I was not born in Philadelphia; I came from Jersey City in 1942. In that year I was the director of the YMHA of Jersey City, and I came to Philadelphia to become the head of several settlement houses known as neighborhood centers, the headquarters of which was at Fifth and Bainbridge Streets in South Philadelphia. There was also one branch further south.

My interest in coming to Philadelphia, to move out of the YMHA field, was because of my increasing interest in working directly with neighbors in the community. And for that reason I shifted from Cornell University, where I was working for a doctorate in Adult Education, and I moved toward New York University and then my major became sociology. I looked forward to working in a neighborhood as the best kind of experience a sociologist could have, - a direct experience with people.

(WMP: Did you take a doctorate degree?)

I took a doctorate degree at New York University in Community Sociology, sociology with its main emphasis on the community. I got my degree in 1948, six years after I came to Philadelphia. I wrote my thesis on neighborhood development in Philadelphia.

My main interest, sociologically speaking, was in the shifting population in South Philadelphia, particularly the effect of the incoming Jewish population at the turn of the century ... and within thirty-forty years, the movement of that same population out of South Philadelphia, and replaced by the Italian and Black population.

(WMP: Where did the Jewish people go?)

They went to ...largely, to the Northeast, which is Oxford Circle and they went to Strawberry Mansion. One of the amusing interests of the young Jewish families moving to Strawberry Mansion was the fact that for one nickel bus ride, you could go from Strawberry Mansion back to South Philadelphia, and be with the family on Friday evening for dinner. So they moved along the trolley-car line to Strawberry Mansion. And as they became more affluent, the young people moved to the Northeast, which was practically developed and built by young Jewish veterans after World War II.
And now they're moving north toward Bucks County, as .... in
the nature of middle class population, movement shifting
from Center City into the suburbs. And they were part of the
huge migration from the city to the suburbs, which took place
in the fifties and sixties.

And that was my interest at that time. I wrote my thesis to
indicate how the movement of population influences a social
institution or an agency like a neighborhood Center. In 1951
or '52, when the main building at Fifth and Bainbridge in
South Philadelphia burned, we then moved our settlements to
other parts of the city, - one in the Northeast, which fol­
lowed the population from South Philadelphia to North Phila­
delphia, and one in East Mount Airy, where we bought a
building at 920 Vernon Road, subsequently bought by the East
Mount Airy Neighbors. It has become the headquarters of the
East Mount Airy Neighbors.

This gives you a general idea as to my movements professionally.
I decided very early, when I found that my work in the settle­
ment house field had just about concluded its cycle; I decided
to move into what I had wanted to do in the first place, which
was to teach in a university.

But at that time, as you may recall, in the early sixties,
President Johnson declared war on poverty. And the Office of
Economic Opportunity was established. I became a warrior in
that war and was appointed by Governor Scranton as Director
of the southern Pennsylvania region for the Department of
Community Affairs.

(WMP: What did you accomplish in that program?)

Well, I learned a great deal. It helped me get a closer view
of poverty of the period, plus the changing character of the
Black population, with which I became intimately acquainted.
You see, until then, my work was generally in an administra­
tive post. I started as a group worker, working with small
groups. But as years of experience accumulated, my position
changed from being a worker directly with people, to becom­
ing an administrator of programs. And so, for twenty five
years I was an administrator. And it was a great relief for
me, and also a new experience, to work directly with people.

I met with community action Boards, composed largely of lower
class Blacks. I worked in Chester, Delaware and Bucks counties
as well as in Philadelphia ..... community groups organized
to fight poverty or organized to develop community programs.

A key experience was in the city of Chester in Delaware County
..... a small city with a population of some fifty to sixty
thousand, a small town that, in miniature, represents all the
problems of a large city. I usually characterize Chester as
many whales in a teacup, because the problems are enormous and the place is so small. I've learned a great deal there, in terms of what people can do and the potentiality of people given the opportunity to express themselves and develop as citizens.

During that time... I'm still on my personal history... I travelled throughout the area, and one of the institutions under my charge, within my concern, was Lincoln University which is largely a black college, as you well know, Walter, since you're a member of their Board.

(WMP: I'm not any more; I'm an honorary member now).

I see. Lincoln University was interested in opening a program for children, extending a program in Lincoln Village. And President Wachman, who was then the head of Lincoln University, with whom I met frequently in order to establish this program, urged me to move out of my role as a worker for government and become a professor of sociology. I was then appointed Professor of Sociology and Social Welfare at Lincoln University. That was in 1967.

(WMP: I guess I was no longer Chairman of the Board then).

I think you were Chairman of the Executive Committee at that time.

(WMP: Oh, that could be... yes.)

I served seven years, the sacred and magical number, at Lincoln University. Again... my background helped to develop a program of community involvement. And my thinking then was as follows: a Black university within a sea of Whites... because, after all, they're only seven percent of Chester County. Therefore, all the years that Lincoln University has been there, the contact with the larger community was nominal.

(WMP: True.)

I developed, with the help of Dr. Wachman, an Institute for Community Affairs, on the theory that if Lincoln U is useful to its white neighbors, then it becomes significant. For example, we made studies of the plight of the mushroom workers in Kennett Square. We made a study of housing in that town. As a result, Kennett Square developed a committee... a commission that became concerned and involved in housing for the poor in Kennett Square.

(WMP: There were some real problems there, weren't there?)

There were serious problems. Our initiating a movement in Kennett Square in race relations grew into a program in housing within a period of five years.
The NAACP in Coatesville appealed to us; they were not getting a fair shake in the school system. So the Institute for Community Affairs made two studies - (1) the relationship between the adult Black parent and the School Board and (2) another study relating to the self-image of the Black child compared to the White child, beginning with kindergarten and going up to the twelfth grade.

