Fifth Session
March 12, 1999
TAPES IX—part of Side B
& X — Side A (Side B of X
did no record), XI- Side A
& part of Side B

TAPE IX— Side B

JR  Well, good morning.

GW  Good morning, how are you?

JR  Here we are again. Fine.

GW  Ok.

JR  We talked in our last session about community support through the Barclay Brent Education Corporation and Greater Homewood. But we didn’t mention Johns Hopkins University yet.

GW  Right.

JR  Can you describe the ties between Barclay and Hopkins that were forged in the seventies and eighties?

GW  Well, when — that happened through Dea Kline. Dea Kline was in charge of community affairs and adopted Barclay by getting some of the students who came over and taught mini-courses — like Oceanography and so forth. And then the kids were so excited they started to do a project on the campus. And they studied every tree on Hopkins campus. Wrote about the trees. And wrote a curriculum about the trees on Hopkins. We would go up into Wyman Park, and we’d climb all through the park and everything — and before it became so infamous. And anyhow, after that Dea just continued. Whatever went on — we’d have activities. We’d go to campus — the Hopkins Fair. Our kids were always up front and invited to be a part of it. And Dea just became very close to us. Whatever situation Barclay found itself in, Dea would be there to support us. Then we had — then when we were fighting for the — first for the middle school and then for the Calvert Curriculum, Dea was involved. And the members of Hopkins — people there at Hopkins who — And of course we all went to “Community Conversations” — and the people there who had become acquainted with Barclay and really liked some of the things that were happening there. They too wrote letters and became involved, and they were very supportive in fighting the Calvert Curriculum.

JR  And “Community Conversations” was the breakfast—
GW  Breakfast

JR  Once a month that Dea instituted to get people from all segments of the community would get together, and they had a speaker talking about a topic of interest –

GW  Right. Which was exciting. It was a place where the leaders could get together and listen to some different topics. But just talk at breakfast with each other, and you’d just used to change seats at the “Community Conversations” so that the people you came with wouldn’t be sitting with you naturally. And it was according to the speaker, whether or not you sat at the main table. Through that we met Ross Jones and the others, and they supported Barclay, and through that it has worked up to the point where today Hopkins is involved in a lot of the segments. You have the students who are tutoring and who wrote the grant to tutor the students. And then you have the Hopkins wives who run the library, and I mean do a fantastic job. They have brought in books and everything, and the library is really – like the children say – “are the book ladies here today?” But they have just revitalized the library.

JR  Wasn’t there also some involvement on the part of Hopkins faculty with your teachers – like Daniels and –

GW  Oh, that’s true. Early on with – when I came to Barclay—I was assistant principal then. There was Paul Daniels and Schiffman. But Paul Daniels was the one who supported Barclay and Brent in having courses there. First of all, before we started having courses, Paul would come over and write courses for the school. And we got credit for it. He would set up – whatever we wanted to strengthen the curriculum—he would write the program and those who participated got credit for it at the department of ed. Then after that we entered into – any teacher at Barclay or Brent who wanted to take courses at Hopkins took it free of charge through Dr. Daniels. What happened was – the teachers – and that was through Greater Homewood, who was back of that. They had – and at that time Greater Homewood was really an education corporation, I mean they really worked with the schools. They didn’t design things; they worked with the school curriculum and whatever you asked for, they would work with you. And Paul would – they continued that until the system started taking our teachers. Our teachers had become so proficient in what they were doing that – they got promoted out. And the goal of Hopkins was to strengthen the teachers right there in the community. And what was happening – the teachers were being pulled out and sent all over. And finally through a discussion, we finally had to agree that they would help us in another way. Because [inaudible]

JJR  Ok. Good. Barclay was also the beneficiary of the St. Georges Garden Club for a number of years. Can you say a little bit about that?

GW  Yeah. That was a great group. They were the finest ladies you would ever meet – Mrs. Parker from Bryn Mawr and oh—I’ll think of some other names. But they would – they took and landscaped the school’s garden. They laid out the trees and so forth. I
can't remember all their names, 'cause one of them -- their husband was one of the directors of the zoo. So the children always went there free. They had special parties up there for them. But the Hopkins -- not the Hopkins -- the St. Georges Garden Club -- the women would come down and work and take care of the lawn and plant whatever else needed to be there. But outside of taking care of the lawn, they had little mini-courses for the children in there. They taught them how to take a tree and decorate it without going out and buying all this tinsel. They would take oranges and make little sweet-smelling things. And I remember Kitty Baetche, who came there, and the strike was on with the teachers. And she had come one day to bring this "Story of Iris" -- was it Iris? Where the bulbs -- I think they were Iris. But anyhow she came, and she really took all of the children who were there, the older ones and the younger ones, but just had enough bulbs for the younger ones because she thought, ok, the older ones won't want that. So gave them out to the younger ones. And then here comes the older ones. They went up to her -- who had listened so intently. And said to her, "I'd like to have one for my little sister." [Laughter] They wanted it for themselves.

JR [Laughter] For themselves.

GW But they were so enthralled with her. She was an excellent story-teller. And -- but they worked at Barclay for years, and then as they grew older then they stopped.

JR Ok. Then there's one more partnership I wanted to mention. And that's the partnership that didn't last quite as long but was quite lucrative while it lasted -- between Barclay and Homewood Friends Meeting. That involved the funding of a school nurse.

GW Yes. We had been fighting for years to get a nurse in there. Because the children had more problems than they used to have, and we would -- we argued and so forth. Then you, Jo Ann, went to Greater Homewood -- not Greater Homewood, Homewood Friends, and told them of our plight. And then they hired Nursey--

JR Fay Menaker.

GW Fay Menaker, who was really wonderful, who worked with the children. She worked three days a week, didn't she?

JR Something like that.

GW Yeah, and she just did so much for those children. And she was working on her doctorate at that time, too. But she became an integral part of the program, 'cause Fay was not just a nurse. She was a people person, and finally the system had said they were gonna replace her. But then Fay was going to finish her doctorate. And the system promised a nurse in her position. But they -- we have a nurse one day or two days a week, who really didn't do the same things that Fay did. I remember one day Fay called me in and she says, "Look in this little boy's ear. And I looked and I could see letters, like "o", "y" -- and it was a crayola. And he said that his letter sister had put it in when he was asleep. So Fay really had to go and take the mother to the hospital to have this
removed from the boy's ear and it had been in there so long it had damaged his hearing in that ear. But she was so good.

JR  Didn't she set up a record-keeping system—

GW  Yes. She had a record keeping system where you could — the book had all these different colors — it was colored-coded. And the children — all the children had whatever problems they had. But Fay was like a mini-doctor. She had her little stethoscope — listen to their heart, check them out, and was excellent. And knew how to talk to parents. Because the parents would come up to her just to find out certain things, you know. But she was very good at her public relations. And she was very good with the children and their parents and everybody hated to see Fay go.

JR  Yes. I can remember that, even though Homewood Friends had been that generous, the school system tried to charge us a fee for receiving the money from Homewood Friends Meeting?

