

Father Maurice Ouelett  
Sacred Heart Rectory  
Groton, CT  
November, 1992

LB: ...turn this on...

ta: Have you seen Malcolm X yet, Father Ouelett?

Fr. O: I'm sorry?

ta: Have you seen the film Malcolm X yet?

Fr. O: No, I haven't. I'm looking forward to it. Have you? (or: You went?)

ta: No, I haven't seen it yet, either.

Fr. O: I'm kind of anxious to see it. Kind of a significant response to that film, I think. It probably represents a change in...in attitudes and I found myself thinking...

LB: Testing...test...

Fr. O: ...if both he and King were alive today...

LB: Test...test...test...

Fr. O: ...that Malcolm X would be the figure, you know, rather than Dr. King, although Dr. King would have grown, ...(inaudible)...too.

BEEP

LB: Okay.

ta: What do you think about the background? The bookcase does show.

LB: Maybe if I get in a little tighter...

ta: It's...

LB: ...or Father Ouelett moves...if he can (or could) turn...

ta: Yeah, if he...

LB: Test, test, Father Ouelett?

Fr. O: (takes a breath)

LB: Just say, "Test, test."

Fr. O: Test, test.

LB: Once more, please.

Fr. O: Test, test.

LB: Yeah, I think that's going to be fine....(noise)....Let me take a look.

ta: Yeah, maybe if...just swiveling...

LB: We could see him if he could sit here...

ta: Okay.

LB: ...and then, Father Ouelett, will you...if you're in conversation with Tammy, then...

Fr. O: You want me to move my body that way?

LB: I think that looks really good.

ta: Does it? Oh, good!

LB: Um...yeah, just kind of turn towards her, um...although it really doesn't matter. I mean, we're in good shape here, so...

ta: Ah, good. The image looks good. It's very...

Fr. O: Good. You're going to have to call her to you and just have her sit next to you. She'll sit. Go, Patty.

ta: Patty!

Fr. O: Go! Go!

ta: Patty! Come here...

Fr. O: Sit, girl! Sit! Patty, sit. Good girl.

LB: I must say, I like doing this!

Fr. O: You do? (Laughs) You'd have to! (Laughs)

LB: Well, in spite of the possibilities for disaster...

Fr. O: Yeah...

LB: It doesn't matter to me, it's just fun to do. (Pause) Did you ever...well, one probably shouldn't ask a priest this question, but have you ever thought, Father Ouelett, or did you ever think, at any point about changing careers?

Fr. O: Yes.

LB: It would be a kind of an American....I mean, I think about it myself. I mean, when I...

Fr. O: Umph. Yeah...almost automatically, when you get to be around forty or so. I gave it a lot of thought then. And in light of what had happened with civil rights that I didn't think the Church had responded very well. So you question. I think everyone does, whatever their

profession, you know.

ta: Oh, sure...

Fr. O: You think of things you might have done, that you would have liked to do, you know....Uh, we're kind of stuck, I think. That door is off the thing.

LB: I think we're all right.

Fr. O: I just hope we don't have any disturbances.

LB: Well, if we do, we'll just take it again!

Fr. O: All right.

LB: How's that?

ta: You're so nicely framed, Fr. Ouelett!

Fr. O: Ah, thank you! ...(inaudible)...body...

LB: ...in the shot. I think we ought to take a couple feet of this dog!

Fr. O: (Laughs)

LB: Otherwise, she's going to feel just...

ta: Larry, this is...

Fr. O: (Laughs) She's never been on film before. Oh, yes!

ta: Oh!

Fr. O: She's a lover! She's not a fighter, she's definitely a lover. (Laughs)

LB: Kiss! (Laughs)

ta: Larry, that's very nice!

LB: Well, it's nice...

ta: Oh, it is! It looks good.

LB: ...make sure things are running properly and we'll...

ta: Do you think the lighting is okay? I'm just....He looks good, but I was surprised by the way Reverend Stenning came out.

LB: (Inaudible)

ta: Do you think it's all right?

LB: I think this looks similar to the way Reverend Stenning looks....We're getting some consistency here.



ta: Okay.

LB: You know. Why? What did you think, Tammy? Do you think I ought to change part of it?

ta: No! I just don't trust myself, but you know.

LB: Well...let's see here. So we're about ready, right?

ta: Yes.

LB: Is the dog ready?

Fr. O: The dog is ready!

LB: Okay....It's not too loud.

BEEP

LB: Okay, Tammy?

ta: Father Ouelett, could you tell us the importance of...of Jonathan's living among the black people in Selma for the work that he was then able to do?

Fr. O: I think that the fact that he chose to do that had a real significance. It gave him credibility with the black community that he would go and live in the black community in a town that was, uh, not used to seeing, uh, white people live anywhere within the bounds of the black community. So that would have, uh, that would have been a favorable thing in his favor. People would have noticed that and have been pleased by the fact that he chose to live with them. And secondly, I think, that it gave him an opportunity to learn, um....Whenever black people go into a white, uh, I mean, white people go into a black community, they have to learn, because it's a different world, and this gave him that kind of opportunity, ah, that he could observe, that people would let down the barriers a little bit in front of him as they accepted him more, and, uh, he would have heard and seen things that he would not, uh, had he lived in the white community and then just come to help out or work in the black community. It's important.

