BARCLAY SCHOOL
NUMBER 34
2920 BARCLAY STREET
BALTIMORE, MARYLAND 21218

PERMISSION FORM

I have reviewed the transcript of my oral history interview by the Barclay Civil Rights Scholars on Friday, May 1, 1992. I grant permission to the scholars to include all or parts of the transcript in their proposed publication on the struggle for justice in Baltimore, Maryland.

This permission is granted subject to the following conditions:

[Signature]
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We gratefully acknowledge receipt of the above permission and agree to the stipulated conditions.

[Signature]
Gertrude S. Williams
Date
Principal
Barclay School
8-15-92

[Signature]
Ann O. Robinson
Date
Instructor
(Morgan State University)
Patricia Cuffie: Welcome and thank you for coming. We are the Barclay Civil Rights Scholars. We study how people made important contributions to the civil rights movement. The reason we have invited you to visit us is because we would like to hear your experiences in the struggle for equal rights and justice. We would like you to know that this interview will be taped and that we hope to print parts of this interview. We will send you a copy and ask your permission before we print it.

Congressman Mitchell (hereafter PM). Thank you. Good morning.

Mrs. Thornton & Scholars: Good morning.

Congressman Mitchell: Good morning. How's everybody doing this morning?

Mrs. Thornton & Scholars: Wonderful.

PM: Who brought me a sandwich?

Scholars: Laughter.

PM: Nobody?

Michael Lambert: I got a porkchop in my bookbag.

PM: A porkchop? On what kind of bread?

Baruke Griffin: I got a bag of potato chips.
PM: You got a bag of potato chips? That's no breakfast for me. What did you bring me?

Tony Cappelletty: Uh, a double cheeseburger.

PM: A cheeseburger? It's cold.

Tony: No. It's warm.

PM: It's warm? Oh, alright. How many people have you had in to talk to you? Judge Watts.

Scholars: Two. Three.

PM: Sidney Hollander, Judge Watts, and who was the other one?

Scholars: Charles Johnson, Dr. Charles Johnson.

PM: Dr. Charles Johnson. Well, I may tell you some things that they might have told you. But if you've heard it before just bear with me, ok? The March on Washington. Everybody thinks that was just something that came into being. But no, it was because 30 years. The civil rights struggle really began in the early thirties, 1932, '33. Way back then the NAACP was marching, protesting and people were protesting against the wrong things that were happening to them in America, to (inaudible) the African American citizens. From the early thirties there had been protest movements, voter registration drives, all of that trying to get America to recognize we and others like us were full citizens. Uh, it really picked up in the fifties, and in the sixties where there was constant protest, protest against evil things that were being done to people because of the color of their skin, or because they were white and
were friendly, helpful to people of a different color.
Very interesting. There uh, there are some names you've
heard before. (To technicians: you getting me alright?
Laughs). There are some names you've heard before. One was
a man named Medgar Evers. Have you heard that name?

Scholars: Yes.

PM: Yeah, Medgar Evers was in Mississippi. He was
straining, working himself night and day, to get the
precious right to vote for black people in Mississippi. His
home had been bombed. His wife and children had been
threatened. He lived in constant fear that someone would
kill them. But he never stopped working to try to get the
right to vote for us. You know Medgar Evers was finally
ekilled. He was murdered. And there's a poster. I wish I'd
brought it with me. A poster showing his wife, a very
beautiful woman. And after he was shot, this picture of her
was taken at his funeral. And it shows this one tear
running down her face. She loved her husband. Her name was
Merlee Evers. Medgar Evers, that's a name you should
remember. You've heard the name of, uh., Schwerner, Chaney,
and Goodman. You're familiar with them. Two white boys, one
black, down in Mississippi trying to get the right to vote.
trying to get the right to vote for black people. They
struggled. They were killed. You know that they were
brutally lynched. The young black man. He was a college
student, I think. When they finally found his body the mob
had beaten him so badly that his bones were broken in a
hundred different places. They were struggling for the
right to vote. Struggling. You've heard of other names,
I'm sure. Fannie Lou Hamer. Now she was beaten in prison.
And others.

Now let me tell you just a little bit about the Freedom
Rides. You've heard about those.
Scholars: Yes.

