

Interviewer: Why don't you start off with where and when you were born?

RC: I was born near Peru, Indiana, April 5th, 1909, on a farm ten miles from Peru.

Interviewer: How's that for you then? Since you weren't born in Putnam County, where did you go to high school?

RC: I went to Butler Township High School. Except the last two years, I drove to Peru ten miles in order to take Latin. It wasn't taught in the local country school. So I graduated from Peru High School in 1927.

Interviewer: How would you describe your experience while at high school? Did you experience any segregation in schooling, anything like that, in your community?

RC: I think there was a good deal, though in the rural area there weren't any people of color, black people. But in the high school, the few black people who were there were very much segregated and cut off from the main student body, which was white. I don't remember any particular experiences. But there were hardly any black people there. But there were a few. Not more than a half dozen at most.

Interviewer: A half dozen black people at your school?

RC: Yes.

Interviewer: Were these black people allowed to participate in extracurricular activities and given scholarships and given all the same opportunities as the white students?

RC: No, not at all.

Interviewer: So they weren't allowed all of the above?

RC: No.

Interviewer: Were they kind of socially segregated as well?

RC: Oh, very much so.

Interviewer: Very much so. Can you recall a particular occasion when you remember segregation occurring?

RC: No, I don't think I can. I'm trying to recall, but I can't recall it seems. I had thought of talking only about race situation in Greencastle from the beginning of 1951 when I came here as a teacher. I can't recall particulars there at Peru. I do remember that my mother was in a little grocery store and she was very anti-racist. There was one black man in there when she went into the small grocery store. The grocery store was much smaller years ago. Another black man came in and stabbed the one who was already there. I can remember my mother telling this story. She told how the blood from the one black man came on to her. Though anti-racist, I think she showed her racism in the way she told the story and the attitude toward the blood from the black man.

Interviewer: So she kind of described it as being disgusting or something?

RC: Though she was a Quaker, we were Quakers and stood against the racism. When the blood of a black man came on to her when it was a stabbing, it seemed to me that she showed some racism.

Interviewer: Did you live in a predominantly Quaker community back in Peru?

RC: No, we lived ten miles from Peru in the country on a hundred acre farm. That was about six or seven miles from where my mother grew up on a farm. All of her brothers and sisters were living and her parents were living for many, many years after the marriage. After she left that community, they lived in that area and went to a Quaker church. We went to church up there seven miles away for many, many years. So I have experience of living in a community where most of the people were Quakers and all family members were Quakers.

Interviewer: Fast forwarding, you moved here in 1951, correct?

RC: Yes.

Interviewer: What were your initial... What initially did you think of the Greencastle community, well, Putnam County community?

RC: From a racist standpoint?

Interviewer: Yeah.

RC: Well, Putnam County was very different from the Twin Cities in Minnesota where I had been living for eight years teaching at Hamlin University. I think racism shows up much more in a small community than it does in a large community. But I don't have very much basis for saying that. I wasn't aware of racism much in the Twin Cities. I expect there was considerable there, but blacks and whites didn't live in the same area and they didn't shun each other or the whites didn't shun the blacks as much as they do in a small community. I think racism shows up. But this was my first experience of being aware of racism on a daily basis. And it seems to me that blacks and whites were very sharply separated here.

RC: Everybody was aware of it. The blacks were even forbidden to drive on certain streets near DePauw University. And in every situation in Greencastle I think there was racism. Blacks didn't go in the front door of the public library and return books and get books like white people did. I don't remember the details, but I remember that they had to go around to the back or side door and then had to have made arrangements ahead of time. And were not at all treated like whites were treated. Well, maybe you have questions on that one.

Interviewer: Well, since we're sticking to the public accommodations, can you recall any differential in things such as education offered to blacks, job opportunities, stuff like that? Well, let's start with education. Can you recall any differential education between whites and blacks in the Putnam community?

RC: I don't believe that whites and blacks went to the same schools. I think there was a small school in the black community where the black students went. But in the beginning of the fifties when I came here, and all through the fifties, and very much the same way in the sixties, until somewhere in the sixties, things remained a good deal the same. Blacks just

didn't walk in the same paths, go to the same places as whites were able to do. Everybody there was a distinction. I remember, see, all the shopping was done around the courthouse, around the central block of Greencastle. And I remember talking with white people, other white people, about how blacks went into side doors and so on at these various different shops, and weren't allowed, were not treated like white people were treated.