GW  That is so true. You remember, we had to go down — they had charged — the money had been sent in to the school system to pay for Fay, and we learned from that, too. And they wanted to charge us money for handling her salary. And that wasn't anything. Well, after we got on them, they backed off. But we learned not to deal with them with money.

JR  Yeah. That was the most —

GW  That was an amazing thing — how they had taken the money out. We wondered where the money had gone —

JR  Right.

GW  And so they made up this thing about how much they had taken out of the salary —

JR  For overhead or something.

GW  Yeah. It was horrible. And that lesson was the reason why Calvert — the money that Abell gave Calvert was at Calvert.

JR  Right. We didn't put it through the school system.

GW  Yes.

JR  Ok. On another topic, you mentioned in our last session, just in passing, that you had been appointed by the mayor to the Fund for Educational Excellence.

GW  Right.
JR Can you say a little bit about what that was—and what you experienced there?

GW Oh, ok. I had gotten this letter from the then Mayor Schaefer, asking me to come to a meeting. Which I quickly called and—I’ve forgotten her name, who worked with him. oh—I called his office—Pine, Marion Pine. And I said to her, “you know, I got this letter. Do I have to come?” She said, “it would suggest if the Mayor sends you a letter that you should come.” [Laughter] So we went and when we got there, it was just—the only other educators were Saul Lausch and—

JR who was principal of City College?

GW City College, principal of City College. Andrea—

JR Bowden?

GW Bowden, who was head of science. She had been the national—she won a national award as science teacher; she came from—

JR Western.

GW Western—and myself. And the others were businessmen. Mark Joseph was there too. All businessmen. The vice president—well he was the president of Equitable Trust, you know. Anyhow, he then talked and said that the businessmen were tired of giving money to the school system and the money went every place but into the classroom. And he had formed this committee and he went around the table to say why he had formed each committee—each person. And when he got to me, I wondered what he was going to say. And he said, “because you’re your own person, you will not let anyone tell you what to do. But you’re pretty agreeable.”

JR Laughter

GW And then he went on around. But anyhow, the committee was to the goal of this Fund for Educational Excellence was to get money into the classroom. And give it to the teachers. Teachers could write these mini-requests and send them to the Fund. And we were to fund [inaudible] for those who were fundable. And the main goal was never to have it involved with the powers-to-be in the school system. It finally came apart—finally after Jerry—who was in charge of the Fund for Educational Excellence—

JR This is Jerry Baum?

GW Jerry Baum—he then started giving money to the superintendent, and most of the money went in to the superintendent. Which was absolutely against the total reason why the Fund had been established. And then a lot of the businessmen started moving off. And they stopped giving.
While it was functioning the way it was intended, what kinds of things were funded?

Oh, like—if a teacher had a science project she wanted to—she or he wanted to set up in the classroom, they could send for that. If they wanted to start a classroom reading library, if they had children in their classroom who needed additional help for math or whatever, it was any kind of thing that was creative that a teacher wanted to do—even music. They set up—they funded music activities. The only thing they wouldn’t buy—they would not buy—they would not fund trips unless the trip was a part of that total package. If in that science package you needed to take a trip somewhere, then they paid for the trip. They set up our lab upstairs we used to have. And somewhere in that building should be a high-frequency radio that goes all over the world. It was Room 312 was the science lab, and they funded a lot in that lab. Tom Husted wrote the and got that money.

So that was the Fund for Educational Excellence. I thought I had another question about that. If I think of it I’ll come back to it. Oh, I know. The Fund started to sponsor those big events down at the Civic Center, or—

That’s right. And that was as a result of the superintendent. See, Dr. Amrey—

It was before him.

Even before Amrey, with Hunter and the others requested— I know Hunter had money. I don’t remember who was before Hunter, but—

Pinderhughes. I think it we had one of these fairs while Pinderhughes was still in.

But I don’t know whether it got the funds for Pinderhughes, ’cause Schaefer was still in and wouldn’t allow that. So I think it started with Schaefer. Because Schaefer had gone. Wasn’t Schaefer still in with Pinderhughes?

Yes, yes. And then Pinderhughes outlasted Schaefer a little while.

Just a little while.

As soon as Schmoke came in he said he was going to ask for her resignation but she stayed on until they found Hunter and then

stayed a little while. And yes and then they found Hunter. [Chuckle] That was a hunt. But during that time that Schaefer was in, no money went to the big people, you know. He would not have let the superintendents have the money. I think it started—and I remember the meeting that we had with Hunter, which shocked me—that we had a meeting and Jerry had said to him, “We have called you here...” We were shocked that he was there—that they had the superintendent there. And he said, “We’ve called you in to see how we can support you and what we can do to help you carry out your program.”
Shortly after that I stopped going to meetings and then Jerry – they called and asked why. And I said that I just had too much to do.

JR It had outlived its usefulness, from your point of view.

GW Well, I – it was doing – they had started doing things that they weren’t supposed to be doing, according to the mandate that Mayor Schaefer had set up in the beginning. And little, less money was going into—less money went into the individual classrooms.

JR Well, two more things that were Barclay tradition – and then we’ll move on to talk a little bit more about the middle school for a minute. But one Barclay tradition that I remember [laughter] very well as a parent is summer packets.

GW Oh, right! [Laughter]

JR And I remember because I put together so many of them, and then I remember my kids doing them whether they wanted to or not –

GW That’s right.

JR going on vacation with Barclay summer packets. Talk about summer packets.

GW Summer packets were really started – I don’t know whose idea – I think it came up in a meeting – one of the meetings we had, to have – and I had gone somewhere to – I think down in St. Mary’s County –one of those – ‘cause we were a Title I school, you remember. And I think I went to St. Mary’s County and they had had the summer packets. And I brought them back and presented them at a meeting. We thought it was a great idea. Thought it would be very easy to do [Laughter] and that it would help our children to be mindful of what they had learned during the year. And a packet would let them continue to – if they went on trips, if they were at home, it would give them something to do. So we decided that we were going to make these packets, like we made those t-shirts. [Laughter] But like everything else did sometimes, it boiled down to a few of us who stayed up late at night and worked on these things – got them together, though. And they went home. After the first packet, the others became easier, because you had something to model it by. But you ended up doing all the typing [Laughter]

JR Oh, but I can remember being over there on a Saturday and you –

GW Right!

END OF Side B- TAPE IX

TAPE X – Side A

JR you running the copy machine, and Sharon Scott——
GW Right. [Laughter]

JR and me and two or three others walking around that table, endlessly collating stuff.

GW [Laughter] It was something.

JR It was —

GW It was really — it was a unique idea. But it really, it really was

JR high energy—high intensive labor.

GW Right. We were determined to finish. And that was something that really was good for the children and really had reached the point where we had had it down pat.

JR Yup. Well one of the most loved traditions at Barclay was the annual Appreciation Luncheon. Please describe that tradition and how it came to be and why you kept it. I think you had 25 Appreciation Luncheons.

