Bill Sullivan: A couple of kinds of questions. One is just for information that you might want to give the audience about background.--so, it's a lot of the history of it. And the other kind of question is such things that we're interested in in terms of interpretation. And so, I thought maybe we could do it sort of chronologically. You could begin by telling us about the input of the Selma project, uh, Snix(?) early work, um, the entry of FCLC, sort of things that were going on prior to the march. If you could tell us in a sense how important this project was in the evolution of the civil rights and then some of the history in terms of those two organizations if you would.

John Lewis: Okay.

Bill Sullivan: So you might just try and bring us back to let's say 1963 or so and what Snick was trying to do down in Selma.

J.L.: Well the first Snick person, um, to go into Selma was a young man by the name of Bernard Lafayette (?), as a Snick field secretary. In 1962 and '63 the city of Selma and Dallas County--Selma being the County seat of Dallas County--the heart of the White Belt, a county that was majority black. Only about 2.1% of blacks of voting age were registered to vote. In many of the counties and communities surrounding Selma there were very few, if any registered black voters. In Lowens (?) County, the county that is between Dallas County and between Selma and Montgomery, was more than 80% black and there was not a

single registered black voter in 1963, '64, or 1965. I recall, in the fall of 1963, after a series of attempts to get people registered to vote in Selma--and this was after the March on Washington in August 1963--after the bombing of the Birmingham Church, we made a conscious effort, a decision, to go to Selma, to dramatize to the nation and to the world that black folks in the state of Alabama, but particularly in Selma, wanted the right to participate in a democratic process. It was on October the eighth we had what we call Freedom Day in Selma, where more than 500 black men and women line up at the Dallas County Court House in the heart of downtown Selma and stood in line most of the day attempting to enter the courthouse to take the so-called literacy test. See, in those days black men and women--would-be registered voters--had to pass a so-called literacy test. They had to be able to interpret a said section of the Constitution of the state of Alabama, or the Constitution of the United States, cite the names of all of the presidents. On one occasion a black man was asked to give the number of bubbles in a bar of soap. The literacy tests were so complicated that even a college-trained person couldn't hope to make a passing score. There were black men and women in Selma, in Dallas County, other ports of Alabama, teaching in the public schools, teaching at Selma University, and they were told they could not read or write well enough--they would fail or flunk the literacy test. On one occasion a black man in another county in Alabama had a PhD in philosophical theology from Boston University and he went

down to take the literacy test and was told that he failed--that he could not register to vote. We tried on this particular day to get people through the line, but at the end of the day only about five people had made it through the line into the courthouse, took the test, and they did not pass the tests. A few of us were arrested for continue to standing in line, and during the winter of '63 more and more people got arrested. And during the spring and summer of 1964 the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (?) was very much involved in another voter registration effort in the state of Mississippi. But at the same time we had people involved primarily in Selma--not only in efforts to get people to register to vote, but to lunch counters and in restaurants in Selma, um, were segregated, so people got arrested at two or three of the downtown drugstores where there was lunch counters and restaurants, and people were arrested at the courthouse for carrying signs saying: "One man, one vote."

This all came to a head in 1965 when Martin Luther King, Jr. went to President Johnson, rather, I guess in late 1964 after receiving the Nobel Peace Prize, and said to President Johnson, um, "Mr. President, we need a strong voting rights act." And President Johnson said, in so many words to Dr. King: "We just passed a civil rights act in 1964 and it just would be impossible to get a voting rights act."

