

Vivian, SR 4006

Vivian: Uh, there was the singing of songs, but there was the making up of songs. There was a sense of creativity, a sense of joy, all right? (Sings) "The only thing that we did wrong, we stayed in the wilderness a day too long." I can't sing., all right? I can't do that at all, but the point is, and I'm no good at that but, but we made those up, all right, and we sang them among us, we created our own church services, all right?

INTERVIEWER: O.K., I'M CUTTING.

Vivian: Yes, that's it, cause that's all you need from that, you don't need that, but, but was a minister right outside of Nashville uh, who, who is, who the last time I heard was in the Bronx, was pastor in the Bronx uh, and he came back with that we stayed in the wilderness a day too long. All right, you know, it just, it just, it was all just so right, you know, and uh, and you could feel the excitement of it, you know. And it made me, it made uh, many of us who were seminarians, I think, understand the history of the Acts because here was—where, why would the disciples sing in prison? What did they sing? Did they have any songs? They made them up, the same as we were doing. Uh, uh, uh, they didn't have music for them, you know? They, nobody had written a sheet and put the notes on for them, there were no Gregorian chants uh, and uh, and uh, and nobody, and nobody had uh, and nobody had written "Amazing Grace" either, all right? And uh, who was it that said "How could they have made up songs?" Ray Charles wasn't there, see, and that was it, you know, I mean, but there was the spirit of, huh, and that creativity, that sense of life.

INTERVIEWER: WE'RE GOTNG TO HAVE TO SCOOT TO A WHOLE DIFFERENT. . .

Vivian: Oh, that's- I know, you're doing this other kind of film.

INTERVIEWER: YES, UM, YOU HAVE, HAVE DONE IT FOR US IN NASHVILLE, WE'RE GOING TO MOVE TO SELMA IN, IN '65, WAS MUCH UH, A VERY DIFFERENT SITUATION HERE AND WE HAVE UH, THE FILM OF YOU TALKING TO JIM CLARK ON THE STEPS OF THE COURTHOUSE, AND UH. . .[Overlap]

Vivian: I thought I'd done that for you last time you were here but. . .

INTERVIEWER: PARDON?

Vivian: You, you want me to explain what happened?

INTERVIEWER: IT'S NOT SO MUCH WHAT HAPPENED, BUT A LOT OF PEOPLE SEE THAT FOOTAGE—"WHY DIDN'T HE SHUT UP?" OR. . .

Vivian: Yes, that's right.

INTERVIEWER: UH, NOW REMEMBER I'VE, I'VE ONLY GOT A, A LITTLE BIT OF TTME, SO WE'RE ALREADY ON THE COURTHOUSE STEPS [Overlap]

Vivian: Sure, yes, and, and, but this is basically the question you want the answer to? O.K.

INTERVIEWER: RIGHT, WHY. . .

Vivian: O.K., and we've got say 30 seconds or something.

INTERVIEWER: SOME PEOPLE. . .[Overlap]. . .YES, WE, WERE LOOKTNG AT YOU AND JIM CLARK GOING AT IT. WHAT MADE YOU KEEP GOING AND KEEP PUSHING? THAT'S THE QUESTION WE WANT, SO LET'S ROLL.

Vivian: It was necessary. . .

CAMERA CREW MEMBER: ONE SECOND, ONE SECOND. O.K.

Vivian: It was necessary to keep speaking back to Jim Clark because I was reaching his questions. Uh, I was responding to his statements. It was a statement for people, black and white, to understand the meaning of what we were doing. We had a right to be there, we had a right to vote, and here was the evil force that was stopping that. It becomes very clear that we can never allow evil to destroy, uh, the forces of righteousness uh, even when beaten down. I had to get back up because otherwise people would have been defeated by violence. We can never allow violence to be defeated by nonviolence [sic]. There can be no questions unanswered, uh, the depth of the human consciousness must be told.

INTERVIEWER: O.K., LET ME STOP IT RTGHT THERE. WHY DIDN'T YOU JUST GO BACK AND PRAY OR SOMETHING, I MEAN WHY. . .

Vivian: Because it does not do that. Uh, uh, you are engaged in. . .

INTERVIEWER: SPECIFICALLY AND GIVE ME THAT CONTEXT OF YOU AND JIM CLARK.