GW Yes. The people — when I started as a principal — I would call people and say, “Look, I’m new; I don’t know how to do this. Would you please help me?” And I found out that there were so many people in the system that would come and help. They would fix the window if I’d call and say “Look! So and so and so and so.” Anything. They were just very helpful at the school. And in talking to the staff one day I said, “you know, people have been so good to us — I mean the people, the little people. Not the people who run the top shop, but the people who come out and do the work — need to be thanked in some way.” I said, “what if we just all made our favorite dish and invited the people?” And with our favorite dish, you remember, we made the booklets — the little — had the recipes in it —

JR Oh, the Barclay Cookbook.

GW The Barclay Cookbook.

JR That’s right.

GW And it had the recipes in it. And we had the people in. And they were so excited, and the food was good, because people went to town on cooking their favorite dish. And it was really exciting. And then we had it again the next year and even went a little further — had the little children in it. And what happened was, it just became the party of the year. And I still have people saying, “why did you stop the ...” [Laughter] “I retired.” “Why did you stop these parties?” But people loved them. And from that, they
would say, "whatever you ask," you know — “whatever your school asks to do, we will help, because you say ‘thank you’ in the nicest way.” That was really a fun time.

JR And one of the most cherished dishes — at least for a segment of the audience

GW [Laughter] were those chittlins! I tell you!

JR Were the chittlins — you and your chittlins. You would stay up all night cooking chittlins.

GW Cooking! That’s right. It went from — which I thought — I’d never eaten them. Mom and them used to cook them and Walt had said, “Listen, you know black folks come. Why don’t you have chittlins?” So I said, “Ok, you got it next year.” Well just before the — the luncheon letter had gone out — but Walt called me and he said, “you gonna have those chittlins?” And I went “Yes, Walt.” So I called my mother and asked how to cook them. So I thought, “Oh this will be fine,” and I get 10 pounds and ended up with a little dish like that.” [Laughter]

JR Laughter.

GW And of course they went and so I promised the next year I’d do better. And it got up to — I was cooking 80 pounds of chittlins and that was horrible. Eighty pounds! [Laughter].

JR Laughter.

GW But they ate ‘em.

JR But they ate him — yeah.

GW Right. Right.

JR I have to admit that that was one thing I let them eat. I didn’t try the chittlins.

GW That’s right. I didn’t eat ‘em myself.

JR Ok. Well, in our last session you outlined the process that led to the Barclay Middle School. Since then, I found in the files the whole chronology, beginning in the March of 1980 when we worked in alliance with neighboring schools to establish — we were trying to establish a lower school at City College.

GW Right.

JR When that fell through we persuaded Dr. Crew to let Barclay pilot our own seventh grade, and the following year, our eighth grade. In the spring of 1985 you were
promised that the school board would vote for permanent status for a Barclay middle school. So we all went that night, wearing our t-shirts, expecting this vote—

GW  Right.
JR  and all they voted was a one year extension.

GW  Right.

JR  In 1986 after we’d raised a whole lot of sand, again, permanent status was finally granted. As you now look over the paper work— with all the steps documented— why do you think it was such a struggle just to get two grades added to our elementary school?

GW  I—change is hard, and especially for public schools. It was something that hadn’t been done — but it had been done in other places. But there was this— we had been there before, we had asked for other things, like the all-day kindergarten and everything. So, I don’t know whether it was that we were knocking on the door again, or whether it was Barclay — or whether it was me—or whether they did not wish try something different. But it was horrible. It really— it didn’t make sense. Because before that, we had gone and tried everything to get our children in another school. They knew they were being really roughed up and beaten up at the other school where they were. But they wouldn’t change. So, I don’t know whether— was it Barclay? Or whether we had gotten on their nerves by asking for things. Or whether it was ignorance on their part of how beneficial it could be for a group of children. I think it was ignorance. I really do. It was something — as someone said — it was something that someone else started. If it had started at central office, it would have been fine. Of course, after that, they — it went well until, I think it was Dr. Amprey thought, “oh, this is a good thing.” He had cut our money back. Where with Alice we had gotten all of our money and everything that was — she put in the exact same things that you would put in any middle school. But with Amprey, he had cut back on the monies, had made it — what did he call it?

JR  Extended ele—

GW  Extended elementary. And then had thought, “ok, this is a good thing.” And he had thrown some schools in total chaos with taking on these — he just made a whole lot of K through 8 without them studying. And we did study and we did work on it — so— And I guess it’s the same thing as — you said the other day; think it was you — that so many of the things that we had pioneered had just become trashed by the system.

JR  Given all that history and how long the struggle was to get it in the first place, as you look back on it now— was it worth the struggle?

GW  Oh, yes. It was. Oh, yes. Because it has really — number one, the kids weren’t being abused in the other way. The other thing — I think middle school is fantastic. ‘Cause those children who are in fifth grade going into renamed junior high schools, can’t handle that. This way they never have to prove who they are. They go on through,
get the work and they're ready — more ready—for senior high school than a lot of these children who are just lost in the crowd.

JR And our kids who have gone from middle school to senior high have done well, as far as you know?

GW Oh, yes! Last year — yes it was — last year 81% of the students were able to choose their schools [inaudible]

JR High school.

GW So, that's great. 'Cause when you think of — like 10%, 5%, 2% in some places who can choose the city wide schools—that's really great. A lot of that is what -- we reached up to that point because of the Calvert School. And then before, when we started we did extremely well, because we wrote that program—the gifted and talented program. And those students did so well—in fact just went on straight through and did extremely well. So you really -- And then after that group of children left then we started sliding down. Then once we got—you had like 2% of the kids getting their zone — about 5, I guess would get their zoned school. But then we started going up with the Calvert curriculum. Um uh.

JR Well there were two moments during the battle to get the middle school that I especially remember. The night the board voted one way — which I was just talking about — and just a few hours after the board president had been at Barclay telling you that they were going to vote for permanent status.

GW [Laughter] Right.

JR Do you remember how you behaved that night?

GW I was ready to kill Alice Pinderhughes. I'd never been as angry! Because, number 1, when Dr. Walker said, "It's going to be tonight." He said, "You can let your parents know but don't say anything else about it," you know. Here we are — so excited at last, down there. And here she is, knowing she had sold us out, and stand there trying to grin. I wanted to hurt her, I really did. I mean physically. And then she wanted to — I guess I carried on so badly because she said, "I want my chauffeur to take you home." I wouldn't get in your chauffeur's car. But she—after all we had gone through, this was the final straw. Jeannie was up there, too. And everyone.

JR Yup. We sort of stormed the stage—

GW Stage—that's right!

JR after the meeting — right up on the stage; kind of surrounded her. Well, we actually —
GW  On the stage. Yeah, she tried to get away.

JR  I think we were all surrounding you because we didn’t know what you were going to do, you were so angry! [Laughter]

GW  I was gonna hurt her! If I had been two feet taller — one foot taller I would have hurt her right there on the stage. Because you knew that she had sold us out, and that she really didn’t stand for — up for it. And Walker was rather disturbed, too, because, remember, he got up and walked off.

JR  Right, he left the [inaudible] quickly.

GW  Yeah.