Interviewer: So they weren't offered the same quality of service at the shops?

RC: They may have been able to purchase the same goods, but they didn't go in alongside white people and shop alongside white people. Everywhere there was sharp, sharp distinction, sharp separation, and certainly no friendliness on the part of white people. Generally, no friendliness toward the black people who were nearby, if they were nearby, or when they were.

Interviewer: We mentioned the segregation in public accommodations. Do you recall there being segregation in living units? Like a certain neighborhood that was predominantly black and then separated off from maybe the white neighborhoods in the area?

RC: Oh, there was very sharp, very sharp separation. No intermingling at all in houses, housing. The blacks had their place to live, their community, in the south end of town. Well, there are not very many blacks living around anymore, but some of those living are still living in that area. I better not start out to name streets. Crown Street was one of them. They lived in one area that was strictly, they were strictly confined there, and no whites lived there.

Interviewer: Now, was this area, what condition was the neighborhood in relative to like a white neighborhood?

RC: It was a much poorer neighborhood, much poorer neighborhood. The school building was much poorer, houses were poorer. Everything showed that they belonged to a considerably lower economic class than whites do.

Interviewer: Have you actually seen, did you actually see the black school building by any chance?

RC: Yes, I can't remember very clearly. See, it's been a while. See, I was, well it doesn't matter how old I was when I came, I've been here for 54 years. So I was only 42 when I came, so I've lived here longer than anybody else.

Interviewer: Do you recall any differential in employment opportunities for blacks in the community?

RC: Oh, the difference in employment opportunities was very marked. Blacks didn't work alongside of whites. Blacks didn't do the same kind of work in the same community with whites. Since 25 years ago, I would have been able to be a lot more specific on lots of things. One forgets some. In fact, I thought of going to Charles Miles and talking with him. Charles is a good friend of mine. Do you know Charles?

Interviewer: No, we watched the interview of his mother. I don't remember her name, though. It was interesting. And someone else in our class was interviewing him, I believe.

RC: Well, Charles and I have been friends for many years. I might have known Charles long and long before racism had ended. I tried to get over those racial boundaries and lines as much as I could. But a black person wouldn't even invite you in the house if you came through the door. And this happened to me not more than about 10 years ago, after blacks had been able to move out of that limited small community. I went to the door of a white woman, I mean a black woman, and she didn't invite me in. I think I said something to her about it, and she did let me come in, but explained that she was following a pattern that was old. See, blacks, it's amazing, blacks just couldn't live anywhere except in their own little place. And, you see, this, I can't really recall names, places and so on, but this was just about directly east of DePauw, over on 231, where this woman lived. And I was very much surprised to see. But she was nice to me after. She was nice to me all the time.

Interviewer: Why do you think it was they didn't let white people in sometimes, or do you not remember?

RC: Remember what?

Interviewer: Why do you think it was that she didn't let you in?

RC: Oh, I think simply that white people wouldn't want to come in, wouldn't go into a black person's house. And I think they were following the biases of the white people rather than their own. I think we talked quite a little about this, she and I, after I got in. We talked about the decision.

Interviewer: So she just kind of expected that you wouldn't want to come in anyway?

RC: Yeah, it was just a habit.

Interviewer: I've heard a lot about IBM being one of the frontrunners in black employment in the community. Could you recall anything about that by chance?

RC: No, only that it was a great thing for a few black people who had the qualifications, the right age and so on. I remember, yes, how good black people and white people who identified with black people, I remember how good they felt about IBM being here. And then how sorry they were for IBM to close. Charles Miles, would you know him if you saw him?

Interviewer: Probably, I've seen him.

RC: Charles Miles worked for IBM and was very appreciative of it.

Interviewer: What types of jobs did blacks typically occupy in other realms?

RC: Oh, I can't be very specific, but it was manual labor. You know that term?

Interviewer: Yeah.

