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CBS archival footage

CBS Announcer:----- court between two attorneys, and went on trial, after the state's attorney general, racial moderate Richmond Flowers, was ordered off the case. Flowers wanted to stop the trial entirely, saying the charge should be murder, not manslaughter, and claiming an atmosphere of hate in Lowndes County, would prevent him from getting a fair hearing. Circuit Judge T. Wirth Thaggart, who waved to newsmen on arriving, waived aside all objections and ordered prosecution to proceed without the attorney general. A circuit solicitor took over. In Montgomery, attorney general Flowers called the whole affair, "a whitewash."

/ 30"

Flowers: After all attempts on our part to avoid an absolute mockery of justice have failed. To try Tom Coleman in Lowndes County at this time, is an absolute travesty, because of the fact that hate absolutely rules the hearts and minds of the vast majority of the citizenry of that county.

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News Commentator: (after much background noise); That's the jury. OK. Are they happy, with audio, with video, in New York?

CBS Commentator: Thunghill Roberrson (sounds like?) issued a statement, saying Coleman was "tried in the temple of justice where he should have been, and---"

Sounds of people walking down wooden stairs. Sounds of rain, Coleman getting into car? Woman's voice: "I'll go with you." "Come on, Ma." "-Tom." (car door slams) She speaks. Lots of female southern accent; unintelligible). Ends with sounds of rain.

2 min 50"

① Flowers: "What has happened this week in Hayneville does not do justice to Alabama. What has happened is appalling. We have witness the democratic processes going down the drain of irrationality, bigotry, and improper enforcement of the law. Now those who feel they have a license to kill, to destroy, and to cripple have been issued that license. It is our duty to do what we can to retrieve it."

55" 2006

Willie Vaughan giving his account of the murder.

Some of the kids was ah, comin towards me, asking me, "Have I got a ride?" And I said, "Yes," and ah, and I told them about this gun, I said "There's a white man down there, has a gun," and some of them didn't hear me. Some of them had already passed me. Some of them turned around and went back. And before I could go down there, turned around, maybe about ten steps behind there, Jon Daniels was standing in the door. And I heard a shotgun blast and I saw him when

He grabbed his stomach, he grabbed his stomach, and then Father Richard Morris[roe] began to start running with this girl. And the man bust out and hollered, "All you black niggers, get off my property." And then, he shot, ah, Father Morris[roe]; and then, we took off running, everybody went, you know, all kinds of ways. Because they was frightened, and the man was shooting, you know. Coming towards everybody, so they just, everybody just got excited and they ran. And I went to the nearest telephone, as I can.

CBS Interviewer

Do you mean another man came out and fired a shot?

Willie Vaughan: The same man that shot ah, Reverend Daniels came out and shot Father Richard Morris[roe], for all I know, to my knowledge.

CBS Interviewer: Well, now, what will you witnesses do now, will you scatter?

Willie Vaughan: No--(laughs ruefully) I wouldn't scatter. After what happened, after the man had killed the man, first degree murder, and out the day, on bail. I wouldn't scatter, not after he had killed a person and out the next day. That's impossible. (end of Vaughan testimony)

Oak Park Hospital interviews.

Dr. River: Father Morrisroe feels that today's judgment does not at all square with his KLV (?) case; he himself is an important witness to the event, but does not want to speak publicly at this time. He hopes that he will be able to give his testimony in a court of law. It is hard for him to understand why the court did not grant a continuance, so that he could testify in this case. That's the jist of Father Morrisroe's statement.

CBS Interviewer: Did he seem shocked, doctor, at the fact that there was an acquittal in the case?

Doctor River; I don't believe so.

CBS Interviewer: Could you describe his reaction to the news, other than by the words here?

Doctor River: I think that he expected this would happen. I don't think that it, ah--again this is my opinion, I didn't get a statement from him on this fact, but, it didn't seem to particularly interest him at all. I mean, it happened, it didn't seem to be out of the ordinary.