JR  Well, the other thing I remember about this whole struggle was the day shortly after that board vote when we went to North Avenue to meet with Mrs. Pinderhughes. And she was the superintendent by then. And remember, she accidentally —

GW  [Laughter] Locked herself

JR  locked herself in the ladies room.

GW  [Prolonged laughter] Locked in that ladies room. We thought she had gone home. [Laughter]

JR  We were sitting there and we kept hearing this —

GW  Pounding

JR  kind of pounding sound. And I think you finally got up and investigated and went and told somebody. But we had this moment where we thought well maybe if we put our demand for the middle school under the door—

GW  under the door [Peal of laughter]

JR  and tell her she can’t get out until she signs it [Laughter] we’ll get our middle school.

GW  [Laughter] That was a day! But she was scared anyhow. And I think that’s how — she was really frightened of us being there. She had told us so many glorious tales that she just fallen through, and, I think that’s how she got locked in there. The Lord didn’t like ugly. [Laughter]

JR  [Laughter]

GW  Oh, goodness.
JR. Well, you told me once that you had two kinds of temper tantrums. You said that, "Some are real and some are contrived." You remember telling me that?

GW Yes.

JR. Could you elaborate on that in regard to being a principal and a leader—

GW Well, sometimes -- you know, they had written down that I was crazy, anyhow, 'cause I would blurt out what I felt like blurtling out, anyhow. But there were times when I really went off, you know, when they had done something that was terrible. But there were times when, if I wanted something to happen, I would just go off on them. So the real ones -- really it was hard to control myself. I had just had it, like with Alice Finklehughes -- that was real. I really wanted to hurt her. But -- let me think -- there are other times when I just went off, but it wasn't a real temper tantrum. I did it to let the people know that I--I'm really super mad. And it worked. Real and contrived. Yes, yes.

JR. The kids remember -- I was listening to the tapes a few days ago from the reunion -- and two or three kids remember -- they would always talk about you. And one of the questions they were asked was what kind of rules did Barclay have. And how were the rules enforced. And two or three of them would talk about you getting after them.

GW uh uh.

JR. And they remembered you saying, "How dare you!"


JR. Ok. Well that takes care of that set of questions. [Rustling through papers to the next set of questions] We move on to what's called "1980 continued."

GW Right.

[More paper rustling]

JR. We've talked a good deal about parental involvement, parent-staff interaction, and community involvement at Barclay. But we haven't talked yet about the priorities meetings that we held. We had one in 1981 and the other in 1987. As an administrator how did you evaluate the usefulness of those gatherings?

GW The priorities meetings really were outstanding. And they were really, very, very important to me as a principal. And they came out of our steering committee where we set up and decided what -- to have priority meetings, to go back over whatever we had done and then to decide what were our priorities for the next five years. That's how our middle school came out. That's how -- I think the nurse was one of the priorities, too, at
that time. The all day kindergarten was in the first priority. We had two priority
meetings?

JR Uh uh.

GW We had two. But it gave you a sense of direction as a principal – and as a parent,
and as a community member—where is this school going? So it gave us something – that
we knew what we were working toward. And we would set all our energies toward that.
And just like the all day kindergarten – before presenting it, we worked through, we tried
it out, looked for the results and everything, and were really ready when we presented it.
When we had our – for the middle school. We had studied it, gone, read about it. Did
everything that we could. And we were prepared when we went to it. But we were only
prepared at these times because we had really focused on them. And that came as a result
of the priority meetings. And everyone knew what our priorities were, so that’s
something that should happen this year.

JR Yeah. And it was unique, at that time, anyway—because as you say, we had
staff, we had parents, we had community. It was open to everyone—

GW Yes.

JR and we spent a Saturday just talking about how we felt about Barclay —

GW That’s true.

JR and where we wanted Barclay to go. And it was very open. Could be very critical
or very proud, depending on what the issue was—

GW And the people knew where we were going. Because I remember Alice and all of
them came to one of the priority —

JR They came to the second one.

GW second one, yeah the second priority meeting and it – and they were just really
delighted the way that it went. A number of people came and were really surprised that it
was well-ordered. Well even the first one – even though it was the first one, it was well-
ordered because it had been planned.

JR Yeah. Well, we — we were in debt there to Ann Leonard and her husband,
because—

GW We went up to that church.

JR They belonged to a group that —

GW That’s right.
JR  that facilitated priorities—so you and I had a little training in advance,

GW  up at the church. That’s right.

JR  and then we talked about it, and they brought it to Barclay.

GW  That’s true. We went up there.

JR  Ann and Fred, yeah. I remember we were feeling a little queer about it at first—
like is this something that we really want to do? But it turned out—

GW  It turned out well.

JR  to be a very good thing.

GW  And then the instructor up there, which was the pastor, I think it was, was very clear on the goals and directions.

JR  And then some of their people helped to facilitate the first one.

GW  The first one, that’s true.

JR  For fifteen years, beginning in 1980, we produced a school newsletter—
on a quarterly basis, then two or three times during each school year. We called it The Barclay Bugle. You’ve been looking through some of the old Bugles. Any comments or observations?

GW  You know, the Bugle was really outstanding. If you look through them now—and even then—and it really was outstanding in a number of ways. It met its goals. Number 1, it kept the parents and community and members and city officials aware of what was happening at the school. And the children were able to show their writing skills and a lot of those you corrected, but at least you were able to show their skills. And then it helped parents know, by having the calendar, what to expect in advance. I know you used to say “hang this on your refrigerator” so that you would know exactly what was coming up and they would know when you were going to have—like when they were going to have report card period—and different other things would be there. I know in one you had—we had dealt with where we were on getting the middle school, because it kept, really kept parents and people informed about what was happening at Barclay. And I know many people called me after the last Barclay Bugle and said, “you mean to tell me we’re not getting any more?” So—and even—I remember—even if they didn’t get one in a mailing—I remember Rebecca Carrol and some of the others would call me and say “I didn’t get the ‘Bugle’” and I would say, “it’ll be out in another wee or so”—you know. But it’s just outstanding—those Buglers. And we need to think of what we need to do with them.
Do you remember the battle we had with Anne Emery over *The Bugle*? She was the director of publications right after we started *The Bugle* and she sent this directive out— I found it after I had given you *The Bugles*—and she said she wanted a coordinated approach to all city publications, so that anything we published we had to run past her first.

GW Oh yes! Right. I remember that.

JR And I said I wouldn’t be party to censorship.

GW That’s right.

JR And we called in Mary Pat Clarke, who was our city council representative at the time and we went to John Crew.

GW Right.

JR and we had what Mary Pat Clarke later called “the Battle of the Bugle.”

GW [Laughter] That’s the truth!

JR And Anne Emery finally backed down, but it was just another one of those—

GW That is true. And what had happened—had something been printed in one *Bugle*? I don’t know why she sent it out—’cause our *Bugles* dealt with Barclay.

JR I think she was just showing— I think she sent it to all the schools—

GW Schools, and she was showing her authority.

JR saying “if you’re going to publish anything you’ve got to—

GW come through her.