* Air conditioner off; counter at 108

So I think somehow, I don't know the history of how it all happened, but I think Dr. King's sort of arranged for

the local people in Selma, some people--in the FCLC arranged for the people in Selma to invite SCLC to come in and work with the local organization called the Dallas County Voters' League. And Dr. King made a decision the first week of January, ah, to go to Selma to write the Voting Rights Act, to work with the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee and the local organization. And I can recall very well, it was on January the eighteenth, 1965, when it was my day to lead a group of people to the Dallas County Courthouse. And as we walked to the courthouse and came upon the steps we met Sheriff Clark, the sheriff of Dallas County. He was a big man, burly, who wore a nightstick on one side, gun on the other side, and carried an electric cow-prodder in his hand. He walked up to me and said: "John Lewis, you're an outside agitator, and agitator is the lowest form of humanity. I looked at him and I said, "Sheriff, I may be an agitator, but I'm not an outsider. I grew up only ninety miles from here, and we're going to stay here until these people are allowed to register to vote." And he said, "You're under arrest." And he took me to jail along with several other people.

* 1 BEEP - Counter at 135

* "Wild" Take #1" begins Counter at 135

And a few days later, Martin Luther King, Jr., Reverend Abernathy and others from SCLC came to Selma to organize a series of demonstrations. And in a matterof two or three weeks more than 3000 people, including Dr. King and Rev. Abernathy, were arrested and went to jail in Selma. We literally filled the county jail, the city jail, and I

guess a place they used to call the, uh, Dallas County, the Selma Penal Farm(?), it was like a chicken coop, a chicken pen, but they just put us all in and we all stepped on the floor on blankets and the hardwood.* That continued for several days of more demonstration, more arrests. And it was one evening in mid-February in 1965, I believe it was the evening of February the 17, a young black man by the name of Jimmy Lee Jackson, was involved in a demonstration in Marion, Alabama--Perry County, only a short distance from Selma. Perry County is the home of Mrs. Ralph Abernathy, Mrs. Andrew Young and Mrs. MLK, Jr.--they all came from this little town and county. But this young man was shot in the stomach by a state trooper and died a few days later at a local hospital in Selma...*march from Selma to Montgomery. We thought about the possibility of literally carrying his body from Selma to Montgomery--placing at the steps of the capital. But we made the decision to have a peaceful, organized, nonviolent, 50 miles walk from Selma to Mont.The march was planned for March 7, 1965. The Saturday, March 6th, the day before the march Gov. Wallace issued an order saying the march would not be allowed. Sheriff Clark, the sheriff of Dallas County, made a request that all white men over the age of 21 to come down to the Dallas County Courthouse to be deputized to become part of his posse to stop the march. The Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNICC), the organization that I was the chair [of] at the time, felt that we shouldn't march from Selma to Mont. That there was so much violence, so many people had

* End of "Wild" Take 1

* Crystal on. Counter at 166

* BEEP * BEEP

* TAKE 2 begins Counter at 172

been arrested and jailed, and it was a sort of schism, a little conflict between some of the people within SCLC and some of the people in SNICC.

So we had a meeting in Atlanta at a local restaurant. Started early in the evening of Saturday March 6 and went late into the night--all night debating why we should or shouldn't march. I took the position that we should march because we had been there in Selma since 1963 for the most part with the local people. They wanted to march--we should be there with them. And I guess I was somewhat biased being a native of the state of Alabama that I really wanted to be involved in the effort to dramatize the need for strong voting rights act. And the SNICC executive committee decided that evening, late that night or early that morning really, tape ends that if we wanted to march as individuals then we could go to Selma and march as individuals--not as representatives of SNICC. Two young men, one was Wilson Brown, who was a native of Birmingham, and a young man by the name of Robert Manns who was a native of Atlanta. The three of us jumped in the car and drove to Selma and got in that morning around four or five o'clock, and slept on the floor in sleeping bags at a little place called the SNICC freedom house in downtown Selma. Later that morning we got up and went to Brown Chapel Church where people had started gathering. After the service at the church more than 600 people that were prepared to march or be there in support of the march gathered outside of the church near a housing project on a play lot. It was there that with the help of Andy Young, James Belville, Jose Williams and others, we organized a

TAKE 2 ends

series of nonviolent workshops and we divided this group of about 600 people into small groups. And we made a decision that we were walking to..that it would be a silent march and that for the most part the children and the women would be in the center and the men would lead and bring up the rear.