(BF: What did that find?)

Well, we found some very interesting things. We found that the Black child, in the early grades, felt inferior to the White Child. But by the time they reached Junior High and High School, their image moved upward to the point where they exceeded that of the White in both Junior and Senior High. We ascribed this to the Black Power and the Black is Beautiful movements ... that the general atmosphere built up the self-image of the young Blacks in Coatesville.

We made a study of the recreation programs in Oxford. This town, in the past, had an anti-black movement; I think it was headquarters of the local Ku Klux Klan.

(WMP: Certainly the dividing line... the Mason-Dixon line...)

Goes right through. And so we developed a plan for the city, how to use their recreational programs effectively.

(WMP: Did John Ware help you on that?)

Yes, he was sympathetic. My chief achievement at Lincoln ... (there were several) .... was the introduction of a Human Services Department; another was the development of field service for students, in Philadelphia. In Philadelphia we actually acquired a bus that took the students to Philadelphia to provide them with eight hours of field work to enable them to get some first-hand knowledge of how things work in the social agencies in Philadelphia.

One more item ... We received a grant from the 1907 Foundation for an investigation of the various organizations throughout the country, concerned with citizen action.... how citizens organize to act .... to change the social situation. We received a grant of $120,000 from this foundation. I was the principal investigator, and as a result of that I edited a book. I think I sent you a copy, Walter. If I haven't, I'll give a copy to you.

(WMP: I think I have it; I'll go through and check)

The title was "Community Action for Social Change".

(WMP: Yeah, We have it.)

And it dealt with twenty five different experiences throughout the country .... how neighbors get together to bring about social change.
During my stay at Lincoln we received funds from Title I of the Higher Education Act, to educate public officials in human relations. And one of my jobs was to teach the Police.

(WMP: In Philadelphia)

No. For three years I conducted workshops for the Police of Chester County. And in 1974, I got tired of commuting from Philadelphia to Lincoln; so I decided to seek my fortune elsewhere and I moved to a new career, my third. I discussed my new interest with the Center for Administration of Justice at Temple University. And I brought to them the idea of educating the Police of Philadelphia in human relations...because the job of the policeman is 80% social service...public service...it's people-to-people kind of service which the Police are supposed to render. Crime fighting is merely 15-20% of the job. And so I brought that idea to Temple. I'm now working full time as Adjunct Professor in Criminal Justice.

(EP: Teaching police?)

Partly police, but my main interest .... I again shifted from the Police to the community. I received a grant from the Pennsylvania Foundation.

(WMP: You mean the old HAAS' group?)

That's right.

(WMP: They call it the William Penn.)

The William Penn gave me some money two years ago. I developed an institute for the training of community leaders in fighting crime. And this year I received a grant from Title I to educate volunteers.... citizen volunteers.... in fighting crime through volunteer service in different agencies of the criminal justice system. Now, I've brought you up to date.

(WMP: Well, that's very helpful. Now would you tell us a little bit about the conditions in the city that you've encountered as you've been involved in these things.)

Yes. I realized when I began, when I started as a settlement house worker in South Philadelphia, that you can't get anywhere unless you first organize .... locally, organize city-wide, and act politically. In the final analysis, if you want action .... if you want change... in this country, it is political change. And the power lies within a political group that is organized and knows where it is going.

I joined the ADA when Mrs. FDR came to Philadelphia and I met with her....

(WMP: You mean Eleanor.)
Eleanor, yes. I was there that first meeting.

(WMP: You said FDR... I though you meant....)

Oh, I meant Mrs. FDR....when she came to Philadelphia and Molly Yard induced me to join and I thought then that was the organiza­tion that meant most to me. ... I always felt that a person has a job to do to support himself and his family. But he has another responsibility as a citizen in the community where he lives. And so I took my work seriously in South Philadelphia by organizing two things. I organized the South Philadelphia Co-ordinating Council. There were many small neighborhood councils in South Philadelphia. And so, eventually we orga­nized one large organization, of which I served as President.

I also realized that if we were to bring social change in South Philadelphia, it would have to be done in housing, since so many houses were abandoned or boarded up.

I organized a neighborhood planning conference and the people around my settlement formed a committee. Interestingly enough, the mother of Cianfrani was the chairman of my committee that investigated housing. The members walked from block to block with a chart and indicated the condition of each house. We then had a picture of the whole neighborhood, in terms of which houses should be totally removed and which could be repaired.

We presented our data to the City Planning Commission. It certified our neighborhood for redevelopment. That was our great achievement.

And, Walter, you may remember that the Citizens' Council on City Planning at that time, in 1948, when this plan was pro­duced, gave me a certificate that you handed to me. You were then the President of the Citizens' Council on City Planning. You presented me with the Citizen of the Year Award.

(WMP: A plaque.)

Or a plaque....right..... which still hangs in my bedroom... with your signature.

(BF: What was the racial composition of that section of the city then?)

The black population was very small in 1948. It was on the fringe of that area, which is now called Queen Village. (they were) usually on South Street; some on 12th St. toward the west; but from 12th St. toward the river, it was largely white of Ita­lian origin.

(WMP: Which river?)
The Delaware River. It was White ethnic...some Polish on the fringe of Front Street, Irish on the west side, Italian further south and Jewish in the near south. Now that was the complexion of the area in the late forties. And after the war, scattering started....the Jewish population moved out....the Black population really displaced the Jewish population, for the Italian population stood fast. I ascribed it to the fact that the Italians were largely of rural origin who came from rural Italy, with a tremendous feeling for land ownership. The immigrant family would save to buy a house. And once they bought the house, they had roots. In many instances the Italians who came from a specific area in Sicily would move into the same block in the city. These paisans felt more at home, as though they were still in their own village.