Vivian: O.K., is that, with Jim Clark, it was a clear engagement between the forces of the movement und the forces of the structure that would destroy the movement. It was a clear engagement between those who wished the fullness of their personalities to be met, and those that would destroy us physically and psychologically. You do not walk away from that. This is what movement meant. Movement meant that finally we were encountering, on a mass scale, the evil that had been destroying us on a mass scale. You do not walk away from that, you continue to answer it. Uh, it does not matter whether you are beaten, that's a secondary matter. The only important thing is that you reach the conscience of those who are with you and of anyone watching--both the so-called enemy, and those who are preparing the battle, and anyone else who may be watching. Uh. . .

INTERVIEWER: O.K., LET'S CUT IT RTGHT THERE.

Vivian: Now, does that answer what you want?

INTERVIEWER: I'M NOT SURE BECAUSE I DON'T, LET ME, LET ME TRY ONE, GET, GET A GRIP ON WHAT, I'M NOT SURE WHAT. . .

BLACKSIDE CREW MEMBERS: YES, I THINK THAT, THAT DOES GET AT IT. - IT DOES GET IT, YES, YES. - I THINK IT DOES TOO. [Miscellaneous] - THERE'S SOMETHING THAT YOU SAID THERE THAT I THINK WAS WRONG, THAT, THAT CAME OUT WRONG, BECAUSE YOU SAID. . . - NONVIOLENCE AND VIOLENCE. - YES, YOU, DON'T LET UH, NONVIOLENCE BEAT VIOLENCE. - YES, OH, NICE CATCH.

Vivian: Oh, oh, I said it, I said it wrong? O.K. Now, how do we handle that then?

BLACKSIDE CREW MEMBER: LET'S DO IT AGAIN, THAT PART.

INTERVIEWER: WHICH PART? STARTING FROM. . .

BLACKSIDE CREW MEMBER: JUST, JUST YOU, YOU SAY: "YOU DO NOT LET. . ." SO WE CAN START WITH "YOU DO NOT LET. . ." AND THEN YOU HAD SAID. . .[Overlap, miscellaneous]

INTERVIEWER: OKAY, SO WE'LL JUST ASK THIS ONE QUESTION, UH, I MEAN YOU'LL ANSWER THE QUESTION ABOUT "YOU DO NOT LET VIOLENCE. . ."

Vivian: You want the one line?

INTERVIEWER: WE'LL, AND THEN I'LL GO RIGHT INTO THE NEXT QUESTION.

Vivian: O.K.

CAMERA CREW MEMBER: AND MARK.

Vivian: You do not allow nonviolence to be destroyed by violence.

INTERVIEWER: O.K., CUT.

BLACKSIDE CREW MEMBER: Excuse me, for editing, it might be easier to say: "You do not let. . ." or a few, and say a few words before you say that because it will be really hard to cut that, and I think we have to do part of that question again.

Vivian: Yes, cause you, just to pull out one sentence and drop it in.

BLACKSIDE CREW MEMBER: YES. . .[Overlap]. . .I MEAN AT LEAST, AT LEAST A COUPLE, AT LEAST A SENTENCE OR TWO [Miscellaneous, overlap] LET'S TRY, "YOU DO NOT LET" THOUGH, JUST TO HAVE IT, 'CAUSE THERE'S A CERTAIN CADENCE TO WHAT HE WAS SAYING.

INTERVIEWER: O.K. AND THEN I WANT. . .

Vivian: Wait a minute. You want that sentence: "You do not let. . ."

BLACKSIDE CREW MEMBER: YES.

Vivian: ". . .uh, violence destroy nonviolence." [Overlap]

BLACKSIDE CREW MEMBER: RIGHT, I THINK THAT'S THE WAY YOU HAD SAID IT THE FIRST TIME, SO. . .

INTERVIEWER: O.K., GO AHEAD.

Vivian: You do not let violence destroy nonviolence.

INTERVIEWER: O.K., CUT. THAT'S GOOD, I KNOW THIS DIFFICULT TO. . .

Vivian: Yes, that's right and I was trying to, 'cause I was trying to remember where I was, you know, but once you flub like that, you've to do something to make it up.

INTERVIEWER: I THINK WE'VE COVERED IT, UM, NOW, ABOUT THE NIGHT THAT JIMMY LEE JACKSON WAS SHOT UM, YOU HAD GONE TO. . .[Overlap]. . .O.K., TO LEAD THE MARCH, UM, TO THE JAILS WHERE, WHERE JIM ORANGE WAS, UH, THEY, FROM THIS QUESTION I'M REALLY LOOKING FOR TWO THINGS, ONE IS THE ATMOSPHERE OF THAT NIGHT, THIS IS ONE OF THE FEW NIGHT-TIME MARCHES - DID YOU HAVE A SENSE THAT IT WAS, YOU KNOW,

FOREBODING? DID YOU HAVE AN OMINOUS SENSE ABOUT THE WHOLE THING OR HAD THERE BEEN SO MANY NIGHT MARCHES BY THAT TIME, THERE HADN'T BEEN ANY IN MARION, BUT . . .