We thought on that day that we would be arrested and jailed. We had no idea what was about to happen. On that march I recall wearing a napsack and in that napsack I had an apple, an orange and two books, a toothbrush and some toothpaste. And most of the people in the march and during those days when there was a possibility of being arrested and taken to jail most people always carried a toothbrush and some toothpaste. We started walking out of downtown Selma from the church, came to the foot of the bridge, it was very quiet, almost eery. Little or no traffic moving across the bridge. We continued to walk into ??. We came to the apex of the bridge, we saw a sea of blue: Alabama state troopers. We continued to walk down facing the state troopers and we came a short distance from the line of state troopers, and Sheriff Clark and his posse, on horseback.

A man identified himself and said, "I am Major John Cloud. This is an unlawful march. I give you three minutes to disperse and go back to your church." We stood there. And I think Jose said something to me in a maybe sort of a cynical or maybe in a joking fashion. Something like: "John, can you swim?" And I said no. It was a long ways from the bridge to down below--over the Alabama River. We thought about kneeling, but before we could pass the word

back for everybody to kneel the major said: "Troopers advance." You saw these men putting on their gas masks and they came toward us with night sticks and billy clubs--and the men on horses beating us and tramping us, bull whips. And then they started releasing the tear gas. And you couldn't go to the side because you'd go to the Alabama River, and if you tried to go forward you were going into the heat of the ?? and they just forced us back. To this day I don't know how I made it back across the bridge, into downtown Selma, back to the church. But I do recall being back at the church Sunday afternoon--and someone suggested that I get up and say something and I do recall saying: "I don't understand how President Johnson can send troops to Vietnam and cannot send troops to Selma, Alabama to protect people whose only desire is to register to vote." And the next thing I knew I was in Good Samaritan Hospital, in the same hospital that Jimmy Lee Jackson died in a few days earlier.

BS: You had been clubbed?

JL: I had been clubbed and I had a fractured skull. I remained there for a few days. The next day MLK, Jr.--that Monday--and Rev. Abernathy came to the hospital and visited me. And MLK, Jr. said something like: "John, don't worry. We'll make it from Selma to Montgomery. We're going to march from Selma to Montgomery. And the following day, Tuesday--sometime late Sunday night or early Monday morning MLK, Jr. issued a call for the religious leaders of the country to come to Selma. And more than 3,000 priests, rabbis, nuns, ministers, lay people came to Selma and

marched across the bridge and stopped at the same spot where we had been beaten two days earlier.

BS: Could you talk a little bit about what was the motivation for King asking the volunteers from the north to come on down. Does it have something to do with the scarcity of coverage of Jimmy Lee Jackson's death. Or why is it that it was important for northerners to join the effort?

JL: I think MLK, Jr. wanted to find a way to sensitize the national community, to mobilize the national community, educate the national community, and by involving religious leaders, I think he also wanted to say: Will the government of Alabama, will the state troopers, will Sheriff Clark, beat and tear-gas the religious leadership of this country. The same way that these innocent poor black people from the heart of the Black Belt of Alabama. But he wanted to show also that there was a great deal of moral and political support for the Selma effort.

I think because of what happened on Bloody Sunday on March 7 and the involvement of the religious leaders two days later, there was a sense of righteous indignation all across the country. When people saw what had happened on Bloody Sunday, people got angry. There were demonstrations in more than eighty cities in America; at the White House, at the Dept. of Justice. People protested at American embassies abroad when they saw people being tear-gassed and clubbed, chased and trampled by horses--simply because they wanted to register to vote.

BS: Could you talk about the impact that the arrival of these people had on the people who, up to that time, participated in the effort?

JL: The arrival and involvement of the ministers and religious leaders around the country was a great boost. It demonstrated a great deal of support to the local people. There was a feeling that [MLK's] help--for MLK, Jr. to get up at a Mass meeting on a Tuesday night, on a Monday night, and say: "People are on there way." That gave people a great deal of strength and encouragement.