JR come through me.” Yeah.

GW Which included the Bugler. Yep.

JR Yeah, So. That was just another— another example of living in the Baltimore City Public Schools.

GW I know, and another battle.

JR Yes. In a 1987-88 edition of the *Bugle*, I printed—oh no, that’s not the thing I want to talk about yet. At the ’87 priorities meeting considerable attention was paid to increasing the role of the community in the school. And right after that meeting we
started the Baselay Community Council, with representatives from the neighborhood, the
branch public library, businesses and so forth. Although we held meetings and used
Council letterhead to lobby for school programs — including the Calvert Curriculum — I
never felt that the Council really jelled. How did you feel about the Community Council?

GW  I wrote something down — [going through papers ]  Oh, it’s on this page—

JR  Yeah, it should be on here.

GW  I think — ’cause Dea was on that too. And I think it never jelled because we never
got a total agenda and it — we met at night several times in there. And different people
were given things to do and come back. But I don’t know why it didn’t jell, because it
was a good idea. But we had the school — not school improvement team—at that time we
had the other—

JR  The steering committee?

GW  steering committee, and that committee was school. The Council was supposed to
support the — but I really don’t know why.

JR  Because as we think — this is kind of looking forward rather than backward — but
as we think about the possibility one day having a board of directors — the Community
Council was kind of a fledgling board of directors. But it never took flight. [Laugh] It
never took flight.

GW  And then— but then didn’t Dea send some one else after she couldn’t — who else
came?

JR  Yeah, I think — well— that was the other thing. It wasn’t really a very solid
group.

GW  No.

JR  It kept changing.

GW  That’s right.

JR  It did. And I think you’re right. It did. I forget — the young lawyer from Greater
Homewood was on it for awhile.

GW  Right.

JR  Trudy—I don’t know what her last name was, but her first name was Trudy, like
yours. Remember the blond —

GW  Oh, I know. Yeah. I can’t think of her name. I know who you’re talking about.
JR. But she was on it for awhile. But any way – it was – we used it, and we had the letterhead, and we wrote letters and –

GW. Right.

JR. But we just didn’t – it just didn’t pull together the way we had –

GW. It wasn’t Trudy Ginsburg was it?

JR. No, that’s Tru Ginsburg.

GW. Tru Ginsburg. But I just think it just never got off ground. I don’t know whether it was the time we planned it, or what. But I remember it. And I remember you had people with good intentions – but it just fizzled.

JR. We had Nancy Hubble for awhile.

GW. That’s right. And it just fizzled. It just fizzled out.

JR. Karen Olson –

GW. Karen Olson came.

JR. She finally chaired it for awhile, because I thought well, if we get some new leadership, maybe—

GW. Yeah. But it just didn’t – And it could be – I don’t know. I won’t even try to speculate. Sometimes when there is a dire, dire

END OF Side A- TAPE X

TAPE X – Side B [failed to record]

TAPE XI-Side A

JR. schools up in New York that had been adopted by Fordham University. And she was thinking that we could have the same kind of relationship with Hopkins.

GW. Right. Oh, that true.

JR. We were looking around for whatever. So we submitted this request to the Greater Baltimore Committee, through Dr. Berkeley, either for Calvert or for a university adoption. Do you remember at this point whether – ‘cause we were also still struggling
about the middle school at this time – do you remember how big a priority this was for you. How much attention you thought—

GW about the Calvert Curriculum?

Yeah. Yeah. I was really excited about the Calvert Curriculum. And it really – when I saw the structure—a when I visited that school, I really got excited. I said, “if our kids could just do one-half of what they were doing”, you know, “they would improve.” Because they had the structure, they had -- the curriculum was so well-ordered. You’d go from first grade straight on through. And you knew they were on the same page, because you had the same accountability and so forth. You saw from first grade for the simple sentences and so forth to moving on up—and course Calvert only goes to sixth grade – moving up to the upper grades and to see the quality of writing. And then having gone downstairs to see the total curriculum – and the expectations. I was excited about that. But we – I had – whatsername had—I don’t know whether Muriel did her job about—

JR Yeah, as far as I can—there’s nothing in the files that indicates she even answered our letter, let alone—

GW Yeah, I don’t think she did.

JR So we didn’t get any money out of that, and it just kind of --

GW fizzled down

JR Just kind of fizzled. So that was 1983. About five years later in January 1988, Robert Emery of the Abell Foundation brought up the possibility of Barclay and Calvert getting together.

GW Right.

JR How did that happen?

GW I had not given up the idea— and still had been talking around and so forth. No, what happened was that Bob had met with Merrill and myself over at the school. ‘Cause Bob had already been interested in getting the Calvert Curriculum established as one of the curriculums in Baltimore City.

JR And how did he know that you were interested.

GW Because I had — see, I was on the board – Fund for Educational Excellence [attack of the hiccoughs] at that time —and so he knew — he knew I had visited the — had visited Calvert. I had been talking about it and had talked with Alice at that time and – what was the young lady who died, who was at –
JR  Oh, yes. Ruth Pratt?

GW  um uh. Ruth’s still alive.

JR  Oh.

GW  She was a “Dr.” somebody.

JR  Yes.

GW  And – I’ll think of her name. And she and I used to talk together, and you know we had gone over to Calvert again together, and then she got sick. And we had asked Alice, and Alice had no money. So that’s when Bob met with Merrill and –

JR  This is Merrill Hall who was by then the headmaster –

GW  Yeah, because when I first started at Calvert Merrill wasn’t there – it was – I’ll think of the president then, uh, headmaster then. And Bob had said he would be willing to pay for four years of – he had been – of Calvert in a public school, if we wanted to; if we were willing to. And he had been waiting for somebody who would be willing to fight the battle, who would not give up. The other girl – what was her name – Cathy –

JR  It was a hyphenated name. [Cathy Pope-Smith]

GW  Yes – had given up, and nobody knew at that time how sick she was. Anyhow, Merrill had said, he would be willing, but the two schools – and then we discussed how we would proceed – and the two schools needed to talk, and he visited Barclay and I visited Calvert again. And then the teachers, some of the teachers visited – Jan and some of the others went over and visited some teachers. And then we met together and did some force field analysis. And the pluses outweighed the minuses, and that was –

JR  Can you – when that happened – that was a big luncheon meeting at Calvert where you did the force field?

GW  Yes, that was a luncheon when we did the force – but before that the teachers had been –

JR  back and forth

GW  back and forward together. In fact, a lot of them are still friends, now. And they had in fact – before we even went into the Calvert Curriculum, the teachers – Jan and some of the others – had started using some of the little things that the teachers had started shipping over and little things that –

JR  So when you talk about the force field analysis that people did – what was that all about? Can you describe that in some detail?
GW  Well, we asked different – there were different questions asked about looking at Barclay. We looked at Barclay, looked at Calvert and the different things that Calvert did and what Barclay did. And if they could work it out together, you got a plus and if you thought that that wouldn’t work, you got a minus. And then when they added them all up you had more plusses than -- And it was based upon what the teachers had seen at Barclay and what our teachers had seen at Calvert—to see if they would jive in the different aspects of the curriculum and would it work. And I don’t remember all the questions, but we asked different things about the curriculum — and asked about the math, about the reading, about — we were still having social studies; they had history. And that was -- I don’t know whether that was a plus or a question mark. There were a couple of minus but the majority were plusses. And the teachers had gotten anxious. They had been very close, and they had gotten anxious to work together. Weren’t you at that meeting? You weren’t at that meeting?