PM: Let me tell you what happened on the Freedom Rides. When we would go into the South, we had a system under which the more experienced freedom riders would sit in the front part of the bus and in the back part of the bus. Those who were going for the first or second time and were not as experienced were put in the middle between the more experienced. And no matter where the bus stopped in our southern states, it looked like a mob was always there waiting for us. Uh, in Louisiana we came to a stop near Deerlines, a place called Deerfields, Louisiana (spelling?). And sure enough, the mob was there, waiting. And we got off singing what was the civil rights theme song. You know what that was? We Shall Overcome.

Scholars: We Shall Overcome.

PM: We Shall Overcome. We got off singing. And the first group got off, the more experienced ones, and people started throwing rocks and things at us. Then in the second group there was a young black man, tall with straight.... He was maybe 16, 17 years old. And we all got off and we were all singing We Shall Overcome. And somebody threw a (inaudible) bottle of milk right in his face and cut his face badly. And he was bleeding badly, and the milk and the blood was mixing together. And you know what? He never stopped moving. Never stopped. And he never stopped singing We Shall Overcome. Wasn't that a terrible thing to do to a human being?

Scholars: (softly) Yes.

PM: That was the pride and the joy. It wasn't just in Mississippi and Louisiana. It was in all the southern states, all of them. So what happened on that great March
on Washington merely represented a high point of 30 years of struggle. That's older than your father, right? Almost older than your grandfather, right? Thirty years of marching, and protesting, and going into the courts and pleading. Then the March took place. All that we wanted. Ah, they were such simple things. The right to vote for everybody. That was one of the simple things. We wanted the signs to come down that said "Colored" and "White." We thought that was demeaning. And do you know what the word "demeaning"'s meaning is? Humiliating, embarrassing for us. Simple things like that. And we wanted a federal law to protect our civil rights and our civil liberties. So finally, after all the turmoil that took place, after the march on Selma. Did you ever see the film on that?

No?

Michael: I read about it in a book.

PM: I have it on my tape on Eyes On the Prize. It's terrifying, to see those people just assaulted by police and state troopers and hoses. The fire hoses were so strong they knocked people (inaudible). The dogs were at them. Police and state troopers using clubs to club people just as you saw with the Rodney King situation. That's what was happening to those who were marching for civil rights. So when the March on Washington took place. And let me show you something. You can see this later. (Shows a large framed photograph of crowd near the Washington Monument).

This is not the first great march. This is the second. The first one took place in the sixties. Twenty years later there was another march to commemorate. When we get finished you can come up and take a look. The first march was much bigger than that. See how all that's crowded around the ellipse? But back here, it went all the way back for many, many blocks. Washington Monument. And on this end, not in
the photograph, is the statue to Abraham Lincoln. And on
that first march it was hot. It was so hot. We were
worried that people would not show. We counted. Oh, not
we. Those who were in charge of the March, counted close to
320,000 people. The newspapers reported it was only
250,000. But even so, that was tremendous, to get a quarter
of a million people to assemble, a quarter of a million to
assemble to demand a law, a law to protect our civil rights.
It was one of the most beautiful things in the world.
People came in wheel chairs. You could see them in their
wheelchairs moving, moving down the streets toward this
place where we had this. There's called, there's a national
association for the blind and they were out, 50 or 60 blind
people walking together with their canes, being guided by
some of the marshalls. Old people, young people, little
babies. It was fantastic. We stood there in that hot sun
and we heard speeches after speech. Do you know the name John
Lewis? John Lewis was one of the young student radicals in
those days. John Lewis is now in the United States
Congress. And I was leafing through a book the other day
and saw a picture of John when he was a young student
radical, with blood all over his forehead where the police
had clubbed him. And John Lewis was one of the people to
speak. He was, he was what was called "SNCC", Student
Scholars (join with PM): Nonviolent Coordinating Committee.

PM: That's right. And he, he was scheduled to speak.
(School Intercom: Mrs. Butler call the office...) (To a
scholar:) are you Mrs. Butler?

Scholars: Laughter.

PM: John Lewis was a firebrand. And in his speech he said
that if they didn't get a civil rights bill passed they
would march through Georgia to the sea spreading fire. He
said we'll do it the same way that Sherman made his famous
march during the Civil War. And the, one of the Catholic
Archbishops who was to speak said, No. That's too
provocative. I'm not going to let you do that. If you
insist on using words like that then I will not participate
and there was a great struggle behind the, behind the
platform, where people were trying to persuade one side or
another to give. And finally John Lewis rewrote a part of
his speech and the Roman Catholic group said it was
acceptable.