And the movement always welcomed, during those days, the support and involvement of people from the outside. But we needed it. It was a way of, in a sense, bringing the nation to Selma. The media played a great role--the press--electronic media as well as print media. But to have living bodies in Selma, in the heart of the Black Belt: white men and women; low income, middle class, wealthy people; Protestant, Catholic, and Jews, black and white--coming from the north, coming from the outside--meant a great deal really.

I'll never forget seeing that evening, when I was released from the hospital, coming back to the church and meeting some of those young ministers from--primarily from New England, from New York, from Ohio, from the Midwest, but a large group from New England. There was one young man--Reverend James Reeb, who was from the Boston area--a Unitarian minister--who had participated in the march across the bridge and late that evening he went out with another

group of ministers to get something to eat at a local restaurant. He was attacked and beaten by a group of Klanspeople. He was severely beaten, so much so that he was transferred from Selma to a hospital in Birmingham, Alabama. A day or so later he died.

BS: Maybe we can end the Selma part and then pick up with ? Carney when you come back. Maybe we could film two quick responses to the Selma business and then we could leave that. Could we ask you to once again respond to MLK, Jr's motivation and then the second one would be this reaction that you just talked about when these people started to come down here. [Shoot selectively on 16mm]. If you could explain to us once again MLK, Jr's motivation in asking the volunteers from the north to come down and join the Selma effort.

3 BEEPS

TAKE 3 begins
Counter at 357

JL: Martin Luther King, Jr. requested, urged religious leaders and others to come to Selma to literally bring the nation, bring the American people to Selma. He wanted to put the whole question of voting rights on the American agenda. And he know by involving hundreds and thousands of white and black religious leaders, these men and women, would be able to go back to their own communities and spread the news. But also he wanted to see, to test--maybe he knew--but just to test whether the state of Alabama, whether the state troopers, Sheriff Clark and the local police would use the same force and degree of brutality against these white citizens from the north as they did against poor black folks from the Black Belt of Alabama. [cut]

TAKE 3 ends
(377)

BS: Describe the response of the local people who were involved in the effort ? ...that survived, if you would. *4 BEEPS * TAKE 4 be (380)

JL: The local, indigenous people of Selma and the Black Belt of Alabama were gratified, they were deeply moved to see people coming from the outside. They knew they had help, that they were not alone in the struggle. Because they were going up against the forces of the state of Alabama, Governor George Wallace, and the state troopers, Sheriff Clark and the local police, the local white political establishment--they needed help. Not just from Washington, but they needed help and support from the larger American community.

This gave them a great sense of faith, a greater sense of hope that they could bring about change in Selma and throughout the state of Alabama.* * TAKE 4 ends (391)

Part of
Second Interview

BS: Well, maybe we can begin by having you describe Lown's County and what workers were contending with as they began to organize Lown's County.

JL: In 1965 Lown's County was a very poor county, majority black. More than 80 percent of the voting age population in Lown's County was black--but not a single registered black voter in that county. As a matter of fact in 1965 in Lown's County in order for a black person to become a registered voter you would have to go to the county courthouse on the first Monday or the third Monday of the

month and attempt to register. In addition he had to have his name published in the local newspaper and to get some registered voter--and the only registered voters in the county at that time were white--to vouch for him or for her, that they were of good character. And no white person in his right mind was going to vouch for a black person in Lown's County in 1965.

I do recall one day during a lull in the effort in Selma that Dr. King, Rev. Abernathy, myself and a few others, drove over to Lown's County and met with the sheriff and some of the local officials and we had a mass meeting. But there was something very eery about Lown's County--you don't have a large city, a large town in the county like Selma. It is very poor, very, very poor. One of the poorest counties in Alabama, one of the poorest counties in the country.