RC: Manual labor. Of course, they came into big houses. Blacks would come and clean the houses and do that kind of work. Well, it was all physical, all physical work that they would have done. It was all physical work.

Interviewer: Well, you were a member of the NAACP. When did you become a member, outside of Putnam County?

RC: I don't remember if I was or not outside of Putnam County before I came. I would have been if an NAACP was at all in evidence of where I was living in St. Paul, Minnesota, for eight years. An NAACP would have been as much in mind as more familiar with racism was seen. Let's see, it was in the 60s that Martin Luther King was around. And a teacher of sociology, John Reiling and I, took four students with us and drove to Washington, D.C. to see Martin Luther King and to hear him. And John Reiling and I were the only two people on the DePauw faculty who would meet openly with any of these small minority of radical students who were concerned about racism. That was a major issue, racism. And the rights of women, too. You can't imagine the conditions of blacks and women just 25 to 30 years ago. Things have changed so quickly. They didn't change for quite a while after those protests. John and I really risked our jobs here at DePauw, and I can give you proof of that.

RC: You know who Bob Farber is? He was the dean at DePauw from the time I came until about 1980. And he lives over at Asbury Towers where I am, and it wasn't over there that he told me this, it was before I moved in that it was about a year ago, I tell you what, it doesn't matter, it was not much more than a year, a little less than a year. He said, "You know, one day the president and I were standing in the administration building looking out on East College, there's a lot of glass windows there, looking out on East College, and we saw a group of students sitting on East College lawn. And that so upset us. We knew who they were. They were these radical students. And we said, "We must go down there and break that up right now." And he said, that's what we did. We went down there, we told those students this was in the fall or the spring, told them to get up and get off of East College lawn, completely off.

RC: And you know, East College building stands in a big block, so there's lots of lawn there. And so he told me that's what we did. Now that seems to me to, you can't imagine, administrative people, faculty people, who would not yet toast to a group of students who were concerned about issues like this. Now John and I did meet a time or two out on East College lawn with them. And I just couldn't even think about what kind of job I could find with a much lower income to feed my two boys and wife.

Interviewer: Can you recall maybe another time that you were kind of singled out since you were so open to racial relations in the community, either work related or just socially, anything like that?

RC: It's been so long ago. It would be 40 years ago if it weren't the end of the fifties. I'm sure there were lots of them. You see, it's unbelievable. Most of the faculty would be sympathetic and a lot of them would take the lead in dealing with social justice issues today. And there are very many speakers who come to campus alongside. Well, fast forward a little bit. Speaking of faculty and being racially open, I mean, Bob Adams recently got named Man of the Year by the NAACP.

Interviewer: Do you think he's done a lot in improving DePauw relations in that matter?

RC: I think so. I wonder if I can recall when he became president. Well, the situation now would have been unbelievable back in the fifties or sixties. I expect he's done, well certainly he's continued with the program. Maybe he was the one who developed it for the most part.

Interviewer: Back when you were teaching here, do you recall anything, segregation of student services between like black and white students at DePauw, such as like maybe different fraternities being exclusively white or exclusively black or something of that measure?

RC: They were all exclusively white, all exclusively white. Do you know the name, I think I asked you this on the telephone, do you know the name Vernon Jordan?

Interviewer: Yeah. I think,

RC: Let's see, it was in '63 that Reiling and four students and I went to Washington, D.C. to the march there and heard him give the address, "I have a dream about little white children and little black children playing together" and so on. But, Vernon Jordan, he was a very nationally known black person. I was here from 53 to 57. We hadn't talked. Well, black students couldn't live in DePauw housing at that time. They couldn't eat on the campus. They, of course, couldn't get the haircut at Queen Castle. There, across from the east end of Walden Inn, across the street, there was a restaurant and it was very much on the corner. It was very much, well, all students went there, except the black students couldn't go in there and eat. I did find out, long ago, that the black students could telephone in and make an order and then, on the outs, food to the order would be brought out to the side of the building. But, black students were very much discriminated against on the campus. This was well into the 60s, maybe all the way through the 60s. But, they couldn't live in a dormitory. They couldn't eat in a dormitory or at the Union Building. They had to live with a black family and eat with a black family.