I have a sister-in-law whose name is Juanita Mitchell.
She's now gravely ill. She fell in her home and is totally
disabled. She's been like that for almost 2½ years. But
she headed the NAACP. She was supposed to be on the
platform. And Juanita was always late for everything. I
think she might have been late for her wedding. (Laughs).
But Juanita got there late, and couldn't get up to the
platform. And around the platform they had this wiremesh
fence to keep the people back. Juanita was fat. And she
climbed over that fence. Her husband said it was the most
comical sight to see her climbing, this little fat lady
climbing over the fence. (Laughs)

Scholars: Laughter.

PM: to get to where she was. Everybody spoke. It was
magnificent. Entertainment was there. Everything to make a
real drama. You haven't started studying Shakespeare yet,
have you?

Scholars: No.

PM: You will. And they talk about Shakespearean Drama.
Well, that was high drama. People who didn't even know each
other were hugging each other, kissing each other. People
were helping each other out. Some had not brought food and
those who had food shared with them. Just a great, exciting
day. And then, and then, everybody who spoke was applauded and cheered. Spirits were up. Spirits were way up. And everybody was received very well. But everybody in that mass of people knew that they were waiting for one man.

Scholar: Martin Luther King?

PM: Martin Luther King Jr. And when he appeared that whole assemblage of people just went crazy. They screamed. They cheered, they did everything just at the sight of this man who had sacrificed so much. Who had been put in jail, who had been beaten, whose home had been bombed, whose children had been threatened. And then Martin King started to speak. And you’ve heard that speech, you’ve heard the We Shall Overcome speech. And toward the end you know what he said. That he talked all about letting freedom ring down from the curvacious slopes of California and all that. And at the very end he said Let freedom ring from every mountain top, let freedom ring. He said, and that day, when freedom rings, black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Catholics and Protestants, you remember that?

Scholars: (softly) Yes.

PM: will all join hands and sing together in the words of the old Negro spiritual, We shall overcome. I cried. I couldn't help but cry. I had so much emotion inside of me. I believed that we were standing there that day. After 30 years of struggle, King in his speech said we had come to collect on a Promissory Note. Do you know what that is? A debt owed, that was promised to be paid and America had never paid that debt to us. From every mountain side let freedom ring. That was it. I can't begin to describe the emotions I felt, nor the emotions I saw coming from other people. And it was the end of the program. King was finished. We started, the crowd started to slowly break up. And that was beautiful, because as we started to slowly walk away from this mass of humanity we were singing what?
Scholars: We Shall Overcome.

PM: Our, our song, We Shall Overcome. And I heard, I was at the head of the crowd and could see who was coming. And then as most of the people passed me by, it was almost (inaudible) and gradually the words of that song disappeared, but we could hear, softly in the background, "We shall overcome. We shall overcome. We shall overcome someday." And then they changed it. They said, "Deep in our hearts we do believe we have overcome today." And I thought we had. And so did all of those people there think the same thing. We thought we had really overcome. We thought that we had ended prejudice and racism and discrimination. But unfortunately those things are still with us. And we must keep fighting again and again. We must keep protesting. We must keep marching, to make this country be what it ought to be. It, it, it's a sham unless the country really is what it ought to be. Our fathers' God, the sweet land of liberty. Is there liberty, really? For all of us? I pledge allegiance to the flag of...one nation indivisible. Are we divided along color lines? Yes, we are. So I'm depending on you. I'm depending on you. As you grow older you will be the new leadership. I don't know where I'll be. I guess I'll be up in heaven with my wings on, an angel flying around in heaven (inaudible) And I'm going to look down, and I'm going to see her (pointing to scholars), and I'm going to see you, and I'm going to see you, and I'm going to see you, all of you, new young leaders, striving to lift this nation to what it really ought to be, a nation not based on color at all, but on the individual worth of every human being. That's what I remember about that march. Twenty years later they did it again. And I spoke at that one. 20 years later. It was sad that we had to do that again because in '63 we ended up saying, we have overcome this day. And only
we found we had not. So we had to come back 20 years later
and in 83 and now, here we are in 92, still struggling.