Vivian: There hadn't been in Marion, hadn't been any in, in, in uh, in Selma either, I don't think, uh. . .

INTERVIEWER: SO THE FIRST QUESTION IS REALLY: DID YOU HAVE THAT SENSE? I MEAN IF, IF, IF IT WASN'T REALLY ANYTHING THAT YOU. . .

Vivian: No, in fact, we were right on top of the jail, the jail was right across the street. In fact, we had to uh- but we weren't going to go straight across the street, right, now I'm trying to give you the scene [Inaudible], is that you, they the jail, you can still see it there, the jail's, I mean the jail's right here in a big block, right, right over from it is this little church, a little Methodist church, right? You uh, it, we really gone straight to sing to Jim, we'd have just walked across the street and right down. . .[Overlap]. . . That's right, it would have taken, taken, we would have done it in a minute, so we didn't want to do that so the idea was to come out of the church, take the sidewalk and go around, completely around the jail.

INTERVIEWER: BUT YOU WEREN'T WORRIED SINCE IT WAS THE NIGHT TIME?

Vivian: No, I really wasn't.

INTERVIEWER: O.K., SECOND, SECONDLY IS, WHERE, WHERE WERE YOU. . ?

BLACKSIDE CREW MEMBER: CAN I INTERJECT FOR ONE SECOND? BEFORE YOU LEAVE THAT PART OF THE QUESTION, I, I GUARANTEE YOU THAT THEY DO NOT NEED THE GEOGRAPHY OF. . .

Vivian: Oh no, I'm not even going to tell them all that. That's what you want, see, I was trying to get that picture to her though. . .[Overlap]. . .Yes, but I hear you, they don't need that geography, all right? But. . .

INTERVIEWER: WELL, ACTUALLY, WHAT, WHAT THEY WERE WONDERING IS THAT UM, WHERE YOU SPECIFICALLY WERE THAT NIGHT?

Vivian: O.K. Now I was, I was in Marion. Uh, here's, let me give it to you so that you can begin to think about it, right? You see, when they called me, I was in Selma. They called me to come over to Marion to give the speech for the mass meeting before they march, because they didn't have anybody who could do that really, they felt, to pull the people out of the church, right? So, but I was the only person there in [Selma], 'cause everybody had gone home for the week and it was my uh, time, whatever, not week, but for the weekend or whatever, it was my time at least whatever, 'cause I never remember days and stuff like that, for me to be there to, so I could handle whatever came up. We'd change off like that, Sometimes it'd [be] Hosea [Williams], and sometimes be- that's how the march [Inaudible], right? And uh, uh, the uh, uh, and uh, uh, so when they called me I told them, "Hey, look now, I will come over and give the speech, but I've got to get right back here because this is really my thing." In fact, we went back and forth on it 15, 20 minutes before I even agreed because I knew if something happened there and you're not there, anything can happen at that time, you can blow a whole movement that way, right? So I said, "O.K., I'm going to come over and do the speech, but I've got to go right, I've got to come right back to Selma, and I cannot lead the demonstration, O.K.?" And I wasn't too worried about it anyway, I mean I knew it was right across the street, I didn't

worry about it really, and uh, had no idea the state police was going to come in in great numbers or anything of that sort. So uh, I came on over and gave the speech. When I finished, I went out the back door, all right? See, it's just a little church and the back door right there, and [I] walked down little steps there, 3 or 4 steps and got in the car in the back, in the back, all right, to get on back to Selma, all right? Now, when they walked out the door, they got less than a half block, I mean and it's a small block, right? And everybody singing, they hadn't even gotten out of the church yet, and the State police were waiting and started beating people, well, what they did when they saw they were confronted with the force, police, fell down on their knees and began to pray, 'cause that was [Inaudible]. They just beat people unmercifully.

INTERVIEWER: NOW DID YOU SEE THAT, OR WERE YOU ON THE WAY BACK TO THE CAR OR

. . .