Interviewer: This may be a dumb question, but were they allowed to participate in any extracurricular activities, such as athletics, student groups, whatever?

RC: It seems to me it was very much an event given much attention when the first black person played on the basketball court. I don't think it was possible in the 50s, I think.

Interviewer: Do you remember about when that happened, the first black basketball team?

RC: No, no, it's a little hard to remember. I can't remember and I can't remember who the black was. A few years ago, I worked out a speech or presentation on this. It had many details. I have my old file in my apartment. I moved from my little house first of May last year. My son was the one who was taking most of the initiative in getting me to move. He and his wife did very much of the sorting of the house. So, some things I would like to have, I don't have anymore.

Interviewer: Going back to something you said earlier, kind of off the topic. When you went with the four students and Professor Riley, was it, to Washington, D.C.?

RC: Reiling, R-E-I-L-I-N-G.

Interviewer: Okay, Reiling. Reiling.

RC: He's been gone 20 years or so. But, I heard from his wife at Christmas Day. She said, "I don't know how I'm going to sleep."

Interviewer: What was that experience like, to see Martin Luther King, during your speech?

RC: Oh, that was a marvelous experience. I could see his face. I got that close. Oh, half a block from him, maybe just a little more. And, he spoke very powerfully, very forcefully. And, everybody, huge crowd there. Very attentive, no noise. The same from his voice. Yeah, it was a powerful speech.

Interviewer: You mentioned you're a member of the NAACP. Are there any other organizations here in Putnam County you've been a member of, through the years? Such as, I mean, I know a few. We're looking out at the Needle Workers Club, the Sunshine Club, Mason Club, Kiwanis.

RC: I was with Kiwanis Club for a long time. But, Kiwanis, I mean, also. Oh, yes, it was Frank's.

Interviewer: Yeah.

RC: Well, they just thought I'd be back, that's all. They couldn't have come with us.

Interviewer: It's just kind of the norm here in Greencastle and all that.

RC: Yeah, yeah, I think racism was just showing up much more in a small town. It was given more attention. See, I mentioned that I used to sit in the back of a car in certain streets near DePauw. Now, of course, there came a time when we had all the tax students we could get. But they were forbidden, blacks from driving into the DePauw campus.

Interviewer: Well, on that topic, since you already are touching it, were you alluding to any nonviolent protests or anything, sit-ins, stuff like that, done here at DePauw's campus or in the Putnam community in general?

RC: Can't recall. Can't recall. If I talk with Charles Miles and get my memory working better and also hear a lot from him, should I give you a ring and tell you about an event or so?

Interviewer: No, someone will be interviewing him also, so we're trying to compile all the interviews.

RC: Oh, you're going to interview him?

Interviewer: Yeah, somebody's going to interview him. And also his brother James, I think, he has a brother named something. They're interviewing him, too.

RC: Well, his brother is one of the top people at the furniture warehouse. Hey, you remember the big, big building down there?

Interviewer: The one on 241?

RC: Just before you crossed the railroad?

Interviewer: Yeah, yeah. I actually bought a mattress there as a sophomore.

RC: Yeah, yeah. For seven years, with one person who had a truck, he kept furniture for people who wanted to give it away and put it up on the third floor there and then took furniture from there to the people who wanted it. And it wasn't just transferring furniture, whites to blacks, but there were blacks that were getting the furniture, oftentimes. Others, too. Mostly, maybe most of them.

Interviewer: So you're saying a lot of the time it was whites giving the furniture to the store and then you were giving it to blacks?

RC: Yeah. Let's see, I forgot there was an organization. Since we were the servants, we didn't get paid. But we'd pick up furniture that people wanted to give away and we would take it to those who wanted it. And we saw some very eager little living places. Very, very, very poor people getting furniture.

Interviewer: Can you maybe describe one of these living units? Or do you not remember specifics? I mean, what...

RC: Oh, you mean where we took furniture?

Interviewer: Yeah.

RC: Well, there were, let's see, I can't remember all the terminology, but on the east side, south of the main street, there's an area in which very poor people lived. There were some very, very small houses that people lived in. I suspect there were places that weren't houses, but I saw small houses that I hadn't seen before. And then out on the, there's an area on the north side that was on just north of the railroad and back to the east. There were little houses in there, if I remember. Yeah. Very, very, very, very small. I had more time.