(WMP: We interviewed D'Ortona.)

Oh, D'Ortona!

(WMP: And he was born in Italy. Did you know that?)

Yes. I knew that. Let me tell you about D'Ortona. He was Chairman of City Council. Were you a member of City Council?

(WMP: No.)

You ran for the Chairmanship.

(WMP: No, I ran for Mayor one time.)

Mayor. I remember that. Certainly. D'Ortona was Chairman of City Council.

(WMP: I did run for City Council one time....)

Of course you did.

(WMP: ...with Arlen Spector. I was a Republican that year.

Yes. I remember. Yes. D'Ortona was Chairman of the City Council. And after we were certified as an area for redevelopment, it seemed to me that we had a great potential for saving the character of the neighborhood -- my settlement house which went for a whole block from Bainbridge to Monroe Street further south. On Monroe Street, facing our Center, was the Meredith School, a pretty good school, new and fresh-looking; further south you came across a little park; beyond that park was the Settlement Music School; the Fleischer Memorial Art Center was to the east of that area; there were about three or four different settlement houses within the area.

And it occurred to me that with these natural community resources available, it would make an excellent area for redevelopment. So, in order to sell the idea to City Council, I invited D'Ortona and Ed. Bacon and Drayton Bryant to take a walk in the area.
I wanted to show them the potential. We walked the whole area that I described to you. The amusing part was... during that time my Center had a dramatic organization known as Neighborhood Players. And Neighborhood Players lost their headquarters at 8th and Lombard Sts. and they were performing at the Settlement Music School.

My plan was to talk through the whole area, have dinner in one of the restaurants and then see the Players perform. So the committee, Bryant, D’Ortona, Ed Bacon and Dorothy Montgomery took the walk, we had dinner and then went to the theater to see our players perform one of Shaw’s plays. While we were enjoying the Shavian humor D’Ortona looked dazed and fell asleep in the middle of the performance.

The result of all this was that we planted the seed and the area was redeveloped and became Queen's Village.... the whole idea of renovating homes, you know, single homes that are still livable was an idea developed by the Citizen's Council. The plan, as it was formulated was that the houses would cost approximately $12,000 each, within the economic range of the people who lived in that area. It didn't take longer than five or six years before developers came in and sold houses at $20-$25,000.... you couldn't get a house in Queen's Village now under $35-40,000 or more. So the people who lived there have really been moved out. They have been thrust out ....pushed out.....by those who can afford middle class housing.

(WMP: I must go down and look at it. How far east does it go?)

Well, it starts at Lombard Street and goes south until Queen Street; and from the river to the west.

(WMP: From the Delaware to ....?)

From the Delaware to about Tenth St and from Lombard or South St, going south to about Wharton, now called Queen's Village. Today, it is a middle class neighborhood with all the characteristics of Wynnefield or East Mount Airy. People who live there are those who have incomes of $25,000 or more. That's the new development. Same way as Lombard Street ....in my time when I was in the Settlement House, it was a dilapidated, forgotten, overlooked street. It was discovered by the redevelopers, and now $45,000 is the minimum price of a home there. It is growing, changing, it's the new cycle ....the displacement of the poor by the middle class....it's happening in South Philadelphia. It will take place in North Philadelphia very soon.

(WMP: What happens to the ......?)

(BF: In North Philadelphia?)

Yes. It will happen in near North Philadelphia ...say around Spring Garden and Sixth and Fifth Street and that neighborhood as it becomes Franklin Town. Because people ... a young couple,
both working, earning approximately $20,000 a year can invest a fourth of their income for rent. The total of their earnings can be doubled for the cost of a house. This means that if they are earning $20,000 they can invest $40,000 in a house. They can see the possibility of renovating an old house, remodel it at a cost of $40,000 and to have a house according to their liking, within walking distance of everything in Philadelphia. It's happened all over Society Hill. It's happened on Lombard Street; it's happening on all those little side streets. The old population, the ethnic population, the poor population, is pushed out and has to go elsewhere.

(WMP: Where will they go?)

I don't know. Public housing has been a failure. It's been a failure because of mismanagement, in my judgment. Public housing in Philadelphia or any other large city means placing people in homes where they don't know their neighbor, although they are usually within the same economic range. Either they are placed in a neighborhood where they stick out like a sore thumb because the neighbors don't understand them and are rather fearful of them. Public housing, placed in the middle of an old neighborhood, a new group coming in, builds antagonism in the old population, usually lower middle class, which fears this new group, particularly if there's a difference in color. Witness what is happening to the Walt Whitman project.

Another handicap is high-rise. That is, if you take poor families and place them into apartment houses, they don't know how to live in apartment houses. They've never lived in them before; they have usually come from the rural South; and suddenly, you give them ten floors and they have to use an elevator.

(WMP: You remember the report that Dorothy Montgomery made on that .... hired somebody .... what was it called?.... the ... I've got a copy of it .... what was his name.... well, it doesn't matter.)

Promoting public housing in Kennett Square, I held out for scattered housing, on the theory that if you place four or five families in the middle class block it doesn't matter. One way or another, they'll adjust. But if you pack two hundred families into one segment of a large city, you're creating a division that's hardened in time on both sides.

(WMP: The Reichley Report. If you don't have that, you should get it. I assume they have it at the Housing Association... I don't know if I have any copies left.)

It deals with public housing?

(WMP: Yes, well, on the subject of high rises... whether high rises should be built for public housing.)

I see.... altogether... right, right. It took a negative position?
Oh, I felt that all along. I visited the Diamond Development Project, which is high rise ... that was some years ago.