In '65 just driving off of highway 80--the main highway that runs from Selma to Montgomery through the heart of the county--you go off of these back roads it just sort of, it's dark, just ~~little~~ lights. And you go to a mass meeting or to a rally--you just sort of want to speak, do what you have to do, and get out. It was a very strange place really and I tried not to spend a great deal of time there during that period really.

BS: Were you familiar with the work Daniels was doing in Davis County and then later in Lown's County?

[camera on] 437 (1 BIFF)

JL: I've heard of the work of Jonathan Daniels was involved in in Lown's County--with some of the SNICC people

and others. I believe that just during that sort of nitty gritty, dirty work. It was not flashy, it was not the march from Selma to Montgomery, but it was work that needed to be done in Lown's County--in and around Paineville (?).

BS: How many people stayed, let's say from the north, and did that kind of work..whether it be in Lown's County or Dallas County?

JL: After the march from Selma to Montgomery or after the Mississippi Summer Project in 1964, you didn't have hundreds and thousands of people, but in several communities you had pockets--four here, five here, six there--stand back, just day in and day out, literally becoming part of the community--working with the local and indigenous people.

BS: I was going to ask you too. There's some controversy at that time I guess, even within SNICC, as to whether whites should be working in Alabama given the threat. I think ? figured that it was a death warrant on a white to work in Lown's County. I don't know if during that time Jonathan was totally accepted or what SNICC workers thought about having a white in Lown's county at that particular time.

JL: I think Jonathan Daniel was accepted by the SNICC workers in Lown's county, by the black community, the movement leaders in Mississippi during '64, in Selma in '65, in Lown's County in '65 and '66. The white volunteers were accepted because people that you struggle with, people that you work with, people that you get beaten with and go to jail with, they become like your family. You become sisters

and brothers in a struggle. SNICC, before late '66--the spring and fall of '66--there was a great deal of discussion about a, we would even sing it and not just talk it. But we was a circle of trust; a band of brothers and sisters.

And some of us during that period thought the only real integration that existed in America was that integration within a movement. There was not just Jonathan Daniel from the north, but there were even some southern whites--like John Robert Zellon, Sam Shier and others--Alabamian. But some place along the way, the leadership of SNICC and others felt that whites should go and work in the white community and blacks should work primarily with blacks.

BS: Did the death of people like Daniels sort of encourage that or did that have any impact on that question?

JL: I don't think the death of Jonathan Daniel really encouraged that. I think it was just the sense of growing black consciousness and what Stokely and others start to bring or put under the banner or the umbrella of black power.

I think many of the local people in Lown's County, in Dallas County and other parts of the Black Belt felt very terrible (?) with the shooting, the murder of Jonathan Daniel--the same way that we felt when the three civil rights workers--two whites and one black were murdered in Mississippi during the summer of 1964.

These young men, you know, they didn't have to come south and work--stay in the Freedom House, sleep on the floor, be threatened with arrests and jail, and the threat

of being beaten and even murdered.

BS: The acceptance of the whites coming down--your attitude to that...[on camera]: (487, 3 reels) Take 6

JL: These young men and young women didn't have to come, but they came with the threat of being beaten, being arrested, being jailed. Even the threat of being killed. They became part of us; part of our family. And you know the only haven, to a significant degree, for many of the young whites from the north was really in the black community. They can come and stay in black homes, attend the churches, go to the clubs or whatever, because we became like a family; like a community. In a sense it was the little beloved community. (500 "cut") 58 seconds approx.

BS: Did you know anything about Coleman?

JL: I didn't know anything about Coleman. Someplace along the way, not to my knowledge, but I heard about him, I heard about his family. That it was the familyness (?) that sort of ran the county; they had a tremendous amount of influence. I believe one member of the family had been the superintendent of schools, maybe someone had been a judge. But, it was not unusual, it was not extraordinary in many of the small towns and rural counties in the heart of the deep south--in Alabama, in Mississippi--it's a family affair.

I think, I do not know, but I think we came in contact with members of the family--when we went there early '65 and had a meeting at the courthouse with the sheriff.