Interviewer: Going back, the NAACP, what was the composition of members racially in the organization back then in Putnam County? And now, I mean, was it predominantly white, predominantly black?

RC: Yeah, it's been predominantly white, because there's been more white. And there's been a sprinkling of the white who were pretty free from race fighting, who have concerns of the situation of black people. The NAACP met last Monday at 4 o'clock, Monday afternoon, and there's a little house over in south end of town. It's been, there's gone to the NAACP. I think it was.

Interviewer: What street, do you remember?

RC: I can't say.

Interviewer: I'm bad with street names too, so.

RC: Yeah.

Interviewer: What kind of role has the NAACP played in furthering the black interest in the Putnam community and the civil rights movement in the 60s and stuff?

RC: What role did it have?

Interviewer: Well, what role did it, well, both, the NAACP general.

RC: Oh, yeah, yeah. Well, I can't think of specifics.

Interviewer: I know you mentioned the barbershop thing where a lot of black citizens were denied the right to get their hair cut and stuff. Did the NAACP play any role in that? Well, first of all, what was that incident like? Let's see.

RC: What did I tell you about a barbershop incident?

Interviewer: Yeah, what exactly happened?

RC: I have a little evidence that my memory doesn't work as well. I can't think right now what the incident was.

Interviewer: Well, African Americans in the Putnam community were denied the service of getting their hair cut at several barbershops.

RC: Oh, yes, all of them.

Interviewer: In Greencastle.

RC: Yes. Yeah. They had to run a county to get their hair cut. I didn't tell you this, I think. There was a barber shop where whites weren't allowed.

Interviewer: So they lost all their white customers, pretty much, if they let a black person.

RC: Yeah, there was a black barbershop. And blacks shouldn't go there to get their hair cut.

Interviewer: Now, how did the black community go about changing that? Did the NAACP play a proactive role in that?

RC: I don't know. You know, a lot of these changes are nationwide. Nationwide, I'm sure some areas of the nation are ahead of other areas and so on. But I think it's all completely changed. Well, I'm not so sure. That is, I don't know how freely blacks could move into just any neighborhood. Actually, do you know the black person on the faculty?

Interviewer: No, there's a few of them.

RC: Let's see. One of those out on North Island.

Interviewer: Keith Stanford, he's one of them. Matt Aware, he's a sociology professor. Trying to think of other ones. I know I've had more than one.

RC: Well, when this chap moved in his wife moved out there, that was something. I think that there have been some getting out of it. I think that there are black families scattered around. Quite a lot. But I think there might still be some resistance to the move.

Interviewer: So you think there is, even nowadays, some resistance towards blacks moving into certain white predominant communities?

RC: I mean, I'd better not say. I'd better not make that statement.

Interviewer: Okay, okay. I understand you. Have you held any leadership roles within the NAACP here in Putnam County? I mean, what kind of positions and stuff?

RC: I can't really remember, I'm sure I was not packed at the tail end.

Interviewer: Right.

RC: But I can't recall. I'm sure I was fairly prominent in the NAACP and worked as head director. I can't recall details now.

Interviewer: You just can't recall a specific title, I understand. Is there a particular story or a significant event that occurred while you were in the organization that impacted you more than others?

RC: Well, I can't remember very much. The trip to Washington, D.C., yes, but that wasn't done with and for the NAACP. It was done with a group of students.

Interviewer: Was that sponsored by any organization?

RC: No.

Interviewer: No? Okay.

RC: No, it was just John Reiling. We were in on everything where there was any racial activity, because we were the only two who were there.

Interviewer: Kind of head hunters on DePauw campus.

RC: Yeah. Yes, I think this story, I told you about Farber and Kerstetter. Kerstetter was the president. About their senior group of students. It seems to me that's almost unbelievable. But then it seems to me that it's very, very revealing. In fact, I've been a radical all my life. I wouldn't use the word radical. I would use it this time. My father, when I was four or five years old, I remember him saying in relation to World War I, if I'm called, I won't go. Quakers don't believe in killing. They don't believe in going to war. They believe in getting into situations where you may be killed. But he said, if I'm called, I won't go.