(WMP: I remember the day we dedicated it. That was the Raymond Rosen..... )

Exactly! The Raymond Rosen Diamond Street development.

(WMP: We thought that was the greatest project.)

That's right. The Raymond Rosen houses. When I visited this site I realized that it wouldn't work. Let me give you another reason why it doesn't work.

If people come from one culture .... black people living in the South .... live in a certain civilization... a certain environment .... they come to a city like Philadelphia.... it's a different environment totally. The way my parents came from Russia to this country, they were immigrants and they had to make their way. And that's exactly what's happening....in fact they have the handicap of a common language.... speaking of the Blacks coming to Philadelphia.

Therefore, we had to educate them as to how to live in a large city, displaced from a rural environment. You can't place them into high rises unless you prepare them for it. The chances are you'll rarely succeed. Row housing is superior because in row housing you have the nearness of your neighbor, closeness of your neighbor.... at the same time you haven't got the mechanics of going up ten or fifteen floors.

(WMP: You see, these points are all made in the Reichley Report.)

I didn't read the report, but I reached the same conclusion. You have now the Police Department to be one of the questions.

(BF: Yes.)

That's my new corner. Have you any other questions? I gave you the long story in terms of my own movement in the city and my social interests.

(BF: Well, have you observed any significant changes in the social conditions of the city from the forties to now? I mean, what are the trends? Is anything radically different?)

Yes, there's difference. One.... I'd say the poor sections look poorer....as though they've been bombed out. Some of the poor sections have been displaced, particularly in center city. I think, in the thirty eight to forty years that I've been here the city has changed, physically, for the better. Center City is now an attractive section. Society Hill and all that surrounds it.... the whole idea of reconstituting the colonial village around Independence Hall was a brilliant idea. I don't know if it was Rafsky or Ed Bacon.... whoever thought of it.
WMP: It was thought of before any of us were on the scene. The Rockefeller people considered restoring the old sections of Philadelphia and when they looked into it further and further, they decided to build Williamsburg instead."

Oh, I see. But it initiated that idea.

(WMP: That's right. In the depression, the architects had a project to keep them working.... WPA. And they recorded all they could find and they measured these houses and marked the ones that should be in good shape and should be preserved. And that was the beginning...way back, you see.)

Did I remember signs on empty lots saying.... this has been set aside for historical development...and so on? Well, it was a great idea, because now Philadelphia can safely say it's a tourist attraction. And, of course, in preparation for the Bicentennial, we have beautified the whole Center City, and the original Ed Bacon idea of making the center of Philadelphia a very attractive area that would bring both tourists as well as business, is coming into reality; it's taking place. And some people give credit to the current Administration but we know better. We know how far back the planning...and what fighting and what struggles the Citizens' Council on City Planning went through in order to get the Charter adopted, in order to get the new plan for the city adopted. It was really citizen action. And much credit is due to you, Walter, because you were the head of it.

(WMP: The method of using a coalition of organizations worked out very well, I think.)

Right. Right. Well, it seems as though things and events have their fashion. The Citizens' Council on City Planning is no more, the City Policy Committee just a shadow of what it was; there are no personalities, knights in armor who'll do battle for causes.

(WMP: Excuse me. Have you observed... I'm trying this out to see if I'm correct in my observation. The civic leadership seems to have moved from rather grass roots kind of people,... we weren't completely grass roots.... but we weren't the big business men. Now the business men have their organizations, and now it's something else, I don't know exactly....)

Old Philadelphia Corporation.

(WMP: Yeah, so that the economic upper crust of the Center City has taken over.)

Yes. If you were to ask someone to give you the name of a person who's most prominent in public life, he would mention John Bunting.

(WMP: Or Dick Bond.)
Or Dick Bond. Two names. Why? Because they are in the top of the money group in the City of Philadelphia. I have a theory of how the ethnic groups move into a position of power. It's a circulation of elites..... the Irish and the Italians and the Jews.... they start with the lowest possible jobs that no one else wants, whether it be street cleaning or peddling or prize fighting or becoming a policeman. Being a policeman now is fairly lucrative. But the policeman in 1900 had the lowest possible paying job.

At first.... ethnic groups moved into the lowest paying jobs, they become prize fighters or they go into the theater field, other.. socially acceptable occupations for the poor. Then they move into politics, as the Irish have done and as the Italians are doing now, and then they realize that politics is not the real power. That real power is the bank. The real power is money power. They move from the street into the political arena and then from politics into the banks. This is where the power lies. The reason why Rizzo didn't run for governor of Pennsylvania is that the banks wouldn't back him. And if he runs again, he'll run only if the banks back him. You need money to win an election.

(WMP: I would add... it's banks and other business institutions.)

Well, yes, when I say the word 'banks', I'm covering a lot of other financial interests. That would include large manufacturers, owners of large department stores. We can now begin to question that, as well. Wanamaker's is not Wanamaker's any longer. It's not owned by the John Wanamaker family in Philadelphia. That has happened just this month. And that is true... probably Gimbeis now, all the other stores, are chain outfits. You have money interests with no specific concern for Philadelphia.

(WMP: I think Strawbridge and Clothier are probably.....)

... the only one left. That's right.

(WMP: Stockton Strawbridge is a good guy.)

Right. Right. And that, I think, is sad, because then we're at the mercy of larger forces than we can control. All the more reason why we ought to return to the average citizen, educate him, give him an awareness of the struggle that is taking place so that he can, by uniting with others, have some power.

(WMP: Well, is anything going on in that regard?)