Now understand, things are better. All those sacrifices
paid off. You don't see any signs around Baltimore,
"Colored", "White." Uh, you don't see uh, people acting out
their dislike of black and African Americans. But there's
still so much to be done. You promise me you're going to do it?
What about you?

Scholar: Yes.

PM: You? See each person has a role to play. Sometimes
it's a matter of just befriending other folks, sometimes
it's a matter of telling someone that you see acting out
their prejudice, oh no, that's wrong, you can't do that.
All of you have a role to play. (Inaudible) How old are
you, Lamont?

Lamont: 12.

PM: You know, when you're 32, 20 years from now, you may be
in Congress and you may not. I don't know. But more than
likely you will not go down in history as one of the great
leaders, but you will have done your part. You may not be
recognized like Fannie Lou Hamer 20 years from now. But you
will have done your part by just living the kind of life
that discourages segregation. No, not all of you will be
leaders. But you got your jobs. If you can't be a pine at
the top of the hill, be a scrub in the valley, but be the
best little scrub by the side of the hill. Be a bush, if
you can't be a tree. If you can't be a highway, be a trail.
If you can't be the moon, be a star. It doesn't matter if
you pass or fall. Be the best of whatever you are. You be
the best at leading this nation, finally, at long last, out
of this morass of prejudice, and discrimination. I'm going
to trust you. I'm going to believe in you, Lonnie. I'm
going to believe in you, Mike. I'm going to believe in you, Rosa. If you can't be a pine at the top of the hill, be a scrub, a little scrub, be a scrub in the valley. But be the best scrub by the side of the hill. Be a bush if you can't be a tree. Thanks for letting me talk to you. I know that you want to ask me some questions, and I'll (inaudible)

Scholars: Applause.

PM: Rosa? I could tell by the way she was smiling, she had a question.

Rosa Loeb: Where were you born and raised?

PM: I was born in Baltimore. Lived here almost all of my adult life. I lived in Philly, Philadelphia for 2 years when I went to the University of Pennsylvania. Of course, when I was in the military service, I was not here, but I, this is my home. I wouldn't desert it. O.K. Other questions?

Patricia: What is your occupation and does it have anything to do with the civil rights movement?

PM: Oh yes, very much. I served in Congress, the United States Congress, 16 years. And I left the Congress. I could have still been reelected, and I know that, but I left, because in 1980 I founded, I founded the Minority Business Enterprise Legal Defense Fund, Minority Business Enterprise Legal Defense Fund. When I was in Congress I got a number of laws passed, because I believe that the first phase of the civil rights movement was (inaudible). And I believe that the second phase was the matter of economic enterprise, bringing economic power to the black communities, getting them started with businesses. And that's why, I'd passed my laws; when Reagan came in I knew
he would not enforce those laws, so I conceived of the Minority Business Legal Defense Fund. And, uh, it got operational in 1984, and it's still going strong. My office is in Washington, and I'm chairman of the board. That's my job, Chairman of the Board of the Minority Businesses Enterprise Legal Defense Fund. We're in court all the time. Where minority business people have been done wrong, where they've been denied (inaudible), we're doing the same thing that the old civil rights lawyers did, Thurgood Marshall and Charles Hamilton, Charles Houston, Hamilton Houston. He went into court day after day, (inaudible). And here we are, going into court day after day, trying to secure equal economic opportunity for minorities in this country. So that's my job, and it's very much related to civil rights. And I'm asked, as Chairman of the Board, and as a former member of Congress, I am all over the country. Last week, last Tuesday night I spoke in Pittsburgh. That was the 38th anniversary of the Pittsburgh NAACP. And I spoke to their (inaudible). Uh, Tuesday, Thursday night I spoke in St. Louis, Missouri. There's a group there called Mo-Kan, Missouri Kansas, uh minority business people who have a group there. I don't know where I'll be next week, but I'm broke. Lend me ten cents.

Scholars: Laughter.

PM: I don't have any money. I don't have any money, but I've got lots of energy and I don't mind serving my (inaudible). I don't get paid for this job, being chairman. I don't take any money for that. I just feel I owe it, I owe it to all those who went ahead of me. So, that's what I do (inaudible).

Rosa: Have there been any events in your life that made you want to be a part of the civil rights movement? If so, please describe them.