RC: So I had radical ideas, what people called radical. But there were... Now this, that only two of us would go and be with these students. That seems unbelievable now, it seems to me. But I don't think it was back across the years, earlier. See, I went to Manchester College. And they took me to Fort Wayne. And it's a Church of the Brethren school. I went there because it was 30 miles from home. The Church of the Brethren overlapped a good deal with Quaker belief. And I majored in History and Social Science. I had a very extended major. And all the professors just came in and lectured. They didn't learn to know the students. The students didn't learn to know them. They didn't discuss contemporary problems. And I don't remember any meetings on the campus dealing with contemporary justice issues. So I think the campus situations, situations generally, have changed a lot in, say, the last 25 to 30 years.

Interviewer: Going back to the Manchester College situation, do you remember it being racially segregated, integrated?

RC: There wasn't any black skin anywhere. The students or the faculty.

Interviewer: Do you think it was because they didn't want to attend or because they weren't allowed to, kind of bored out?

RC: Oh, I think it was just unthinkable. In a milder sense, it never would have occurred to whites to look in a black community for students or for the blacks to think of going to a white school. You see, the issue just wasn't an issue.

Interviewer: So they just kind of stayed away from it then? They stayed away from each other?

RC: Very much so. Just like women back 50 years ago never tried to do what men do. Now they do everything. College presidents, let's say there were two black faces among the Democrats running for president back several months ago.

Interviewer: Yeah, Al Sharpton was one of them. Probably would have been unthinkable 50 years ago.

RC: Yeah, I think so. Yeah, I think the question now about race and about lots of things, just which they wouldn't have said at the time back then. This political neutrality, radical political neutrality on college campuses is something you could try to understand. No speakers, no small groups, discretionary groups, anything. I remember when I was in St. Paul, Minnesota being concerned about these issues and hearing about problems here and there and going and being present and participating in some. But there was no faculty, no students who were involved.

Interviewer: So it was a really small percentage of the students who were involved in radical racial, at the time, radical racial stances on the college campus.

RC: Yeah.

Interviewer: You mentioned earlier that the NAACP owns its own building that you guys meet at now. Can you remember where you guys have met throughout the years? Did they always own their own building?

RC: Oh no, no. We met at black churches. Let's see, the black church on Crown Street, I think. It would have been in black communities, in the black communities. I think that's where we met, although we were not there. Charles can give you the right answer on that.

Interviewer: This may be an easy question, but was the NAACP itself segregated at all? Were any of the white members, was there some kind of racial tension between them or anything?

RC: I don't think so. I don't think so. I think those whites who were maybe moved on knew what they wanted.

Interviewer: Do you remember anything about the integration of schooling here in Putnam County when they kind of used the racial tensions and blacks and whites were allowed to participate in extracurricular activities together and stuff like that?

RC: There were lots of stories about black students doing sex in school with whites. Lots of stories. See, if you really want to learn all you can, talk to people all you can. Do you know Bruce Steinbrenner?

Interviewer: Yeah, a political science professor.

RC: Yeah. Do you know about his wife? She's written a book on that. Oh, what's wrong with my head? Steinbrenner. Oh, I know her very well. We went to their house a lot. She graduated from Yale. She either went one year or two years there. When Yale opened up for women, she went from a women's college into Yale. And when she graduated, she found a job in a prison in Connecticut. And she has continued to study prisons ever since. She is the top prison authority in this community. She gets invitations to speak at different places. She would be a very good person to see. I've read her book. It was written many years ago. I've never forgotten her name before.

Interviewer: You mentioned earlier there were a lot of stories coming out when schools were being integrated about black students acting out, misbehaving, whatever. Do you think that was predominantly due to them being black, that they were being singled out?

RC: Oh, yes. Now, it may be that a lot of these stories have to do with what white students did when the rule had become that black students couldn't enter your school. But I can see two school buildings where I know there are stories. Let's see, it's not been very long that there's been any black teacher at the high school here. Not over five years, I don't believe. It would be interesting to talk with black people about how much racism is still around.