Vivian: No, I didn't see it, I was gone, no, I was already on my way back. What I saw was that a pol- by the time I got where I was, all right, see, 'cause they seemingly didn't walk immediately out, all right, but uh, when I got to, we were, got to a place where you turn, there was a, a state policeman standing there with a flashlight directing ca- well, we'd already, about a half a dozen state cars had already passed us--zoom, zoom, zoom--and we figure, what's this all about, right? By the time we got to that corner, here was this state policeman with a, with a, with a, a flashlight, waving them, telling them where to turn in other words, all right? And boy, they were coming. And uh, as we drove on there must have been oh, twenty, that's the number that comes to my mind, all right, from thinking back on it, about twenty of these police cars that passed, us--zoom, zoom, he was just directing them, right? Well, I stopped alongside the road to watch it, that's how I knew just about how many there were, you know, and uh, and uh, uh, we couldn't figure that. Then it was a matter of what to actually do, because I mean I knew I was supposed to be in Selma, all right, then we also had this situation there, see, all right, so uh, uh, I knew I had to go on back to Selma. Now, as I remember it, I went back to Selma. Now later I may have come back to Marion, but if I did I was not involved in anything, and that is why I say that is because some people in Marion say I came back that night, but I don't think I did, all right? I think I stayed in Selma that night. . .[Overlap]. . .See, it's too, it's too, see, for me to explain that, I could ex- see, because I didn't have an eye witness of the beating of the people, all right? You see what I mean?

INTERVIEWER: O.K., WE'LL GO ON THEN.

Vivian: And so, yes, that's right, so that's really not important for me, and I, I don't want you to, you see what I mean? Now, in fact, they killed Jimmy Lee Jackson. Well, one of the things is they killed Jimmy Lee Jackson looking for me, you know what I mean? Because uh, uh, and the thing is, boy, I felt so badly 'cause when we went back to the funeral, uh, Jimmy Lee, I thought those people were going to say, you know, "You so and so, you know, you walked out on us and we got beat," 'cause I know, people basically knew what was happening, I mean, you know what I mean, well, they'd probably been told at the, at the meeting.

INTERVIEWER: WELL, SOMEBODY SAID THE WHITES WERE LOOKING TO KILL SOMEBODY BLACK THAT NIGHT.

Vivian: That, that's right, and when Jimmy Lee Jackson, they won't- see, 'cause Jimmy Lee Jackson wasn't even close to the place, you know, he and his mother was in a restaurant, right? And they would spread out all over the city looking, and uh, uh, and Jimmy, and they, they insulted his mother and he spoke back and

that's where they [Inaudible], that's when they shot him, is uh, but uh, when I came back the people were so wonderful, you know, pardon me, I was sharing, but uh. . .

INTERVIEWER: NO. I WAS TRYING TO THINK, O.K., GOOD STORY [Overlap, miscellaneous] O.K., UM, O.K., THEN, O.K. THEN WE'LL JUMP TO [Overlap], YES, AFTER REED WAS, WAS KILLED UH, YOU AND REVEREND GREELEY UH, WERE TRYING TO LEAD A MARCH TO THE COURTHOUSE TN HIS HONOR AND YOU GOT STOPPED BY CLARK AND, WELL NOT SO MUCH CLARK BUT WILSON BAKER?

Vivian: Yes, yes, yes. Well, see, the first, yes, that started the Selma walk stuff, all right, uh, yes. Now, uh,

INTERVIEWER: CAN, CAN YOU, IS IT POSSIBLE TO GIVE A, SORT OF A CONCISE LEAD UP TO JUST WHAT HAPPENED THERE BRIEFLY AND THEN SO WE CAN GO TO ANOTHER QUESTION

Vivian: In fact, I'm trying to remember it that well myself. Uh, uh, see, I'm trying to remember details that would make it any different from any other situation. I mean we, we gathered at, at the Brown Chapel Church, all right, and we came out of the church and started down the street, and that's when we were stopped, all right? But that's, I mean it's a normal story.

BLACKSIDE CREW MEMBER: IT WAS THE FIRST TIME YOU WERE, IT WAS THE FIRST TIME YOU WERE STOPPED THAT CLOSE TO THE CHURCH, THOUGH, ISN'T IT?

Vivian: Yes, I think so, I think it was the first time we were stopped that close to the church, right, yes.

BLACKSIDE CREW MEMBER: AND THAT WAS WHAT LEADS TO THE SELMA WALL.

Vivian: That's right, that's right, that's what led to the Selma Wall.

BLACKSIDE CREW MEMBER: I THINK THAT'S WHAT THEY'RE AFTER. I THINK THEY'RE ALSO AFTER THE FACT THAT WILSON INTERCEPTED YOU BUT THERE WAS CLARK AND HIS POSSE THERE WAITING FOR YOU.

INTERVIEWER: WAITING IN THE WINGS.