CBS Interviewer: Was he alert enough to express dismay, or, how would you say what he did do when he heard the news?

Father McDonough: Well, I think what he had to say is right in the statement there. That about sums up anything that he could and should publicly say at this time.

CBS Interviewer #1: Father, you are an attorney, and Father Morrisroe said that he would like to tell his story in a court of law. How might that be legally possible, under the circumstances in this case?

Father McDonough: It seems to me, just speaking off hand, that the way the case was conducted suggests that the state of Alabama itself will look carefully into it, and the attorney general might very well feel that, ah, the judgment can be overturned. He attempted to get a continuance, and I think with very good reason, and it was not allowed. He attempted to have a different prosecutor try the case, the assistant attorney general, and that was not successful. So I think the state of Alabama itself is interested in seeing to it that a proper process of law is carried out. And, even in the grand jury hearings, not all of the eye witnesses were called, so that a rather meager presentation of the evidence was made, and a rather rapid trial accomplished, it seems to me.

CBS Interviewer: Is there any sort of precedent for trying a man a second time?

Father McDonough: Well, that does raise interesting legal questions, and I think even the Constitutional issue of due process, is possibly raised by the episode here, and ah, of course it's by curious reversal; generally, it's the defendant who's seeking due process; here, officers of the state of Alabama will be seeking due process, against one of their own agents.

CBS Interviewer: ---that the state of Alabama will seek to overturn this?

Father McDonough: I think that he would be interested in doing that, I should imagine so.

CBS Interviewer: Dr. River, how soon do you think Father Morrisroe will be in any condition to testify?

Dr. River: Well, Father Morrisroe is still very weak; the wounds which he received were massive, and his convalescence is slow; I can't see that possibility within the next sixty days.

CBS Interviewer: Could he possibly have gown down to testify in this trial?

Dr. River: No.

CBS Interviewer: Why?

Dr. River: I think he probably would have died. He is so weak, that I think the stress of having to go back there, and to attempt to testify, would have been completely beyond his capabilities, at this time.

CBS Interviewer: Could you describe, in some detail, what his condition is?

Dr. River: Well, his condition is that of any patient who has suffered rather massive wounds, and come close to death, ah, it's a matter of his body just needing time, to recover itself.

CBS Interviewer: Does he still have some of the shotgun pellets, in his body?

Dr. River: He does.

CBS Interviewer: How many?

Dr. River: I think about eight.

CBS Interviewer: How many have been removed?

Dr. River: I believe that approximately eight or nine were removed, at the Baptist Hospital in Montgomery, and as I stated earlier, if it hadn't been for the excellent surgical care that he received there I am sure he would have died, initially. I believe that his living at all was thanks to the excellent surgical care which he received, at the Baptist Hospital in Montgomery.

CBS: Father McDonough, in saying that you think there should be a new trial, if it was legally feasible, are you in any way speaking for the Chicago Archdiocese?

Father McDonough: Oh no, I'm just speaking as one reacting immediately to the news that I heard, and interested in seeing justice done anywhere in our nation. And it does seem strange -- I don't feel our own people know the circumstances of the event, you know. Ah, and I possibly briefly might say a word about that, if you would be interested. You know that these young people who were held in jail for about a week, were released on the day of the shooting, and they asked permission to remain there in the jail until transportation could be brought, to carry them away, and they weren't allowed to remain in the jail. And so they went out to the front lawn, in front of the jail there in Hayneville, and remained there. But then the sheriff insisted that they leave even from the front lawn, and they had to go down the street, to a corner, where they

congregated together and waited until transportation was going to be brought, and about 45 minutes later, some of them went over to get a drink of water. To this store. And, I might mention that in previous days, this store had been used by various young people, civil rights workers and others, without incident, and without difficulty. And they expected no problem there whatsoever.

CBS: The defense testified that the two priests, or Father Morrisroe and his friend were armed.