Only in one possible aspect. I saw this happening recently when I began to push toward organizing neighborhoods to fight crime. There is a neighborhood movement growing in many parts of the country. People, as a result of the rebellion of the sixties, when college campuses went into flames and started agitating for a new world. Now these new radicals are fighting for personal careers and that public fighting spirit is evaporating.
But there is a residual element of all this, the counter-culture movement. The residual element is that people are interested now in nature, in the protection of the environment, ecology.... I'm giving you a new movement they've started. These movements push toward a simpler life, toward emphasis and concern for the individual. They organize in New Hampshire to keep a nuclear plant from being built....one of those plants that they're afraid will have dire effects on the area, on the health of the people. This concern about health, concern about the environment, organizing to express themselves, leads to an increase in neighborhood awareness and organization.

My own feeling is that the neighborhood organizations will grow.... going back to the old Citizens' Council on City Planning, which was a collection of neighborhoods. But even the Citizens' Council began to suffer because it needed financial support and turned to corporations. Where financing will come from is a central problem. Neighborhoods could organize and fight their battles if they could get some kind of financial support, or even government support which may be forthcoming.

Let me give you an example. The Finance Committee of City Council, in looking over the budget, found an item of $1.8 million to be distributed in the neighborhoods of Philadelphia so that they could organize and have an office....$25-30 thousand per neighborhood....enough to hire a store front, and put a secretary and telephone in it, which is all that is really necessary to get the organization moving. They cut a million dollars out of that budget because the Councilmen said......we can't afford to have local people become experienced in government....they'll run against us, then we'll lose our jobs. And so the City Councilmen cut the million dollars off to protect their own jobs.

(WMP: I didn't realize they'd ever proposed a million dollars.)

Yes, $1.8 million.

(WMP: What year would that have been?)

Just a few months ago.

(WMP: Well, the Citizens' Council is still going then, is it?)

No. No. You see, they had a million, eight hundred thousand dollars available to give to different neighborhoods of the city, each getting approximately $25-30 thousand, to maintain itself.

(WMP: I see, This had nothing to do with our original Citizens' Council.)

None whatever. This is a new thing. Well, there are literally
hundreds of neighborhoods in the City of Philadelphia that are organized. But they're living on a pittance; they're living from hand to mouth. They're really barely existing. But this would have given them a new lease on life. But the City Councilmen saw this as a threat to their own jobs.

(WMP: Well, who proposed it?)

This I couldn't tell you. Remember, Ewing is running East Mount Airy because of his experience as the head of a community organization. He is proving their fears.

(WMP: Running for State Senate.)

Yes, right. But his experience, his backing, does come from the fact that he headed a community organization for many years. The fact of the matter is that neighborhoods organized are a training ground for community leadership that eventually will challenge the system. And we have to start that way. Even if eventually they become corrupt officials, at least during the twenty years that they're trying to become officials, they'll be honest. And since most reform organizations, like Clark and Dilworth's last about twenty five years.....

(WMP: Ten years, they were in office.)

Twenty five..... Tate was half as bad as the one we now have.

(WMP: That's right.)

So the downhill is slow. But it gets there. And then, the abuse becomes so dreadful that the citizens say...turn the rascals out and get a new set in. But the strange thing is that now we don't have the same kind of anger or concern. Isn't there a woman running for office who was fired because she misused her office?

(BF: You don't mean Tucker, Dolores Tucker?)

Tucker was running for Lieutenant Governor, having been turned out of office because she was dishonest. She used her office for personal gain. She was fired. Nobody challenged the fact that she was fired and she's running for office.

(WMP: Well, what about some of the racial problems, Julian, having such big blocks of Blacks in North Philadelphia and in parts of West Philadelphia.... what's going to be the result of...... segregation, which it really amounts to?)

Well, I'd love to sit down and suspend all my work and write a book on just that development right now in Philadelphia... no doubt parallel to other big cities. The Black community is waking up, in the sense that it has power. The Tucker case is a case in point. They will fight for someone on a racial basis, regardless of the individual record of that person. In other words, ordinarily you'd say that she abused her office.... how can you re-elect her? But the Black com-
injunJty supports her because she is Black, not because she is competent.

This usually happens in the beginning... in the early stage as an ethnic group gains power. The Black community is beginning to feel that power and is saying so openly. It says to Mr. Carter, what have you done for us lately? And the same thing....communities now saying it to their own elected officials.

We'll suffer that for some time. I say suffer, for the simple reason that this is not enlightened citizenship. It is citizenship based on fear, based on their desire for self-protection, rather than for the good of the community as a whole.

(WMP: Well, maybe some of them do need some of that....)

Oh, undoubtedly that is true. They've long been neglected, and so they need to have their place in the sun. And it's happening. Seventeen hundred cities in the United States have Black Mayors. New Orleans, Detroit, Los Angeles, have Black Mayors, which means that they're gaining politically. And, as I've indicated earlier, the path which is being taken by ethnic groups.... the Black community is following the same route. They start with prize fighting, with basketball, with the theater, because the bars against race or ethnicity are lower in those occupations. Now they're going into politics and they'll stay in politics for a long time.... the next decade or two, and then they'll go into banking and business and money because that's where the real power lies. So they're going through the same path, the same role, which others have trod. And we'll have to, to some extent, suffer through that 'measles' period,,,, certain childhood diseases one has to go through.

And, if you're conscious of it, then you can work toward educating the Black citizen into his responsibility as a citizen, not simply as a Black man. That's the important point... at the moment, in terms of the education of the citizen.

(WMP: Do you see any really enlightened and effective Black leaders in Philadelphia?)

There are. They're coming up.

(WMP: Whom would you cit as such? How about Leon Sullivan?)