PM: That made me want to be what?
Rosa: A part of the civil rights movement.

PM: Oh yeah. Yeah. Well, there were so many events. But let me give you one or two. You know my whole family is highly involved, most of them involved in civil rights. You know where Pennsylvania Avenue is?

Scholars: Yes.

PM: That's the commercial (break in taping while cassette is turned over) I think I, who told me they were 12 years old. Who?

Scholars: Lamont.

PM: Lamont. When I was about 12 years old, I forget which group it was, must have been the NAACP, decided to picket on Pennsylvania Avenue, to demand the right for us to take any job that we wanted. And I was a little skinny kid, used to wear what was called stovepipe pants. You've never heard of them, have you?

Scholar: Knickerbockers.

PM: No, not knickerbockers. These were these little ball pants, like shorts. You know, and my mother used to always starch my pants and that felt so uncomfortable. And there I was out there picketing and carrying my sign saying "Don't buy where you can't work." Little knobby knees showing, little skinny legs. But always since then I've been involved. My brother, Clarence, who is now deceased -- you've heard about Clarence Mitchell -- used to be a cub reporter for THE AFRO. And many, many years ago, well, my mother always insisted that we always eat dinner
together. And Clarence had gone down to the Eastern Shore, and he hadn't come home yet. And we were worried about him, and I was hungry. I said, let's eat. My mother said, wait for your brother. And finally, he came in, washed up, sat down to eat, and just got sick at the table. He had covered the last lynching in Maryland. A man named [inaudible] had been lynched, there in Centerville, Maryland. And the man's body was left hanging out for two days. And that's what made my brother sick. And that was one of the reasons, I guess. I didn't quite understand all of that. But I knew I loved my brother. And I knew something had hurt him. And whatever it was, I wanted to hurt that back. It was racism. [inaudible].

Patricia: What was it like to live in Baltimore?

PM: I'm not going to. Let somebody else ask me a question.

Scholars: She's the interviewer.

PM: Oh, you're the interviewer. Are you the only interviewer? You and [inaudible] are the interviewer.

Laughs.

Lonnie: What was it like to live in Baltimore before the civil rights movement?

PM: You read about South Africa, with its system of apartheid. Baltimore was just like South Africa. Separate neighborhoods, separate schools, separate everything. Uh, women who went downtown to buy a dress found that they agreed to sell women dresses downtown but they could not try it on. The old Ford's Theater downtown, if we, when we were finally able to go in there, we could only sit in the 3rd balcony. It was a system of absolute, complete prejudice. Uh, at my age I did not encounter too much of the
prejudice. Because the neighborhoods were so separated I rarely moved outside of my neighborhood then, I rarely went downtown. But that's what it was like. It was embarrassing. It was humiliating when you had to confront that racism. But oh we had some tremendous heroes. Did you read about Ms. McMillan and how she [inaudible]. So many people. There was a minister over in East Baltimore named uh, I can't recall, oh, Rev. E.G. Meade at New Israel Baptist Church. Uh, he wanted to buy a house and at that time there was something called a restrictive covenant that said the house could not be sold, uh, the restrictive covenant. I read one. Let's see, "no hogs, no chickens, no Negroes", no nothing else. The Rev. Meade filed a suit because he thought he was being deprived of his rights. And he filed a suit, and he broke the back of restrictive covenants [inaudible]. So that all those heroes, little, little people, all the little people that used to come to the NAACP. You know how we went into court? On $2.00 memberships. That's what the membership was, $2.00 to join the NAACP. And that paid the lawyers. All those little people giving their $2.00. It was a lot of money then. It is a lot of money to me now because I'm poor.

Scholars: Laugh.

PM: Laughs. Everybody hear that? But they were heroes. OK?

Syreeta Byrd: How has Baltimore changed as a result of the civil rights movement?

PM: How has Baltimore changed? Yeah. Well.

Syreeta: Did you participate. (Other scholars interrupt).

Scholars: He's already answered that.

PM: Let her alone.
Scholars: Laughter.

PM: Go right ahead.

Syreeta: What were you doing when you learned about the assassination of Dr. King?