LB: CUT.

Fr. O: All right.

LB: What do you think, Father Ouelett?...*(inaudible)*...We can get another shot if you want.

Fr. O: Ummm....Patty...

LB: I don't think we heard Patty.

ta: Well, you know what?...

LB: Hum?

ta: Well, I think my chair might have squeaked...

LB: Well...

ta: ...when I leaned forward, I thought that...

Fr. O: Uh...

LB: Sometimes it's hard the first time. Sometimes it becomes easier the second time, too...

Fr. O: Well, if you have it set up, we might as well do it another time, and then you can take whichever is the best.

LB: Yeah, yeah...

ta: I was afraid she was going to scratch the bag, so I leaned forward to get her...

Fr. O: Umm...

ta: ...and the chair squeaked.

Fr. O: Oh.

LB: So the drift...the nature of the question is, um, how Jonathan affected them or more how they affected Jonathan?

Fr. O: No...

ta: However you think it should be.

LB: Well, I'm trying to...

ta: It seems like from what Father Ouelett said earlier that he was speaking, uh, to what, uh, living in the projects did for...his experience.

LB: I see.

Fr. O: Yeah, I don't think he would have had that great an imp...somewhat. Oh, I see what you mean. You're saying, too, uh...

LB: Well, I'm just...

Fr. O: But the opportunity was for him. He was the one undergoing change by the fact that he lived there.

ta: Um-hum...

LB: He could have observed people and -- Hey, get off the script!

Fr. O: Patty!

LB: (Laughs)

Fr. O: Off the script, Patty!

LB: Get off the script!

ta: Hey, Patty!

LB: She really wants to be part of this whole thing!

Fr. O: Oh...

LB: ...(inaudible)...engage in conversation with him...listen to what they were really saying, which he couldn't have gotten had he been living outside of that community. Well, that's what you just said, so...

Fr. O: Um-hum...

LB: Great! Okay, well....Tammy, if you could do two things at once. Hold Patty and...

Fr. O: Hold Patty! (Laughs)

ta: Hold Patty?

LB: ...and ask the questions...

ta: Come here, Patty! Okay, sit. Come over here.

Fr. O: Sit, girl.

LB: (Unintelligible)

ta: But Larry! We can't...

Fr. O: Sit, Patty, sit. Sit, girl.

LB: (Inaudible) Well, we have some of that...

Fr. O: Sit, Patty!

ta: Sit!

Fr. O: Sit!

ta: Sit!

(Laughter)

ta: I think she's okay, as long as she's comfortable.

Fr. O: If she sits, she'll stay more quiet. Sit, Patty!

ta: Sit!

Fr. O: Patty!

ta: Sit.

LB: (Whistles) Sit down! Sit down!



Fr. O: Sit!

LB: Sit!

Fr. O: Down! Down!

LB: Down!

Fr. O: Good girl.

ta: Lie down. That's a girl! Tummy rubbing is probably what we need here!

Fr. O: All right.

LB: Frances...

Fr. O: She may want to wrestle if you do that, though. (Laughs)

ta: She likes...she wants part of me in her mouth!

Fr. O: Yeah, she'll do that a lot, won't she?

ta: Yeah...

Fr. O: She'll do it gently, but she'll do it, yeah....

LB: There! Now she's nice and quiet.

ta: Okay. (Pause)

BEEP. BEEP. BEEP-BEEP.

LB: Okay, we're rolling.

ta: Father Ouelett, can you tell us how Jonathan's living among the black people in the projects affected the work that he was able to do? In Selma?

Fr. O: Um...I think that...because he lived in the community, the black community, he gained a credibility that would not have been, had he lived elsewhere. Uh....That he was willing to share their life with them, uh, would make them more receptive to whatever he had to say, or, in allowing him to participate with them in the things they did. Uh, and secondly, I think that, uh, being in the black community gave him the opportunity to learn, and....Conversations with the people that he was living with and with neighbors would have given him an insight that he couldn't have gained otherwise. I think by that fact, he would have been more sympathetic, um, in his approach to things, uh, because he knew, uh, from daily experience and being with them...just what the, uh, what was going on in their minds and what was going on in their lives.

LB: Good. CUT. (Pause) Great!

Fr. O: Bueno!

LB: We all survived it!

ta: Oh, that's good!

Fr. O: I still can't get over this...this six-hour drive, and all this equipment...

LB: Oh, that's all right!

ta: (Laughs)

LB: That's okay!

Fr. O: Wow! That's ...(inaudible)

LB: ...(inaudible)...cloudy outside.

Fr. O: Oh...all of the sudden, huh? On the news, they did predict rain for tomorrow.

LB: Really?

Fr. O: Yeah.

LB: Let me undo you, Father Ouelett....(noise)....There we are...(noise)...there.

Fr. O: You were terrific, Patty.

LB: Yeah, really!....You really got into it that second time!

END