County, I am sure and in the union that serves Bridgeport there have been some terrific conversations about it and some promises have been made in the last ten days that something will be done about it. There are qualified negroes who have applied and have not gotten in. There are negroes in some of the other unions. I know a negro who is president of the union in a plant and there are only 110 negroes in the plant. This is a plant that hires nearly 1,000 and a negro is president of the union. This is one of the companies here but in the plumbers' and electricians' unions there are no negroes. This problem comes about -- well, the problems in the construction unions, for instance, come about because it seems a lot of the fellows bring their brothers. Pure and simple -- they do bring their good friends or brothers or cousins or something. Negroes are more or less eliminated because the jobs are gone, more or less, before the negro hears about them and there is no excuse for the unions not hiring negroes because it is a vicious cycle --

you can't get the job because you don't belong to the union -- you can't join the union because you don't have a job.

DO YOU THINK THAT THE FACT THAT IT DISCRIMINATES AGAINST THE NEGRO HAS UNDERCUT, UNDERMINED THE NEGRO'S FAITH IN THE PROCESS OF THE UNION, THE FUNCTION OF THE UNION, IN THE SENSE OF CRITICISM OF THE ROLE OF THE UNION IN LABOR? DO YOU HAVE ANY EVIDENCE ON IT?

REV. PETERS: I think the negro accepts the union theory because it means equality, but where negroes are excluded from the union they just want to get in because they feel that once they are in, they will have this equality.

REV. JOHNSON: I think there may be some cynicism but I don't think it's very widespread. I know that many fellows I know in the church and community, work hard in the union, work hard for it -- they wear union clothes, they insist on union shops, they're union-minded, but there is a certain amount of distrust -- no more distrust however than a man develops at a certain age, that is developed by all men in all instances where the institution is run by human beings. The kind of distrust that he has to be watchful and careful and he has to be especially watchful and careful because he is a negro.