PM: At that time I uh was heading up the Baltimore City anti-poverty program. It was called the Community Action Agency. And when the word broke I uh, said we're going to have trouble. And I don't, I don't know when it will end so I'd better get ready. So I went home, turned on the radio and heard that some fires had started in East Baltimore. I took a one hour nap and washed up and went back down to the Community Action Agency headquarters. By then everything had broken out. And I didn't leave that headquarters for 3 days. We used that as a point where people were bringing food in, to replace the, the stores had been looted and people couldn't get any food so we used our headquarters down on Mount Royal Avenue. People from Anne Arundel County, Harford County, all over brought food in. Uh, I remember, (inaudible) patrolling the streets, trying to talk to people. Walter Carter was a great civil rights leader. And we were in a car together, in my car driving in East Baltimore, trying to see groups of people to stop them, and suddenly a barrage of bottles and cans hit my car and I got scared to death. And Walter says no point in speeding. Let's just sit here and wait out this barrage. And we did. And then we went on. Uh, I said I was there for 3 days. Because people were hurting and uh I was pretty well known, and the agency was pretty well known. They knew that they, they assumed that if they came down there on Mount Royal Avenue they'd get some help. There's this guy named Stanley Mazer who was one of my deputies, and another guy named
Dick. And we just got folding cots and slept in the office, for 3 days. Uh, that answer your question? (laughs) Isn't she pretty?

Scholars: Laughter.

PM: Better say yes. You know what? I live deep in the ghetto. I live right across from Market Square. You know who Yos are? Little Yo boys. They're the ones wear their caps backwards. (inaudible) I got a lot of little Yos in my neighborhood. (inaudible). My nickname is PJ. And they call me PJ. And when they see me they call me Yo, Hey Yo how you doin'? And I yell right back at em, Hey Yo, how you doing? Some of them wear their caps all crazy. And some of them wear those awful plaits in their hair.

Scholars: Laughter.

PM: Terrible lookin'! I was talking to a little Yo about a month ago. And I hadn't had a chance to get my hair cut for about 3 months and it's sitting up like that. And I said little Yo, I can't talk to you any longer, because I got to get to my barber's to get my hair cut. The little Yo said to me, PJ why don't you plait it?

Scholars: Laughter.

PM: Don't think I'm going to plait my hair. I want a haircut! Nah, just joking. We talk. See, I take the position that I got to talk to everybody. Just because they, they wear their caps crazy or have those funny looking little plaits in their hair, I can't just turn my back on them. Can I, Lonnie? No. Any other questions? Devin, I was figuring on you asking me some questions.

Scholars: Not an interviewer.
PM: Huh?

Scholars: He's not an interviewer.

Devlin: How did you first react, what was going through your mind, when you first heard about the assassination?

PM: I was so angry. I just didn't want to talk to anybody because I was so angry and hurt I'd lost control. And I figured if I talked to even some of my white friends I might just lash out at them. So I didn't, I held that all inside of me. Deivin, it was such a painful thing, painful, a hurting thing. But then, you know, soon after that the city erupted and I got so busy doing what I was supposed to be doing I didn't feel the pain very much. It was numbing though. But that was the best thing for me, that, that I was so, so involved, so many demands were on me that assuaged -- that's a nice word for your vocabulary -- that assuaged the pain that I had. (Turning to Naron:) Just because you're running the tape, that doesn't mean you can't ask any questions.

Scholars: Laughter.

Scholar: What happened as a result of Dr. King's murder, and did it affect your life in any way?

PM: Yeah. Uh. Shortly after the eruptions that took place in this city when Dr. King was murdered, I saw a perceptible change in the responsiveness of city government. Tommy D'Alesandro III was then Mayor. And he started getting to the bottom of (insudible) There was greater responsiveness. And after that murder I came to find out that I had to work even harder. Said look, you think you've done so much. You
haven't done anything. You've got to redouble, quadruple, your efforts. And I did. I did. I never wanted to run for public office. All my life from the time I was 21 years old people were telling me, run for public office, run for City Council, and I said I'll never get mixed up in that dirty politics I don't like that and uh when I was director of the Community Action Agency I went out to community meetings almost every night. And I went to one, one night, and I said what's, what's the problem. And they said you're the problem. We want to run you for Congress. I said, No way! No, I'm sorry. I'm not going to do that. Then, oh maybe about 3 weeks later, another community group called me. This time there was about 100 people. I said how can I help. They said you can help by running for Congress. I told them, No, no way that I'm going to do that. And they told me, it's not your choice. You owe us. We want you to run. And we will (inaudible) And I said well I'm not going to do it. And they said what we'll do, we're going to start putting signs out and we're going to go down and get the form to register you to run for Congress and forge your name to it. I said, oh don't do that. You'll get in all kinds of trouble. That's how I ran. And it was great. It was a great experience. We didn't have any money. You know what bumper stickers are?