Father McDonough: (laughs) Yes, well that's --pure fiction. As I say, they went over in utter expectation of being received readily, and simply to buy a soft drink or to get a drink of water, and encountered Mr. Coleman at the door, with a shotgun, and in fact, Father Morrisroe --as soon as he saw that there was going to be trouble, and he heard Mr. Coleman speak, as Father Morrisroe said, "In his own way, he made it clear we were to leave." "In his own way," I can't quite repeat on television. But, Father Morrisroe turned and departed rapidly, and was shot in the back.

CBS: Uh, Father McDonough, did you talk to Father Morrisroe about the statements by the defense that he was armed?

Father McDonough: Oh, yes.

CBS: Well, what did he say?

Father McDonough: He just-- he's been asked that by every police officer and attorney involved in the case, and has denied that he was armed and neither as far he knows or anyone was Reverend Daniels armed. And there was no way in which they could be armed. Sounds like a comic strip to say that they were armed. Just came from jail and had no source, nor interest, --it's against their whole approach and philosophy.

Dr. River: I think it should be said that Father McDonough was in Alabama from the time Father Morrisroe was hurt----
(sound at interview ends)

(continues)

CBS: Were you shocked at=---

Fr. McDonough: Well I was, in a way, it's so out of keeping with the facts, that I couldn't imagine such a verdict. Being made by any court of law, any jury of real Americans.

CBS: Could I clarify one thing, Father: have you talked to Father Morrisroe about the defense allegation that he was armed since that allegation was made in court? Have you discussed that with him and has he---

Fr. McDonough: No, I haven't. This question was raised right from the beginning by various investigative officers. To be sure, there was no arms; and I'm merely reporting on that. My personal conviction is so firm about the fact that

he wasn't armed, I haven't asked him just this afternoon, no.

CBS: But you have discussed it with him since this occurred.

Father McDonough: You mean the fact of the acquittal, and the rest of it? Oh yes, oh sure.

CBS: Thank you very much.

CBS Correspondent Nelson Benton, outside Oak Park Hospital: When word was received in Oak Park Illinois, of the outcome of the trial in Hayneville, Alabama, Father Richard Morrisroe was too ill to meet with reporters. Instead, he released a statement through his doctor, Dr. Louis River, and through another priest, Father Thomas McDonough, who's handling Father Morrisroe's affairs. I've got to do that again, I left out something.

Still rolling? When word was received in Oak Park, Illinois, of the outcome of the trial in H-- watch it, watch it, don't say it. When word was received in Oak Park Illinois of the outcome of the trial and --- gee whiz..

When word was received in Oak Park Illinois of the outcome of the trial in Hayneville, Alabama, Father Richard Morrisroe was too ill to meet with reporters. Father Morrisroe, who was wounded but survived the shooting incident in Hayneville, released instead a statement through his doctor, Dr. Louis River, and through another priest, Father Thomas McDonough. Father McDonough was handling Father Morrisroe's affairs, while he is confined to the hospital.

I'll take that one more time, and --that's a usable one.

When word was received in Oak Park, Illinois, of the outcome of the trial in Hayneville, Father Richard Morrisroe was too weak to meet with reporters. Instead, he released a statement through his doctor, Dr. Louis ---

When word was received in Oak Park Illinois of the outcome of the trial in Alabama, Father Richard Morrisroe was too weak to meet with reporters. Father Morrisroe, who was wounded, but survived the shooting in Hayneville, instead released a statement through his doctor, Dr. Louis River, and through another priest, Father Thomas McDonough, who's handling Father Morrisroe's affairs during his period of recovery. That all right?

Whether Fr---(ahem) Whether Father Richard Morrisroe will ever get to tell his story in court is questionable. The wheels of justice have already turned in Hayneville. Nelson Benton, CBS News, Oak Park, Illinois.

I'll repeat that. Whether Father Rich-- it's hard to say. Whether Fr-- (laughs) Now I'll never make it. Rolling.