BLACKSIDE CREW MEMBER: AND WILSON, THIS IS, THIS IS THE WAY, I WAS, I WAS THERE WHEN GREELEY WAS TELLING THE STORY THAT, UH, WILSON STOPPED YOU BECAUSE AS, AS IT SOUNDED HE, HE RECOGNIZED THE DANGERS OF THE SITE THERE TOO, THAT, LET'S STOP IT RIGHT THERE.

Vivian: True, uh, and you, and you really, really have a point, because we had continuous conflict between the two police officers, all right? Uh, one of them well-trained, the other was [Overlap]. O.K., O.K., good, then in that case, we'd better [Overlap]. Huh?

INTERVIEWER: I THINK WE HAVE GREELEY'S SIDE OF THE STORY 'TIL A CERTAIN POINT AND THEN WE'LL TRY TO SEE HOW MUCH. . .

Vivian: Yes, uh, see, this is um, uh, all I, all I actually remember we went out and we were stopped by, by, by, I remember talking with and having a conversation with, uh, Baker, about it, all right? Uh, the point is, we did not want to push be- and we didn't want to just push them out of the way and they knew that, all right? That was the conflict again on the bridge, the same kind of thing, they figured if they just put a mass of folk, that we wouldn't push

through them, which we didn't the first time, right? We had to make them open by other means. But uh, uh, uh, we talked and uh, I felt a sense that uh, Baker understood a lot of things, was concerned about a lot of things, but we did not talk directly about the fact that Clark might do this or might do that, 'cause if we talked directly about it, I would have felt the necessity that we had to go meet it.

DO YOU REMEMBER CLARK UH, BEING. . .

Vivian: Hm um, I don't remember Clark being there at all.

BLACKSIDE CREW MEMBER: WELL, NO, I THINK IT'S, THEY DON'T HAVE ANYTHING ELSE IN THE FILM THAT, THE POINTS THAT THEY WANT TO MAKE SIMPLY ARE THAT THIS WAS A MARCH THAT CAME OUT OF THE CHURCH AND WAS STOPPED ALMOST IMMEDIATELY BEFORE IT CAME TO THE DOWNTOWN. ALL THE OTHER MARCHES HAD GONE TO THE DOWNTOWN AREA.

Vivian: Yes, that's true, that's right, we'd gone, that's right. In fact, we tried to even cut across the park on Baker and he stopped us.

BLACKSIDE CREW MEMBER: YES, O.K., UH, AND I THINK THEY JUST SIMPLY WANT TO KNOW THAT THE MARCH WAS STOPPED EARLY AND, AND, THAT IT WAS STOPPED BY WILSON BAKER-- THOSE ARE THE MAIN. . .

Vivian: Yes, yes, the educated one.

BLACKSIDE CREW MEMBER: THE MAIN POINTS. O.K. [Overlap]

INTERVIEWER: O.K., SO JUST GIVE ME THAT SHORT BIT ABOUT YOUR, YOUR LEADING THAT MARCH.

Vivian: Um hum. Uh, we had gathered then to uh, to protest uh, we'd gathered in Brown Chapel Church basement where the clergy gathered all the time--I was in charge of clergy during summer. And we organized our demonstration, came up out of the basement, started down the street, and a normal- we expected to- it not to be stopped, or if at all stopped, we'd be stopped by Clark downtown. No sooner had we gotten out of the church good, and we were stopped by Baker, and a whole group of his posse, who was across, of his, of not posse really, of his, of his uh, regular policemen, And they were across the street and they wouldn't let us go. We tried to cut across the street and they would not let us do that. They, they hemmed us in uh, uh, and uh, and then that began the Selma Wall as we stopped there, because we were, the forces were meeting eye to eye, and uh, and we later called it "the Selma Wall."

INTERVIEWER: WHAT WAS THE VIGIL LIKE AT THE SELMA WALL?

Vivian: Uh, it was all night, it was in the rain, it was a day, it was uh, uh, day after day, it was in the rain all night, people joined from all over, it became the place to be, I'm sorry, it became the place to be, and uh, because it became a symbol of the forces meeting each other eye to eye, not in anger, but in an understanding, it was a way, a way to show the love and concern that we later see in the peace movement with flowers and the guns. Uh, I didn't need that last part--that has nothing to do with the other.

BLACKSIDE CREW MEMBER: HOLD ON ONE SECOND, O.K.

INTERVIEWER: O.K., SO WHAT WAS IT. . .

Vivian: One of the things that characterized Selma was what was called the Selma Wall. The Selma Wall was when people began to demonstrate, as they started downtown they were met by police forces and where they met was called the Wall, in fact, the police even put some uh, wooden horses uh, in-between us at one point, uh, and we stood there across that line looking at each other, sharing with each other, talking with each other. The policemen hardly talked but we were making uh, uh, our statements to them and trying to make them understand what we were doing. But that place became the Selma- we stayed in it night after night even in the rain we were at the Selma Wall.