JR  No. You came back and -- there weren’t any parents at that meeting.

GW  Oh. Ok. They were the teachers, yeah because Merrill had a luncheon and called us all together. And Pat was there, too.

JR  In the controversy that would develop later about this, a big thing was made out of the fact that Calvert clientele—even though they had their home teaching which reaches all kinds of people — but the people who go to Calvert School primarily are wealthy, well-to-do, upper-class, quote unquote, kinds of people. And we were a poor, inner city school, so that a lot was made of this big class difference.

GW  Right. Yes, Dr. Hunter. Yes.

JR  When you all were meeting together was there any sense on the part of Calvert that, you know, they were the missionaries to the public school—

GW  No!

JR  or was there any sense on the part of the Barclay people that they were being condescended to, or –

GW  No it wasn’t. Because the teachers had gotten very close. And these were teachers up through grade four. They had -- because we only had planned to go up to grade four. And they had really—had really worked out some of these things so that they saw what the teachers were doing, and they were wondering when they could switch over -- whether they could switch their math. They could add—where the children could do it. And they then decided, well, for some of the things that the children were doing in kindergarden, our pre-kindergarten would have to start doing certain things to have them ready. But at pre-kindergarten — up until that time—really didn’t have a structured something. They did what the city did and there was a lot more play. The children still play, but they have a structured play, too. But, no it wasn’t. That problem didn’t arise until—even when that foolishness came up with Dr.Hunter. The problem didn’t arise
until Muriel Berkeley told— not Muriel—I made—what was that second grade teacher’s name? Coordinator.

JR  Michelle?

GW  Michelle Joceylon. And I didn’t find out until a lot of this started. She and Muriel Berkeley became tight. And I really didn’t find out until a lot of this foolishness started that Muriel did not like the Calvert Curriculum— not Muriel—

JR  Michelle.

GW  And Muriel really wanted to— Muriel had called me— I think I told you about that—to take the position as Coordinator.

JR  Um uh.

GW  And I said I didn’t think it was wise and so forth and so on. And she went up to Brent. But in the meantime she and Michelle were doing a hammer job and saying different things that really were—

JR  But in the beginning there wasn’t the sense—

GW  There wasn’t that.

JR  that Calvert was doing us a big favor and we were— like missionaries— and we were just a poor—

GW  No we thought— You know, there was a sense of togetherness in the beginning. There wasn’t that missionary— like we were the little pawns in their— No. It was really a neat feeling. And Merrill was at the school all the time. He’d come in. He’d take the papers of the children and take them to meetings. And he would say, “now choose which one,” you know. Because Barclay really validated them. And made it known that the Curriculum wasn’t just for rich people, that the curriculum would be for children period. But they— Merrill would be over there all the time. Take the children’s papers— be so excited about what was happening with the children. And it— Sita [Sita Kulman, vice president of the Abell Foundation] used to be there a lot, too. Bob [Robert Embry] never visited. Bob never visited the program. It wasn’t until Michelle became the Coordinator, that a lot of that started.

JR  So back in this initial stage, Calvert’s excited; Barclay’s excited.

GW  Yes.

JR  You and Merrill are both on the same page.
GW    Yeah.

JR    You kept trying — in this whole time that Barclay and Calvert were getting acquainted here — re-acquainted in ’88 — to have Mr. Ball [Clifton Ball], who was your executive director, involved in the process. And you would set up meetings at his convenience and then he would cancel. And

GW    Right.

JR    the big luncheon where they did the force field analysis had been set up—

GW    set up for him.

JR    for the date that he said he could come and then at the last minute he couldn’t come — for whatever—

GW    Right.

JR    Why — do you think that — there’s going to be a — we have an issue here of trying to explain why Clifton Ball played the role he played. In the beginning, here— do you think it was just kind of happenstance, that he couldn’t — these things just kept interfering and therefore he didn’t get involved and so he never understood. Or was he from the beginning opposed to even trying to get involved.

GW    I think he was opposed to. I think he was joining in with the powers-to-be. Clif always had the goal of becoming superintendent of schools. He always wanted to keep moving up, you know? And he — but at that time I really wasn’t aware then. Because when Clif first came there, we had the middle school — he did a lot. He brought a lot in for us. He worked and he then said, “you know, people say that Barclay has all these things. I am surprised how you make stuff out of practically nothing.” And so he then — then he was a sheep. Then he became, you know, a sheep in wolf’s clothing later on. Clif — once we had presented that — Alice had told him to take it and work on it. And that’s when Clif — I guess he didn’t want to get into a battle. I don’t know what Clif didn’t want to do. But Clif, I found out, was one who never went against the powers to be. And he just sat on it. And he never did anything with it.

JR    Right. Ok. So you couldn’t get him to come to these meetings. So even though he hadn’t been there, you and Mr. Hall sat down in the spring of ’88, after you’d had the luncheon and everybody was feeling so excited about this. And you and he put together a tentative proposal.

GW    That’s right.

JR    For a partnership between Barclay and Calvert. Did you at that point — even though Clifton Ball had not yet said anything one way or another — did you have any
qualms at that point that you were doing something that was beyond what was appropriate for the school system?

GW Oh, no! I really couldn't see any reason why they wouldn't do it. Because it wouldn't cost the city a penny. Abell was going to really pay for the materials and supplies. All that the school system had to do was give our regular money for our teachers and the paper and stuff like that. Abell was paying everything else. And Calvert had really then—was ordering the materials. We were just so sure it was going to happen. And Merrill was very excited about it too. In fact at that time the only person we had problems with—and we were concerned about—was Bob. And Merrill had sent a letter to Bob and said, "look, are you going to do it or aren't you. You have people excited, and you keep waffling." 'Cause Bob used to do little things at that time, and maybe Bob was doing so much, we weren't aware of Clif. But Merrill didn't like Clif. Clif came there one day and was ugly. That day Verna—

JR Right—we're gonna'

GW Ok, excuse me.

JR We'll walk through that whole thing. Ok. So in the spring and the summer of 1988 you thought that by that fall—

GW we'd be in it.

JR You could get this going.

GW Right.

JR The fact that you were so confident indicates that Mr. Ball—even though he hadn't been there yet—and other people in the school system understood what you and Barclay wanted to do. And that Mr. Ball and all the rest of em were supportive and that they would help get the necessary authorization.

GW Oh, yes. Ball would sit there and say, "well, I passed it on," you know. Then he—well, when he finally said—whatsher name—had the—Edmonia Yates,[an assistant superintendent, next level up from Clifton Ball] And I—"You know, Clif, I'm getting ready to go away," you know. I think it was supposed to be going to Jamaica.