Interviewer: That's actually the next question I was going to ask. You're on top of it. I was going to ask, do you believe there's still a high amount of discrimination, segregation or anything to this day? And maybe in what forms do you think they exist?

RC: I'm not prepared to answer that. There certainly is quite a few. There are a lot of white people who don't. I personally said a few white people.

Interviewer: You being a racially open person, being involved with the NAACP for a very long time, what kind of impact has the organization had on your life?

RC: I've been a member since I think it was 1963 that the NAACP was established here. In the early 60s it was started here. I've been a member ever since. I haven't been ready to participate in any work projects and so on. I don't think it had any transforming influence on me, but I already believe in all people being human beings.

Interviewer: Do you think you made a lot of friends slash acquaintances as being a member of the NAACP or do you think you probably would have met them and befriended them had you not been a member?

RC: Well, I think it brought me closer to black people. Charles Miles and I have been friends all through the years. I probably knew him before, I don't know if I did or not, before I was in

the NAACP. But I've associated a lot with black people and talked with them a lot by being at various meetings. And that's been very, very good. Very good. Associating with blacks has been an enriching experience. They see the world somewhat differently.

Interviewer: Helped provide a unique perspective. In the organization itself, do the whites usually play a more proactive position or the blacks? I mean, that's kind of a difficult question. Were the blacks typically the leaders in the organization or the whites or neither one really?

RC: That last answer is the one I think is okay.

Interviewer: It was probably a mixed responsibility then, I guess. That's what I figured I was trying to figure out.

RC: Well, blacks, they had a place. They weren't just following along behind.

Interviewer: Can you maybe recall any particular projects or anything the NAACP has done, either for the community or for the advancement of black concerns in the community throughout the years?

RC: Well, I'm sure there have been some, but I can't remember. But there was a school where I think we arranged to help blacks to freely park and to come to meetings at that place. I can't remember anything. Let's see next to that. When you're almost 96 and have trouble remembering.

Interviewer: I have trouble remembering at 20, so I can understand. Believe me. Moving to the civil rights period and moving towards somewhat of racial equality, although it's questionable whether that exists to this day. Do you remember any particular events or stories that kind of caught you during the civil rights movement here in Putnam County that significantly kind of affected you, impacted you, anything like that?

RC: I don't think so. If we had Kelsey Kaufman, who's the name I was trying to recall. Kelsey and the black man, if I had them sitting around here. We talked about the past. They would help my memory.

Interviewer: Team effort, kind of.

RC: Yeah. You know, when Vernon Jordan, do you know the name Vernon Jordan?

Interviewer: Yeah.

RC: When he graduated. Maybe I told you this on the telephone. His parents and an aunt and uncle, after the commencement, they came to my house and spent two hours. Well, Vernon knew, of course, that they'd be welcome. But, you know, looking back on that, I have an idea there was no other place to go. For five people that graduated, two couples came. Because this segregation, this acting out the bias, whether the bias was very deep in the heart or mind, was something that people followed very much.

Interviewer: Now, do you think the transition towards a more just society as far as public accommodations and living opportunities, do you think that was a harsh transformation for the community? Or do you think it was fairly easy?

RC: Oh, I suspect that for a period it was something not easy. But I'm not aware now of, and I'm not in a position to be aware of, I guess. But I don't believe there's very much anti-racism around that would show itself up by black society in maybe decent places.

Interviewer: So you're saying there weren't probably a lot of the conflicts that were nationally due to the fact that the black population is fairly small and there's not much of an anti-racist sentiment in the community at that time?

RC: I think there are less black people around now. Well, now, no, because DePauw has a lot of black people. Black people, they had to keep it down.

Interviewer: Do you think the community has lost a lot of black people because of its racism?

RC: Well, maybe they've found better opportunities elsewhere. As things opened up, then they could go to college and find work elsewhere.

Interviewer: Okay. Well, that's pretty much it for me. Do you have anything else you'd like to share with anybody?

RC: No.

Interviewer: That you can think of?

RC: If I... I don't have anything. I'm sorry.

Interviewer: Oh, you're fine.

RC: I'm sorry I don't have...