INTERVIEWER: O.K., LET'S CUT THERE.

BLACKSIDE CREW MEMBER: GOOD.

Vivian: It's a good way to see it, there's [sic] a lot of 10- and 12-year olds out there, and this film [Overlap]. That's right, that's right [Inaudible]. Hosea [Williams] wanted to go across that bridge so badly [Overlap], he was looking for some excuse to go across that bridge. And John Lewis showed up that day and he had to have the excuse he needed. There, wasn't anybody else from SNCC there. He just showed up, he just came to town.

INTERVIEWER: UH, IN SELMA UH, THERE'S A QUESTION HERE ABOUT THE UH, SPEECH THAT MARTIN LUTHER KING MADE, HIS FIRST SPEECH IN BROWN CHAPEL ON JANUARY SECOND. WERE YOU THERE?

Vivian: January Second, Emancipation Pro- oh yes, and I set it up. See, I set up the town for it. I had to make the arrangements with the town.

INTERVIEWER: DO YOU REMEMBER THE SPEECH?

Vivian: Oh, I don't remember the content of it.

INTERVIEWER: NOT THE CONTENT, BUT DO YOU REMEMBER ANYTHING ABOUT, UNUSUAL ABOUT THE, THE SETTING, HOW IT WAS RECEIVED, WHAT IT. . .

Vivian: Well, it was, oh, it was really received, of course Martin was always received, so there's nothing new about that, I think, I think how it happened [Overlap] and why it was the 2nd is probably the kind of stuff you need, is that, you see, let me sort of give you a background then you play with it as you want to. See, what had really happened is, SNCC had been there, Bernard Lafayette had been there and for a period of time, right? But nothing wa- not "nothing," but things were not happening like most of the people, like the leadership of the town wanted them to go, O.K.? And even some of the direction, the thinking and so forth, they were not for. Uh, and since things were not moving like they wanted them to and it was about time to bring in somebody else, is the way they thought. Well, I'm national director of affiliates right? So I have to go ahead and troubleshoot everything, make certain plans. So I come into town and uh, I remember pers- I remember most of them, but Miss Marie Foster stands out in my mind as being one of those persons that just couldn't, you know, she- and she was, she was so mixed up because she liked Bernard and the whole group, at the same time, she wanted something else, and uh, then there were other people there that just didn't like SNCC and wanted something else. Then there were people there that said, "You know, I wish there was some way that we could really work together, you know what I mean?" But there had to be a new set of leadership, all right? Now, uh, uh, so that once it was agreed, once they passed a thing, the leadership of the town, you know, the, the movement there passed the thing, that they wanted us to come, right? When I go back, I'm

just trying to give you the wholeness of it, right? I go back to Atlanta, and we began to talking about how are we going to do it, right, so once all of it is cleared, we know everything is right, and we go back and forth between Doc and the people there. And you know, and are [Inaudible] directing the people and all that kind of stuff clear up. So, O.K., so then we decide to come in. Now, when are we going to come, how will we plan it, et cetera, et cetera, O.K.? So we began to send people in to begin the preparation but we've already decided that January First is Emancipation Proclamation day, so here's the time to do it, all -right? The whole town's ready for a speech and, anyway, right? The Emancipation Proclamation day is the real way to do it. Something happened on the First is the reason we did not do it I think, and it was on the Second that we did it. In fact, I was thinking it was the Third or Fourth.

INTERVIEWER: [Overlap]. . .ABOUT THE DAY, ABOUT THE SPEECH OR THE CROWD'S REACTTON?

Vivian: Oh no, it was just a regular mass meeting. I mean the idea was that, is that they knew when, when, 'cause it was already clear we were coming, but you see nothing is clear until Martin arrives, I don't care who else does what, how many things done, until Martin himself comes, people don't believe it. But when Martin comes and tells them that, they believe it, O.K.? No, I mean I don't care what you say, I don't care who you are, right, until Martin says they're coming and they're going to stay through 'til the end, O.K., now those kind of things were important, all right, and uh. . .

INTERVIEWER: LET ME THINK FOR A SECOND, THAT'S NOT GOING TO. . .

Vivian: See, this is not going to sell, the way I'm doing it for you. [Overlap] Let me tell you, do you know what the very truth is it was a long time, really after everything had cleared before I even began to realize that Martin- that Malcolm had any real importance. Now I mean, that's me, so you know what was happening to most people, all right? You know what I'm trying to say, I'm supposed to know what's happening. . .