JR Was it Jamaica or Disney Land? I couldn't remember which vacation it was. But one of those two.

GW It must have been Disney World.

JR I think so. 'Cause I think you and I actually talked on the phone—
Talked on the phone. And I was in — And I said, “I’m getting ready to go away.”
And I started not — you know — and then I said, “when is Edmonia going to answer?” He
says, “I really don’t know, because she has it.” Now I don’t know what clicked in my
mind while I was listening to him or on the way home. And something said, “that’s not
like Edmonia.” So I called Edmonia and said, “Edmonia, this is Trudy. When are you
going to respond to our request?” And Edmonia said, “what request?” [Laughter] And I
said, “the one for the Calvert Curriculum that Clif had sent you.” And she said, “oh?
Well I haven’t received anything yet. But I will. And I’ll get back to you.” So she hung
up. Now before Edmonia could get back to me — I knew she had called Clif. Clif called
me. And he said, “well you know Trudy, I don’t know what happened; evidently it was
lost and all.” Not knowing what Edmonia had said to me. And I said to him, “I said,
Clif, you didn’t send it to her.” And he said, “oh, oh, yes I did. I don’t know what
happened to it. I think she’s looking for it now.” So then when Edmonia called me back,
she said to me — and I told her what Clif had just called me and said. She said, “he’s
lying to you, Trudy, and I’m gonna set up a meeting with the board and let them know
what has happened, so that you at least can present it to the board. And at that time—

JR curriculum committee with Ruth Silverstone.

GW Ruth Silverstone was the chair of that board.

JR Ok, so while a lot of this is going on, Kurt Schmoke had been elected mayor.
This was in ’87 that he was elected. And he announced as soon as he took office that
Alice was going to be asked for her resignation.

GW um hu.

JR And there was a nationwide search going on for a new superintendent and that
brought us Richard Hunter, in the same summer of 1988. So Richard Hunter’s entering
the stage while you are trying --

GW trying to--

JR to get Clif to pay attention to this proposal and he’s

GW But Edmonia — I mean — Alice got fired because she went in and demanded $150,
000. And here was Alice, non-degreed asking and demanding $150,000. And that’s
what shook up the mayor and he asked for her resignation. Before we had had a
meeting with the board, before that time. Ruth Silverstone—

JR While Alice was still on board?

GW Yes.

JR Ok.
GW While Alice was still on board. And then the mayor came in – Hunter came in after. What happened, we met with Silverstone and the group, and she started— Edmonia read a statement and stated what had been happening, what I had been going through, what the—what—you know, so forth and so on. And then Ruth Silverstone started asking Clifton questions. And she said, “well, when have you worked with Miss Williams?” And he said, “oh, I’ve had meetings; I’ve had meetings.” And Edmonia looked at him. And he said, “oh I met with members of my staff.” And Dr. Silverstone said, “was Miss Williams present?” And he says, “oh no.” And she said, “how can you deal with her proposal without her being present?” And Edmonia then broke in and said, “it was stated that I was holding up her proposal, is that correct Mr. Ball?” And he said, “well I don’t know whether it was stated that way.” And then Edmonia went on to tell what had happened—that I had called her. And so then when Dr. Silverstone, Ruth Silverstone just went off on Clif, because she just couldn’t believe that he would handle it that way. The problem that happened was, that board was changed when Schmoke came in. She had told him he was to go back, meet with me, and get this straight—and so that the board could—

JR Now this all happened that summer, before

GW This happened before

JR Because there’s a record of a Silverstone board curriculum committee meeting November first.

GW No. That’s when it was! That was November.

JR Yeah. Yeah.

GW Had the mayor come on board?

JR The mayor was on board. Pinderhughes left the end of the summer when you’re still trying to get—

GW That’s right, because I went away and then you called me—I called—

JR And Clif had set up a meeting knowing that you were away and not expected back.

GW That’s right.

JR He set up a meeting at—And I want to talk about that meeting in a minute. But my question about Pinderhughes is: I’ve always gotten the impression from you that you think that if Alice had wanted to, even though she was a lame duck, she could have just signed off on this and we could have started that fall.
GW That’s right! She was the superintendent. Alice knew about it because it had been presented one time before — Why can’t I think of the other person? [Cathy Pope — Smith] And there wasn’t the money. Now we thought all we had to do — the money was there — if she signed it. Before she had said, there wasn’t the money. This time we had the money. But then she wasn’t gung ho. So it was benign neglect.

JR Why do you think? You think she was just giving up and didn’t care about anything, or that she had — or she just didn’t — or why do you think?

GW Well, I don’t know why. Because — she really at that time wasn’t her own person. She had really become a pawn then and knew it. So I don’t know whether she was playing some one else’s game or her own game. But Alice could have signed us —

JR Ok. She didn’t. At the end of July, and this is the summer of ’88, you’re going off to — for a week in Disneyland. We talked before you left. You told me that Edmonia — you and Edmonia Yates had this exchange —

GW Right.

JR and asked me to kinda keep tabs on what was going on.

GW That’s right.

JR So a couple days after you left I called Edmonia Yates and she told me to talk to Mr. Ball. Meanwhile — Mr. Ball had — and then Mr. Ball called me and he wanted Calvert’s phone number. And then a few days later I got a notice that there was going to be a meeting at Calvert School —

GW Right.

JR and it was going to be the day before you were supposed to be home. And we talked on the phone — if I’m not mistaken —

GW Right, right.

JR And you came home early.

GW Right, right.

JR So this meeting was set for August 9th. We go to Calvert School. Mr. Ball is there with Jessie Douglas and Deborah Holly — two of his staff people. Merrill Hall and Pat Harrison and Susan Weiss were there. I was there, and much to everybody’s surprise [Laughter] —

GW I walked in.
JR You walked in.

GW Yeah.

JR What do you remember about that meeting?

GW I can’t remember much. I remember Clif was very uncomfortable, and he didn’t talk much, you know, he squirmed. I can’t remember what we got done in that meeting.

JR I think it was the first time that I had been to Calvert School, and I remember we got a tour of the building finally.

GW Right.

JR I mean, it didn’t turn out to be much of a discussion

GW No. ‘Cause Clif was very uncomfortable ‘cause I was there.

JR So we toured and we went down to the home-study place where they have all the curriculum materials, and we looked at everything, and –

GW Right, right.

JR that’s basically—

GW all we did. We didn’t do much because by my being there I had really put a [Laughter] — really a knot in his rope. But—

JR But then that next week he and you and curriculum specialists had a meeting, and you were to decide with the curriculum specialists — or show the curriculum specialists how you thought the Calvert Curriculum —

GW Right.

JR was compatible with what the school system’s objectives were. Do you remember much about that meeting, and the kinds of things that came up?

GW No—they were very interested. You know, I went through and they were, “yes”. Well, I guess at that time they knew if they had shown any ugly way there would have been a fight in the middle of that floor. But they were very interested, and they listened, and they were going to carry back to Mr. Ball.