BS: Thinking of the consciousness of a white racist Alabamian at that time, why would he want to shoot someone

like Ruby Sales (?) and from what we can gather he was really attempting to shoot the two young black women trying to get to the store. I was wondering from your point of view, how do you explain that kind of hate where one would pick up a shot gun and aim at a sixteen-year-old black civil rights worker

JL: It is very difficult to explain it. I don't know what is, what is really in the mind. What tends to possess a person to want to kill another person, to take a persons life for exercising what they consider to be their rights. But, racism in Alabama at that time, maybe still today and in our country was like a disease and maybe it's still like a disease. It is deep-seeded and ? deep-felt emotions. And somehow, someway I think Mr. Coleman felt like it was his responsibility, his obligation to take matters into his hand, own hand. To keep people from defying a custom. These people were defying a tradition; they were going against our way of life in Alabama, in Lown's County. And somehow he felt that he could play a role in stopping this from happening. And I think they resented, a, maybe they wanted ? to kill the young black women.

But they resent more than anything the ~~presents~~ presence of white workers. It really tended to turn them into something else. It was a sense that these white people...it really didn't matter (BUZZ OF VOTE MACHINE) whether a white person was from Alabama, New York, or from New Hampshire or Massachusetts, it really didn't matter. But, there was a greater degree of maybe resentment if they were from the outside, or knew they were

from the outside. But they saw these people, saw white volunteers, white civil rights workers betraying the white race. And they would refer to people like Jonathan Daniel as a nigger-lover.

To see a white person identify with the movement, identify with the struggle, part of that effort--it was probably too much for someone like Coleman to stand, to visualize, REALLY. And maybe he saw these women as maybe the weakest link, ~~or~~ maybe as just a beginning, I just don't. It's hard to explain that type of mentality. What would provoke a person to do something like that? [Talk between Sullivan and Lewis about Lewis' personal interaction with Daniels. Lewis doesn't recall much, so there's an agreement to move on.]

BS: From what we can gather there was a SCLC meeting, I forget whether it was in Atlanta or Birmingham and Father Morrisroe came down from Chicago and I think somehow that's when you met Jonathan at that confab. There was a coming together of yourself, Daniels, Father Morrisroe and introductions were made. So, I don't know if that's clear in your mind -- if it isn't we just won't bother with it.

JL: It's not clear in my mind.

BS: Okay. Maybe we can go on then and ask, could you talk about -- and we might film this -- how you would sum up Jonathan's contribution to the civil rights effort.

JL: Well, Jonathan Daniels must be looked upon as one of those courageous, young men--American, who died not in the Far East, not in Africa, not in Central America, not

in Europe, but in America, in Alabama, trying to make the democratic process real. He must be looked upon as one of the martyrs that shedded [sic] his blood and gave his life to redeem not just the soul of Alabama, but the soul of a nation. It was the blood of JD and others that helped to bring about what I like to call a non-violent revolution in American politics. (510, end Tape 7)

SIDE B

BS: ...What's taken place, what hasn't taken place, what would you like to see take place?

JL: Alabama, the Alabama that I grew up in, was strictly two worlds -- a white world and a black world; one of signs saying: "white" and "colored." White men, colored men; white women, colored women. One of segregation and racial discrimination, in a sense we knew--we knew our place. There were places a short distance from Lownde's Country in the heart of Montgomery just a few miles away. In Selma black people and white people couldn't ride in the same cab, couldn't sleep under the same roof, eat in the same restaurant. People couldn't stand on the streets' corners in Selma on the steps of a church and organize a demonstration. It was a place of brutal force and it was sanctioned by the state, by Governor Wallace or by the state troopers, by the local sheriff's dept. in Lownde's County, in Dallas County, the other counties of the Black Belt. Tremendous amount of fear, tremendous amount of hate. The

Klan was well-organized in that state. You saw signs...