Whether, Father Richard Morrisroe will ever tell his story

I'll repeat that. Whether Father Rich-- it's hard to say. Whether Fr-- (laughs) Now I'll never make it. Rolling. Whether, Father Richard Morrisroe will ever tell his story in court is perhaps questionable. The wheels of justice have already turned in Hayneville. Nelson Benton, CBS News, Oak Park, Illinois.

(end of Oak Park segment)

(long passage of silent film)

Voice of Richmond Flowers; presumably talking about the Daniels case, but he might be talking about the Liuzzo case.

He walked up to me, and told me that nobody in that county would tell me anything and when I started to leave, he told me that I should stop my investigation of the Klan, and continue to more or less argue or (????) me about my investigation of the Klan, said that I should quit investiatiating them and investigate some one else. *2:55 Sec.*

CBS Correspondent: How do you think the Klan is connected with this case?

Flowers: The defendant himself is strongly believed to be a Klan member; ah, known Klan members more or less swarmed into town, immediately when this thing happened. Colonel Lingo arrived in a state car, in the company of a known Klan member; he remained with him the entire time he was there, and left with him. Ah, it has every indication, everything points to the fact, that it is a Klan murder. *5:05 Sec.*

CBS Correspondent: What actually did Colonel Lingo say to your investigators?

Flowers: He told my investigators he wasn't going to give the attorney general or the FBI, or anybody else, any information till he got good and ready. (end of interview) *1:08 Sec.*

(SYNC BEEP)

John Hart, CBS: Mr. Coleman, you've remained silent for a year, since your trial and indictments. What's been on your mind that you haven't been saying?

Coleman: Ah, you all know what's been on my mind (laughs) without me answering that question. Ah, this trial's been on my mind. Most of the year. However, I felt like I would be exonerated. Felt like I should be exonerated. And I felt like, ah, I was being persecuted by being accused of being a member of the Ku Klux Klan, which I have never been a member of the Klan. Richmond Flowers said he knew I was a Klan--Klansman; to get--gain votes, at the time he was running for governor.

John Hart: How do you think Hayneville has been treated? What is the result of all of this difficulty?

Coleman: I think Hayneville's been persecuted, and I think Richmond Flowers is responsible for a good bit of it. And ah, the outsiders, from up north; we still have a lot of good niggers in this county.

Hart: Well now, Jonathan Daniels, Richard Morrisroe were outsiders. Why do you think that happened?

Coleman: Ah, I would rather not comment on that. Ah, they were down here (birds in background) promoting, antagonizing things, promoting trouble.

Hart: Let me ask you this; if you had that experience to go through all over again, would you have changed anything?

Coleman: I wouldn't have changed a bit. If the same thing in the morning that happened that day, I would shoot them both tomorrow. I hope to God it never happens. And thank God I had some good witnesses.

Hart: Now you have black power and Black Panther here, an election coming up. Do you think the troubles are over for Hayneville and Lowndes County? (birds singing)

Coleman: Our troubles would be over, never would have started, if the outsiders hadn't of come in here. Ah, I don't know whether the troubles are over or not. Ah, I hope they over.

Hart: Well, how can this all be resolved? It is a terrible problem.

Coleman: I would have--somebody would have done that a long time ago if they had the answer to that question.

Hart: What do you think? Should be done?

Coleman: I don't know. If I knew what should be done, I'd do it.

Hart: Well, shooting them didn't solve that problem, did it.

Coleman: No, shooting them didn't solve that problem. It--might have solved some problems that would come up later, and it kept me from getting hurt.

Hart: Well, how about voting, the Negroes have more voters on the lists, than white people here, and they're running Negro candidates, are they going to elect anybody?

Coleman: Your niggers are gonna vote for the best man; your good niggers that are not threatened by the outside niggers.

Hart: By that you mean that the incumbents are going to be re-elected?

Coleman: I would say yes.

(end of interview)