INTERVIEWER: WAS THERE ANY MATCH IN THAT, TO THAT VISIT?

Vivian: Not by, not by folk.

BLACKSIDE CREW MEMBER: WELL SEE, THAT'S WHAT THEY NEED. THAT, THAT'S WHAT THEY'RE TRYING TO GET AT, IS, IS YOUR SENSE OF WHAT THE REACTION OF LOCAL PEOPLE IN SELMA WAS TO. . .

Vivian: That's right, local people, it wasn't, it wasn't a big thing. Uh, uh, as far as the people in the south was [sic] concerned. . .[Overlap]. . . .See O.K., [Lapse]. . .was laughing about uh, says uh, Malcolm said uh, "Martin's in Washington having a dream and I'm in Harlem having a nightmare."

CAMERA CREW MEMBER: O.K., AND ROLL SOUND, AND MARK.

INTERVIEWER: OKAY, MALCOLM'S. . .

CAMERA CREW MEMBER: AGAIN, PLEASE.

INTERVIEWER: I'LL START THE QUESTION. WE JUST WANT THREE, FOUR SENTENCES ONLY, UH, JUST MALCOLM'S IMPACT ON PEOPLE UH, IN SELMA [Overlap].

Vivian: There was no great impact on the people of Selma uh, by Malcolm. They hardly knew Malcolm in the first place, and they felt they were the only ones doing anything and what they were doing to nonviolent direct action and the means they were using was [sic] getting results: they were passing bills in the legislature, they were creating voting rights bill, they were changing the very nature of race relations, it was not being done in New York or Chicago, uh, and it was not being done through that kind of conversation.

INTERVIEWER: O.K., CUT, THAT'S FINE [Overlap, miscellaneous]

Vivian: [Lapse]. . .really be something, you see. Uh. . .

INTERVIEWER: O.K., UM,

BLACKSIDE CREW MEMBER: SHOULD WE HAVE A CRACK AT THIS?

INTERVIEWER: YES, LET'S TRY THIS WITH UM, LET ME JUST THINK A LITTLE BIT BEFORE WE GO, UH. . .

Vivian: Well, I can simply say, uh, but the, but the, Malcolm didn't make an impact on persons there, on the people there, but may have made a, a great impact on the structures of this society, all right, on, on those. . .

INTERVIEWER: LET'S NOT GET THAT, I DON'T WANT TO GET THAT PHILOSOPHICAL.

BLACKSIDE CREW MEMBER: YES, 12-YEAR OLDS DON'T, 12-YEAR OLDS DON'T UNDERSTAND STRUCTURES OF THIS SOCIETY.

Vivian: That's right, that's right, uh, uh, but something he did say that was very important, one thing, something he was. . .

INTERVIEWER: MAYBE WHAT YOU SAID BEFORE, MAYBE WHAT PEOPLE REMEMBER ABOUT THAT IS NOT SOMETHING MALCOLM SAID TO PEOPLE BUT. . .

Vivian: O.K., good, put it very simply, O.K.?

BLACKSIDE CREW MEMBER: O.K. SO LET'S HAVE A SHOT AT IT, AND. . .[Overlap]

INTERVIEWER: THAT'S IT. WE'VE GOT THE REST OF IT ALREADY.

BLACKSIDE CREW MEMBER: O.K. WE'RE FINE.

INTERVIEWER: O.K., READY TO GO.

Vivian: But what was remembered from Malcolm's visit was his conversation with Mrs. King where he clearly states that he wanted America to understand that there was another alternative. If they did not listen to the nonviolence of Martin King, there were other alternatives that the nation would have to face.

INTERVIEWER: CUT, THAT'S FINE, THAT'S VERY SIMPLE.

BLACKSIDE CREW MEMBER: I'M SORRY, BUT I HAVE ONE LAST ONE IF YOU DON'T MIND.

INTERVIEWER: YES, NO, I'M JUST, I'M WORRIED ABOUT THE TIME. IT'S 6:30.

Vivian: Oh, I'm not, oh, that's unimportant, 6:30 is not important at the other end, half-hour difference is not going to make a bit of difference there.

BLACKSIDE CREW MEMBER: WELL, I THOUGHT WE, WE DID A VERY INTERESTING INTERVIEW WITH JOE SMITHERMAN.

Vivian: Yes, is that right? Yes, he's Mayor.

BLACKSIDE CREW MEMBER: YES, HE'S A WONDERFUL GUY, UH, AND HE GAVE A WONDERFUL INTERVIEW, WAS, SO IT WAS YOU AND ANDY AND. . .