Scholars: Yeah.

PM: We, we made bumper stickers there in our basement. We didn't have any money. We'd take a silk screen and we'd do the bumper stickers and the students, the kids, would come in and put glue on the back. Then another bunch would come in and cut the bumper stickers. I still see some of those bumper stickers on cars. That glue was so hard it would never come off. Laughs.

Scholars: Laughter.
PM: We didn't have any money for posters. And that's where we made our own posters there in the basement. Silk screened them. Young students, old folks, everybody helped out. Oh. The most interesting thing was, the students at Morgan State University. They called me PJ, too. You can call me PJ.

Baruke: PJ.

Laughter.

PM: They said PJ we want to raise some money for your campaign. I said great, that I thought it would be wonderful. Now students, college students don't have any money. (Laugh). They can barely eat. And I was wondering how they were going to raise any money. But they organized students and they went down to the docks every Saturday morning, and they would buy a bushel basket of peanuts. And then they had brown paper bags, and they would stamp on there, "Peanuts for PJ." And they'd fan out through the city selling these peanuts for PJ bags. And the night came for a big fundraiser we had. It was one of these big places and these student leaders wanted to give this money presentation. They raised $300.00 selling peanuts for PJ. I just, I just thought that was so wonderful. That's, that's what I liked about the campaign. We had no big money. No big boss. Nobody told us what to do. But we won.

Gertrude Williams: May I jump in a minute, because I have a class I have to meet downstairs. But I want to thank you for taking time to come here. Uh, I don't know whether. See, students when I came to Baltimore as a teacher uh, I came during a time when, if you went downtown. Uh, in fact I taught in a separate school for awhile, and when they integrated the schools they moved some of us who had been
in integrated settings into other schools. And, uh, when people, some people used to say, they really took a lot of the strength away from the black community and moved it into integration. One of the people uh, that was admired is this young man standing in front of you.

PM: Old man.

Gertrude Williams: See, young man. You see, not old until you uh stop having great ideas. You still mean so much to the people here. But there were times when those of us who were of Afro American race had to uh go into places and bring things outside. See you've never witnessed that. And you hear me as I say, and, and Martin Luther King died for you to act like that? And other people gave their lives and and that's, you see, sometimes you don't feel the pressures that some of the people my age and others, who did not have the opportunities. This man standing in front of you, there were times when we were afraid for him. He would stand up so that those who needed, he would stand, and it was frightening, frightening. We would meet in groups so that we could be prepared to move in. He, he talked about afraid, and all that, he may have been afraid inside, you know? How Bambi, if he's cornered, becomes a lion!

PM: Laughs.

Gertrude Williams: So you don't know what went on inside of him. But he stood there. And as a result of the many, the many fights that he championed you have the right to sit in a Barclay School, you have a right to be what you want to be. It's up to you, you see. But he, there were times, I'm telling you, it was frightening. And, uh, if it had not been for, I can't say P3 (inaudible). We were just so reverent when he walked in the room, you see. Uh, that Congressman Mitchell, who when he went to the Congress and had a fight there, too, because he was outside of the green circle. But everyone knew him. Everyone knew him. And I
am so glad that you thought enough of the students at
Barclay to say yes, because you're part of our history.

PM: Thank you, thank you for those words.

Scholars: Applause.

PM: Who's going to be States Attorney. Who's going to be a lawyer?

General informal exchange.

Jo Ann Robinson: Rosa has one last thing.

PM: Alright.

Rosa: Thank you very much for sharing with us. As a token of our appreciation please accept this remembrance from a trip that 9 members of our group recently made to the National Civil Rights Museum in Memphis.

PM: Well, thank you very much. That's very thoughtful of you.

Applause.

Michael: We have one final request. This is our photographer, me. May we, may I take your picture?

PM: I'd be honored. Thank you for this. That's...

Naron: You're welcome, PJ.

PM: Listen to that. If you want to come up before you leave and take a look at this picture, you may.