Leon Sullivan, Charley Bowser, Sam Evans...I'm giving you the names of the key people in Philadelphia...Reverend Washington. Now this is almost like a spectrum from left to right, with Washington taking, I think, the left position, and then with the extreme right would be Evans, though he talks radical; but he's really approachable and purchasable. I worked with him in PAAC. I was a member of PAAC (Phila. Anti-Poverty...
Committee; he was Chairman at that time.

(WMP: He's been around a long time.)

I know. And he'll move in the direction where there is money and power.

I would say that the cleanest person in the group is Bowser. Sullivan I question, to some extent. When I was working during the anti-poverty campaign Sullivan was just starting. He is spectacular; he's interesting, he's intelligent, he's got hold of a very good thing. He's exploited it to the full.

Why isn't he running for Mayor? What is his role in politics? Jesse Jackson of Chicago. to me the number one Black leader in the United States... he stands for something very specific.

(WMP: We gave him an honorary degree down at Lincoln, do you remember that?)

I remember hearing him then. Jesse Jackson, when he says.... education is the road, the upper road for the Black people, he knows what he's talking about. It worked for the Jewish people. It worked for any ethnic group. Education. But Sullivan, well, I don't know. He has never been evaluated. His program has never been investigated. And I don't know how the money has been handled. And no one else knows.

The moment Sullivan became international, I lost faith in him. You see what I mean?

(WMP: In what way is he international?)

He said his idea is so good, that he formed chapters all over the country for job training, that's his key, job training. And then he opened an international organization in African countries, where he has twelve or so districts where he is supposedly operating the same program he's doing here.

In the book I edited, I have a chapter dealing with the program which Sullivan conducted. And I investigated that program... at least one piece of it. I thought it was excellent...probably because I thought of the same idea before he got it... and I thought it was pretty good. I investigated it. But he was just scratching the surface. It sounded beautiful in the newspapers. It died a year later; it's not there any more. This program was an education of the illiterates on the block. It was adult education on a block basis. I thought it was excellent but it didn't work for Sullivan. The point that I'm making is that he's too spectacular. He looks too good in the press.

(WMP: He's too much of an orator)

Yes. And he's never been evaluated. I don't believe anybody who gets funding from a public source should do his job longer than a year or two without being evaluated. He has to be account-
countable. How did you spend your money? That's why we have sunshine laws.

(WMP: Well, does he get money from the federal....?)

He lives by grace of the federal government.

(WMP: Does he? I didn't realize that.

Oh, sure. Most of his money comes from Washington.

(WMP: How did he manage to do that?)

He did one great thing. Once. And that's sufficient. He called all the ministers in the Philadelphia area together, do you remember, to boycott the electric company because they wouldn't give jobs to Blacks.

(WMP: I'd forgotten that.)

That was the beginning, of Sullivan.

(WMP: I think we'll have to interview him. I've had him on my list but I haven't gotten around to it.

I think you should. Oh, yes, he's quite a person. He should be interviewed.

(BF: Why don't we get onto the subject of the police and the community and your observations of that. Because that's a very important thing.)

Well, that's one of my new specializations. The Police in Philadelphia are probably no different than police anywhere else...by and large. They're just as honest or dishonest or brutal or not..... same as any other police of any large city. There's a difference, however.

Police, in general.....I'm giving you one of my early lectures....police, in general, reflect..... a military cadre. They are built along military lines. I mean, in the morning, when they get into the Police Station, they line up. And they get the orders of the day. And they salute and they march out to do their work. They don't discuss with the Captain or the Sergeant.... what are we going to do today and how are we going to handle our problems. They may do that with the Sergeant but they don't do it in the group. They're militarized.

A military organization operates on the basis of obeying the boss... the General. They follow orders. The mayor of Philadelphia was a policeman. Therefore, they follow the pattern and the tone set by the top of the heap, the mayor.

O'Neill, in Philadelphia, is Mayor Rizzo's shadow. And every policeman looks to Rizzo as his Captain. The methods which
the Police use in Philadelphia are those which Rizzo would use if he were still a policeman. But we remember Rizzo as a policeman. At least I do. He was so brutal as a Police Captain, that he was moved out of South Philadelphia and sent up to North Philadelphia by the Police Commissioner.

(WMP: Who was the Commissioner then, do you know?)

I think it was....

(WMP: Leary?)

Leary. Howard Leary.

(WMP: Yeah we're going to interview him. He agreed to be interviewed but he put it off a couple of times.

I know Leary. I worked with him. Yeah, Leary is another problem. Leary became a Police Commissioner in New York after he left Philadelphia. He was there three years and then he started teaching.

The police in Philadelphia are more brutal in their methods than the average, because that's how Rizzo would be handling the job. If he were gentler, they would be gentler. He believes in force, the firstest with the mostest.

I recall Cecil Moore gave a talk at Broad and Lombard Sts. He threatened he was going to give a talk. It occurred during the sixties and Rizzo was then Captain ....or Commissioner. And Rizzo said ....I'll wipe him off the face of the earth, that agitator.... and so on.... When Cecil Moore finally appeared to give his talk, there were about seventy or eighty people listening to him on the street corner. Rizzo had seven hundred policemen there watching him! The same thing is true about the Bicentennial, you remember? He needed fifteen thousand troops to keep the people in order! That's how he works.

The one exception in his case that I can recall, is the MOVE Group incident, the recent case..... he didn't blast the people out...as he usually loves to do.

(Note: this interview took place prior to August, 1978 when MOVE HQ was razed by Philadelphia Police)

(WMP: I wonder what got into him there.)

There were several factors that held him back. I met with a committee of ministers and priests who came to discuss tactics with me, how to handle this situation and, apparently, the religious groups must have had some influence on Rizzo that kept him back. I'm sure what he wanted to do was to simply use the machine gun.