Vivian: Oh yes, uh, and, and Dorothy Cotton and uh, uh, how many others I don't really know uh, but there was half a dozen of them.

BLACKSIDE CREW MEMBER: O.K. 'CAUSE WHAT I THINK WOULD BE USEFUL TO THAT FILM IS A LITTLE BIT, TINY BIT OF A SETTING OF WHERE YOU WERE, A TINY BIT, BUT MAINLY YOUR OWN REACTION TO HEARING THAT, AND I, I'M. . .

Vivian: Jackson is his name--I got it Dennis uh, uh. . .

BLACKSIDE CREW MEMBER: I THINK IT'S SUFFICIENT TO SAY THAT THERE WAS JUST A, YOU KNOW, GROUP OF YOU TOGETHER WATCHING. . .

Vivian: Yes, O.K., see, I want to say it at, at uh, at uh. . .[Overlap]

BLACKSIDE CREW MEMBER: THE QUESTION IS JUST TO GET ON FILM C.T.'S REACTION TO, TO [INAUDIBLE].

Vivian: Oh, cause it's very important because uh, see Martin, a tear came down Martin's face.

BLACKSIDE CREW MEMBER: NOW WAS MARTIN THERE?

Vivian: Oh yes, oh that's what I'm talking about see, see. . .[Overlap]. . .Oh yes, I witnessed this.

BLACKSIDE CREW MEMBER: I'VE HEARD THAT STORY BEFORE ABOUT THAT TEAR COMING, THAT'S GREAT.

Vivian: That's, see, that's, that's it, see, and because we cheered and I remember looking over at Martin and he was sitting there silently and a tear was running down his cheek, right?

BLACKSIDE CREW MEMBER: I THINK YOU, AT MOST, A SENTENCE ON THE SETTING, JUST A GROUP OF YOU WERE THERE, YOU KNOW, WERE TOGETHER, UH, AT A HOME IN SELMA, O.K.? AND I HATE TO TELL YOU THIS, BUT WE HAVE ABOUT 30 SECONDS. I WANT YOU TO DO THIS AND THEN WE ARE LITERALLY OUT OF FILM.

INTERVIEWER: OKAY, SO JUST, DO YOU, DO YOU HAVE IT IN YOUR HEAD?

Vivian: Sure.

CAMERA CREW MEMBER: O.K., AND ROLLING. HOLD ON ONE SECOND, O.K.

Vivian: I remember very clearly when we heard LBJ give that famous speech. We were at the residence of Mr. & Mrs. Jackson, Dennis there, and we were all sitting around together, and Martin was sitting in a chair looking toward the TV set and when Mar- and when uh, LBJ said, "And we shall overcome," we all cheered, and I looked over toward Martin and Martin was very quietly sitting in the chair, and a tear ran down his cheek. It was a victory like none other. It

was an affirmation of the movement. It was- guaranteed us as much as anything could that we would vote and that millions of people in the south would have a chance to be involved in their own destiny. It was really the final breakup of segregation and, as we knew it, in the old south.

INTERVIEWER: GREAT [Overlap] THANK YOU, A MASTERFUL JOB, THANKS A LOT, THAT WAS REALLY GREAT.

BLACKSIDE CREW MEMBER: WHY CAN'T THEY ALL BE LIKE YOU?

Vivian: It's uh, it's uh, since uh, see, I, I have my, I have my own little recorder in here to take those remarks out. Those, those are the ones I turn onto, uh, I keep those, I play them back to my wife every time we get in an argument, you know what I mean? Turn it up in the background, the louder she gets, the louder I turn it up. These introductions are great for that.

INTERVIEWER: SHE SOUNDS LIKE, THE WAY YOU DESCRIBE HER, SHE SOUNDS LIKE SHE WOULDN'T GO FOR THAT.

Vivian: No, she doesn't, in fact, in fact, actually, my wife is too nice. She is just coming to realize that she shouldn't have to be that nice, you know what I mean? And uh, and I, I'd like you to- I say, "Baby, I already told you, talk back sometimes," you know, you know, "Don't, don't take all this junk," you know. Because uh, you know, she's like that, she's [a] beautiful soul.

INTERVIEWER: I WANT TO, WANT TO GET SOME STILLS OF YOU, IF YOU DO HAVE ANY, OR SIIE, YOU SAID SHE HAS [Inaudible].

Vivian: Yes, that's right.

INTERVIEWER: WHAT'S THE BEST WAY TO DO THAT? SHOULD WE JUST. . .

Vivian: I don't know, take them uh, uh. . .

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