END OF Side A, TAPE XI

Side B, TAPE XI
[Completion of point under discussion not recorded]

JR And the idea that you could possibly start in September with the Calvert Curriculum has evaporated. So that’s when Dr. Yates advised that you get the proposal to the School Board.

GW Right.

JR And that the curriculum committee be asked to meet on it as soon as possible.

GW That’s right.

JR So an announcement finally comes out that the school board curriculum committee is going to meet November 1 and you called up to make sure that they were gonna’ to talk about – to ask if the Calvert Curriculum was on the agenda—

GW Right.

JR and they said yes. What did you expect to happen at that curriculum committee meeting?

GW I really expected them to ok it. Because we—by then we had been through so much. The—had Hunter gone into the rage at that time?

JR Not yet.

GW Not yet. But we had presented it. We had gone—but we’d never—we had presented it to Alice, we had dealt with it, and talked about it.

JR And the curriculum specialists had told you they thought it was—

GW thought it was fine. And --but they had gone back and sided with Cliff; that they felt that it wasn’t. That was one of the statements. That they had decided it was not up to the curriculum that Barclay already had. And that’s when Silverstone asked him, had he met—he had I been in the meeting. And he said “no.” And she said to him, “how could you have a comparative meeting when the school you’re talking about—the principal wasn’t there?” And I think that shocked him, because he really thought [inaudible] kind of slick. And she said to him, “you’re supposed to go back and have a meeting with Miss Williams and whatever committee that there is, so that we can move on.” Cliff never called that meeting.

JR Right. He didn’t follow through. So the months pass. November goes. December goes. What do you remember about how you were feeling at that point and how parents and teachers at Barclay were reacting?
GW  By this time you felt like there was something sick in the city. You felt, really—you felt like you were betrayed. Because you had worked on something that had gone through and had proven, or called yourself proven a curriculum that had been in for years, you know. And the staff—they wanted it, because they had started working—in the lower grades—the upper grades didn’t know anything about—you know, had pushed for it because they thought we had a right to have it, but they weren’t as gung ho as the kindergarten, first and those lower grades had been, because they had been working with those teachers over at Calvert—just with the anticipation that we were going to start at any time. And each time you got knocked back, it just took something out of ya, you know?

JR    Ok.

GW    Yeah. It was unfair. And I began to really see how the system acted in a way for everything but the boys and girls.

JR    And from the standpoint of parents and community, I know that we were getting more and more frustrated.

GW    Right.

JR    Several people from the community and several community groups, including our little Barclay Community Council, sent letters to Ball. Barclay parent Meagan Shook collected signatures on a petition. She personally hand-delivered the petition to Dr. Hunter’s office at the end of December.

GW    Um uh.

JR    He didn’t answer or even acknowledge the petition.

GW    Right, right.

JR    Ball didn’t answer any of our letters. Then early in January 1989, Mr. Ball set up a visit for curriculum specialists to go back to Calvert.

GW    Right.

JR    And he picked the morning of the annual breakfast—Martin Luther King breakfast, that you were committed to—

GW    Right.

JR    You had to take kids there. So you couldn’t be at Calvert. You sent Verna Chase who was your assistant principal. And she said that Nancy Gimbel, Alice Morgan-Brown, and Carla Ford showed up with Cliff Ball. They stood for a couple of minutes at the back of a classroom, and then they left.
GW  Right.

JR  That was their study of the Calvert method.

GW  Right. And Clif was very rude to Merrill in the meeting. She said she was just shocked the way Clif was really degrading to Merrill in that meeting. But they didn't even see what was going on in the classroom.

JR  So what was your thinking about that meeting and the way it was timed.

GW  Well, I wanted to go kill him then, and Verna said, "No, No, No." [Laughter] When Verna told me she said, "you're not going to believe what happened." And when she told me, I was ready to go kill them and I'm sorry that I didn't go kill them, because it came back to haunt us in that board meeting, when — well, Alice Morgan-Brown and Nancy Gimbel came to the board meeting. But —

JR  The other one — Carla Ford —

GW  Carla Ford refused to go. Because she really liked what she saw in that little time. And she got demoted because of that. But she refused to go. And these two— who knew nothing about the curriculum—and who then presented to Dr. Hunter how horrible and outdated the curriculum was. And then I wanted to kill 'em. I remember [Chuckles] Stokes and all of us were sitting at that side there; at that end there. And it just took every bit of strength — of not getting up there. I think I kept saying, "you're just lying." But I just wanted to go up there. And both those young ladies have gotten their fair behind lying like that. I did go over the next day to see them and say to them, "how could you lie like that?" And Nancy Gimbel said, "well you have to do what you have to do." I said, "no you don't. You don't have to sell your soul." And Alice Morgan-Brown — "well, Trudy after all, there're other curriculums. You're doing all right." I said, "Alice why would you lie. You don't tell me about the curriculum..." Of course Alice went in saying, "well, it isn't worth it." And I said, "yes it is, Alice." And I said, "you wait, you gonna get your day." Alice has told me many day after that, "you put the bad mouth on me."

JR  Laughter.

GW  No, sitting up there lying.

JR  Well, about this time Edmonia Yates resigned from the school system.

GW  Right.

JR  Do you think that she was basically supportive of you on the Calvert issue?

GW  Yes, she was. Yes, she was.
JR So you were sorry to see her go?

GW I was sorry. Then I really thought the last ray of hope—'cause she had been pushin' it. But she — she resigned because Hunter was just horrible to her, you know. She was so much brighter and knew. And Hunter resented her. And whatever she was doing — and relegated her to nothing. And that's why she left the board.

JR Well, up until this point, this had all been within the Barclay community and within the school system. We hadn't said anything in public.

GW That's right.

JR But on February 9, 1989 Meagan Shook and Karen Olson, who was then the president, the chairman of the Community Council,

GW Right.

JR raised the issue in a public school board meeting. And Kathy Lalley, a reporter for the Sun, picked it up and wrote a big article about it and

GW That's right.

JR it went from being an in - house controversy to a major public issue.

GW That's true.

JR Do you think this was a necessary step, and did you expect it to become such a big—

GW No, but I was happy. No, I didn't expect it to -- It was a necessary step. Or we would still be fighting today. Because when Lalley printed that, then it showed how idiotic the system was. And it brought in everybody. It made it so that wherever Hunter went and wherever Schmoke went, people asked “why can't they have that program?” So it really then thrust them into the light of answering to everyone, not just us. And I don't think we would have ever had it —if they hadn't put pressure on Hunter — and Schmoke. Because Schmoke finally had to put pressure on Hunter, because I remember in one article, people had gone to the mayor, and he said, “I will stand by my superintendent.”

JR That's right.

GW And then of course, that made us want to kill him. And — but then they were putting pressure on him. After he said that, they started putting pressure on him, too, so— Katherine Lalley really opened the door for us.
JR    Well, I didn’t expect us to carry it this far. But that’s a good place to stop, just as it goes from being in-house to public. So we can pick up from there the next time we meet.

GW    Alrighty.

END OF FIFTH SESSION