(WMP: Is he a good Catholic? Would he listen to the Cardinal?)
Well, the Italian Catholics are skeptical Catholics. There is an ethnic difference. They take the Pope lightly. If you check on the religious observances in Italy itself, you'll find it's nominal. They've just accepted contraception as not against the Catholic religion, in Italy. The Parliament has passed abortion and contraception as....

(BF: Abortion, too?)

Abortion, I'm not sure. But I'm sure of contraception, which is now publicly accepted. My opinion is that the Italian Catholics are not as rigid as Irish or Polish Catholics. They're different. So that I don't know whether the religion, well, after all, Italy has the largest Communist party in Europe, if you want an example of anti-religion. However, if the monsignor....I forgot his name....

(BF: What does it say about the citizens of Philadelphia, that a Police Commissioner could become mayor?)

Let me again give you an example of what I think is the power in Philadelphia....what constitutes the power in Philadelphia. We've been agitating to have a Police Advisory Board for years. And it hasn't succeeded. At one time there was a Black citizen advisory board for the police, but acting independently...on their own. They really had no power; nobody paid any attention to them. And they have disappeared.

(WMP: Who set up that advisory board?)

There was an advisory board in the Black community run by the Black Congress of North Philadelphia. David Eccles...was the name of the man who...was the chairman of this committee. It was an outgrowth of the community action boards.

(BF: That was when Tate was mayor, wasn't it?)

That's right. And they didn't get any place. That is, it operated on its own. After the recent Cradle case, in which the Police were so obviously brutal, Marston became famous because he handled it. He lost it, as you may recall. The Cradle case involved the Black man who passed a red light and then was beaten up. There were people who saw the thing from beginning to end. They gave their testimony; it didn't work; the Police were acquitted.

As a result of that, many citizens started an effort to control the Police. Ewing was the chairman of a committee which drew up a resolution, which stated that every citizen complaint must be written, in triplicate and kept on file by the Police, so that if no action had been taken, the citizen had recourse, saying ....look, I've made the complaint; it's in your files. You haven't done anything about it. (This proposal was discussed at the City Policy Committee a few months ago). Rizzo said publicly ..."I'll tear this piece of paper to shreds. It's ridiculous"... that's what he said.
A few weeks later, the head of the Catholic action groups, the head of the Jewish Community Relations Council and John Bunting held a luncheon meeting with the mayor and City attorney and they arrived at a compromise.

(WMP: What was the compromise?)

The compromise they reached is that a citizen can now make his complaint at the Police Department and the complaint will be put on file. And he can refer to it in the future as to whether any action has been taken in the matter. So exactly what was originally drawn up by Ewing and his committee, which the mayor said he would tear up and never in his life was going to sign it, is now a fact, only because the power groups in the City acted.

(WMP: Well, he did sign it then when the power groups....)

Yes, so now a citizen can file a complaint against the police, and that complaint must be filed and kept and referred to. Notice, that in the last two weeks, the police took action against two policemen who were accused of thieving or of making some money deal..... they were fired. The fact that the Police contained themselves in the MOVE affair is another example of restraint.

If the public raises its voice sufficiently loud and gets the Chamber of Commerce.... I forgot to add the Chamber of Commerce, .... they also moved to compel Rizzo to accept this compromise.

The Chamber of Commerce, Bunting and all the other powerful people in the city of Philadelphia can bring about changes. It's organizations that matter, organizations with clout.

The police in Philadelphia, in general, as I indicated before, are the same as police anywhere else. You have to exercise pressure at the top.... the mayor and the Police Commissioner.

(WMO: And it takes the top citizens to get action.)

If you want immediate action. And then, if you want permanent changes, get the City Council to pass a ruling that no policeman can get the job unless he's had two years of college, as California has already initiated.

(WMP: Is there any move in Philadelphia to do that?)

No, I doubt it. But that would be a step in the right direction. The President's Commission on Crime and Law Enforcement, which finished its work in 1969, recommended that all police in all cities should have a professional education. And if you're a professional, you have a college education. An educated policeman is apt to be less brutal, more humane, more considerate.

(BF: What do the Police symbolize to the community? I'm thinking in terms of fear of the Black community. Is that
a big factor? Is that why Rizzo is... people feel protected by Rizzo because of his racism and they feel he's going to protect them from the Blacks?)

Yes. He's polarizing the community because he's saying... there is a sharp division between Blacks and Whites and I'm going to defend the Whites. When he does that, he makes everybody feel .... well, where do I belong? Am I with the White community? the ethnic community? You see, by making that statement he immediately divides the community. That's happening in Philadelphia.

Somebody wrote an article in Harper's this month. It's called 'The Balkanizing of America'. The Balkan states are those along the Danube ... Serbia, Montenegro, all those countries which caused the First World War because of their internal conflicts. Now if we break up this country in terms of group interests..... I'm interested only in what professors will do and how you can protect professors.... or how you can protect Jews or Chinese or Blacks or any other group... then you break up the country into small self-interest groups, warring with each other.

Now, Rizzo, in his public statement regarding the Walt Whitman project, is doing that. He's breaking up the community into antagonistic groups.....now I better fight for my own... I want to protect my own... and so on. And that brings about the great divisions, very difficult to bridge and, eventually, they turn into violent conflicts.

(BF: And the danger is that he has the Police as his....)

Yes, he does make the Police into his private army...as long as he's mayor. But the moment he's no longer mayor, and he can't be mayor after this term unless he changes the Charter... things are going to change, depending upon who is going to be elected mayor. Because then the new mayor will choose his own police commissioner, and that police commissioner will set standards and be responsible to the new mayor.