Today the state is a different state, it's a better state. In 1965 there was not a single registered black voter--not in the state, but in the county, Lownde's County. But today the great majority of blacks in Lownde's County are registered to vote. And you have a black sheriff, blacks ? school, the majority of the Board of County Commission are black.

In Selma, where only 2.1 percent of blacks of voting age were registered to vote 25 years ago, today more than 75 percent of voting age are registered to vote. And the state of Alabama today has the highest number of black-elected officials than any state. So, it's a different place. But you don't have the promised land there; there are still hundreds and thousands of people that are still poor. Lownde's County is still very poor, Dallas County and Selma: still very poor. There are still people that are just left out and left behind. But the fear is gone and it will not return. There is a greater sense of hope, there's a greater sense of optimism. But as I said before, we don't have the promised land in Alabama. Alabama is not the beloved community, but I think the people there are on there way toward making their state something different. You no longer have the Klan riding, you know longer have the Klan shooting people down in open daylight.

Klan was well-organized in that state. You saw signs...

Today the state is a different state, it's a better state. In 1965 there was not a single registered black voter--not in the state, but in the county, Lownde's County. But today the great majority of blacks in Lownde's County are registered to vote. And you have a black sheriff, blacks ? school, the majority of the Board of County Commission are black.

In Selma, where only 2.1 percent of blacks of voting age were registered to vote 25 years ago, today more than 75 percent of voting age are registered to vote. And the state of Alabama today has the highest number of black-elected officials than any state. So, it's a different place. But you don't have the promised land there; there are still hundreds and thousands of people that are still poor. Lownde's County is still very poor, Dallas County and Selma: still very poor. There are still people that are just left out and left behind. But the fear is gone and it will not return. There is a greater sense of hope, there's a greater sense of optimism. But as I said before, we don't have the promised land in Alabama. Alabama is not the beloved community, but I think the people there are on there way toward making their state something different. You no longer have the Klan riding, you know longer have the Klan shooting people down in open daylight.

BS: How would you react to the fact that if Smith had been still the mayor of Selma with all these problems with the schools, the firing of the new school superintendent -- is that different or is that just a replay of '65?

JL: I think it's different -- it is not, what has happened in Selma is not good, but it's not 1965. In 1965 you wouldn't have had a black person as superintendent of the school. Smith may still be the mayor, but his days are numbered. I think you will see a new political regime in Selma; blacks and whites coming together to vote for new leadership. All across the state of Alabama you're going to see people moving together and race is going to become less and less an issue. Blacks in Selma, in Lowndes County, and throughout that state will be dealing with those issues that affect all of the citizens, and not just impact on blacks

BS: That's kind of interesting. This is one of Jonathan's visions that -- he said things to the effect that he was a white Al.. he was called a white nigger and he said, "I accept that with pride." Then he moved also to the point that he was also a white Alabamian in that he thought that eventually these people had to come together to form a kind of new kind of order..I don't know if I understand that concept.

JL: Well I think by being there Jonathan Daniels, by being in Lowndes County, by being in Alabama -- he had an opportunity in a sense to walk in the shoes of a black Alabamian, to live with black Alabamians and feel some of the pain and, to some degree, some of the hurt and share some of the emotions of black Alabamians. But he was also able to get a glimpse of the feelings, some of the frustration, maybe some of the hostility of white Alabamians. I think he had a dream like so many of us did that it was possible that someway and somehow you can

reconcile people, that you could bring people together and build a sense of community, a sense of family.

BS: You being a champion of that--you think that that's the spirit that is now coming forth in the South

JL: I think that spirit is the ongoing spirit. I think that spirit will last. We went through a transitional period during the late '60s--a period of black consciousness when people were using the slogan, the chant "Black Power," "Black Nationalism." But I think, for the most part, that's behind us and that immutable principle of the beloved community--the interracial democracy--that dream that J. Daniels shared-- I think that is what we're moving toward, and that's what we're all about, and that is my hope. (180)