So the change in the police will depend upon the change in the administration. And the rulings you make, in terms of who can be a policeman and who should not be a policeman, and what is required, and the extent to which citizens can public, or at least ostensibly, be able to report their grievances.

(WhP: To what extent do you think that the public are aware of this enough so that it becomes a major issue politically?)

Yes, it could be an issue politically, if you have personalities to fight the battle. Now your son, for example, was in the public eye for some time, and I think you ought to take advantage of the fact that he was in the public eye, the way Harston is doing it. I don't think Harston is going to get anywhere...because you have to have a political organization behind you if you're going to really make an impact.
But we do not have people of leadership quality. Who's going to run for mayor in the City of Philadelphia? We don't have anyone. What has happened in Philadelphia that we're not producing any Clarks, any Dilworths, any Walter Phillipses any longer? Where are they?

(WMP: Well, I don't know.)

By the way, they came from the middle class as I indicated before....they came from the white middle class. And they are WASPs if you want to know it, racially. How about the ethnic groups that are now spring up? Rizzo is a representative of an ethnic group. Tate represents an ethnic group. I don't know who's going to run for mayor now.

(WMP: Good question.)

There is a dearth of leadership, I think, that is our great problem, at the moment. Issues are here, problems are here.... ...maybe because the problems that we do have and the issues aren't sufficiently sharp....they don't hit people too hard...there's no war. A war is the thing that gets campuses aflame. But there's no war on.

(WMP: When we.... Clark and Dilworth came along.... there had been a war and the city was very rundown and it had been mishandled by the Republicans and they were very corrupt and things were done to expose the corruption and so on. And, maybe, that doesn't exist as much....to the same degree, anyway....)

Well, I remember Smith was just as stupid as Samuel... and Smith....Smith was then Commissioner of Recreation. Both were about as crude but not as brutal or stupid as Rizzo.

(WMP: Yeah. I think maybe they were even more stupid than Rizzo.

 Possibly. He has street sense. He has street wisdom, gutter snipe sense, a certain shrewdness that he employs.

(WMP: There was sort of a vacuum in Center Hall in the days of Barney Samuel. And he took his orders more from Tom Gates and Edward Hopkinson more than anybody else....the money people.

(WMP: Money was a problem then.)

Then too. Right. Yes, I recall now the people of power in that period. I really have no answer. I still don't know how we breed leadership.... if there are no problems that threaten life and limb....which a war does.

(WMP: Well, there was an awful lot went into those two, three, four or five years before Clark and Dilworth emerged. We had the City Policy Committee, as you know, the Citizens' Council on City Planning... you were on that, and Clark and Dilworth
and that was all... had been worked up for them, and they took advantage of what had been done on the civic front. Then they gave the political side a twist and they got themselves elected.

Well, but if you were to look at the social character of the people who led that movement. They were white middle class. At the moment, in our state of affairs, we do not have as clear cut a white middle class movement. The white middle class movement at that time, I think, moved out of noblesse oblige. They moved out of the spirit of doing service, being altruistic...working for their fellow citizens. After all, Clark came from a wealthy family. And FDR came from a wealthy family. So that group...that spirit of doing service, with its Anglo-Saxon background, has changed....

(WMP: Pushed out, you might almost say...)

Yes, because of the new money groups that came in and the ethnic groups coming in....

(WMP: And political organizations coming in....)

Well, there are always political organizations.

(WMP: Yeah, but in a way, the organization got into the hands of the Irish, and....it was always partly that, but there was always the top level....some of the people in the Clark... the financial people.... and up in the Northeast and other places, there were less of the immigrant, more recent people...and there were fewer Blacks.

May I ask you this? Could you get some funding for a research project? I would like to make an analysis of the rise and fall of the Citizens' Council on City Planning. I'll tell you why. The Citizens' Council on City Planning was involved in all these battles,- Charter, Planning Commission; they produced Clark who was part of their leadership....you were part of their movement. Why isn't there a Citizens' Council on City Planning now? We need an analysis of what made the Citizens' Council to begin with, what it accomplished in its heyday, and why it declined.

(WMP: Why don't you do that?)

You have to have time and money. That requires graduate assistants; now is there any money for such a study? How could a Citizens' Council on City Planning just fold its tent and disappear? Where are its records?

(WMP: I think the records are up at the Temple Archives.)

Well, wonderful. Wouldn't you... as part of your effort make such an analysis. Dig in depth and ask...why did this happen? It may reveal why there are no leaders now. I remember the excitement in the forties and fifties. It isn't here today.

(WMP: Well, that would be another project.)
I would say that analysis of the rise and fall of the Citizens’ Council on City Planning... an analysis of the City Policy Committee, which are parallel organizations, would be necessary for us to know...why it is we don't have the same spirit and leadership now.

(WMP: Well you have some classes, don't you, going now?)

Yes

(WMP: Well, how about assigning some of your students who might dig out the files and I'd be glad to work with them.)

The point i'm making is that you cannot get a graduate student to follow this unless there's a pot of gold at the end of the rainbow...he gets a degree out of this or he's paid for the time and effort in going it.

(WMP: Do they still have the Fels.....)

Fels Foundation?

(WMP: Fels.... School.....)

Oh, that's the University of Pennsylvania, yes, but you see

(WMP: I don't know whether they write these out of there or not.)

They do. But if there is an organization that will declare that it's going to give an award.... fund an activity of this sort.... you'll find people who'll be able to do it.

(BF: We're looking into a grant for what we're doing. If you're looking for a grant for what you're doing, then you can add to that what I am suggesting. Then this makes a volume, it adds depth to what you're trying to do.