Today is Friday, May 8, 1999. Gertrude Williams and Jo Ann Robinson continue the conversation. Well, good morning.

Good morning.

Here we are again.

Yes.

And we're ready to talk about Dr. Amprey, who replaced Richard Hunter as the superintendent. How would you characterize Dr. Amprey's policies and practices as they affected Barclay and the Barclay-Calvert program?

He was antagonistic toward Barclay, and in fact the whole system. He had no set plan, and there was this attitude that Barclay—we were trying to make elitists out of Barclay's students and that we didn't have the right to do these things. A kind of lay over and attitude that we got rid of Hunter and that we're not going to get rid of him, and that he's, he's the person in charge. So it was, it wasn't a healthy attitude. And when you tried to talk with him, there was a lack of understanding, or there was a block in his mind so that he really didn't want to hear what you had to say.

Did this translate into any actual roadblocks to the program, and to—

Oh, oh yes. There were times when our money was cut. There was time when, there was a time when he just did not want to accept the contract. In fact, he said to me, “My name’s not on that contract.” And I said, “Well, that’s why the superintendent’s
name isn’t on the contract, because they come and go, but it’s signed by the head of the
school board.” That was Dr. Smith, and I think he’s a Dr. Smith

JR I think he was just a mister—

GW Mister

JR Yeah, Joe Smith.

GW Mr. Joe Smith. But anyhow, that antagonized him more because he resented—
well, he had a problem with women and authority, anyhow. So that—he resented that
more, about dealing with that—with the Barclay-Calvert program. We were robbing the
children. Our children were robbing other children of what was their due. And in fact, it
cost Baltimore City not one penny for the Barclay-Calvert program, because the Abell
Foundation added to what we normally would receive. But what had started happening
was that he was cutting back on money, which would cut back a teacher or an assistant in
the classroom. In fact, the first year—the second year (the first year he was there)—he
took the money back for—we had a first grade class without a teacher or an assistant,
and that was a big fight there, the first big fight. But he was given the contract and he
ignored it. But we did get—the Board intervened, and we did get our teacher back. But
he still always had this attitude that we were taking money from other children

END OF TAPE XIV-SIDE A

START OF SIDE B – TAPE XIV

JR Ok. When the School Board had authorized Barclay to use the Calvert curriculum
there was a written agreement that was signed by all parties.
GW  Right.

JR  And it included a provision that the school would continue to receive funding allocated by the school system according to the same per pupil amount as any other city school.

GW  That's right.

JR  However, and this goes right along with what you were just talking about, in the '94-'95 school year the allocation to Barclay came up short by $175,000.

GW  Right.

JR  You told parents and the community about it, and there was another protest, and there was more publicity. Why do you think there was such a big shortfall? Was this an honest mistake by the budget people, or was it as --

GW  No, it was deliberate, because we had sent in and sent -- when you get a projected amount, and we had protested then and sent in: “This is not enough. It’s not covering the basic number of teachers in the program, plus” -- I think we were supposed to get four and then the Abell Foundation gave the other eight. What happened was, when I sent in to -- what do you --

JR  The budget office?

GW  Well, you send back to the area director, and protesting about the amount of money that we were receiving was not fair. Then we had to meet with Dr. Amprey. She met with Dr. Amprey and said that’s our right share. Everyone had got -- which was not true, and that’s when I found it necessary to call the parents. And I talked it over with you and then we called the parents in. This action was again the same kind of antagonistic attitude toward Barclay School. The children were succeeding; the scores
were high, and yet there was this “they are getting more, they’re trying to --” As he called us into a meeting one day. There were nine of us he called in. And that’s when--

JR Principals?

GW Principals! And just ranted and raged and said – that’s why Joe Wilson (he was at Mt. Washington) left the system. Said, “I don’t have to take this.” Trying to make elitists out of these children, and they’re no better than every other child. And see, we had the gifted and talented program there, too. Which was cut back, but given back by – not the whole part.

JR Yeah.

GW by – three quarters of a placement—by Mary Pat [Clarke, President of the City Council], by her intervening. But anyhow, when we met that night, when the parents and everyone met that night, Mary Nicholsonne [area director] and what’s his name – Judson Porter met with us. But Barbara had –

JR Barbara More, right.

GW Barbara More had done her homework, had taken all the back data that we had and then made out a chart and then when Dr. Nicholsonne -- Well, first we talked to Porter, who was stuttering and stirring, and then he turned it over to Dr. Nicholsonne who was very uncomfortable herself, too. And then finally they both admitted that they had skimmed our money. I don’t remember whether we got the money at that time or not.

JR I think it was a long time--

GW time coming in

JR And we never got the whole amount, as I recall. But there was some compensation finally.
GW Just a small amount. 'Cause we didn't get the total money and they had cut our children down to really barely anything per pupil, so—

JR Well, in December 1994 Sam Stringfield, whom we mentioned the other day, who was the evaluator for the Hopkins Center for Social Organization of Schools, presented the first draft of his fourth year evaluation, which depicted Barclay-Calvert student achievement as really stellar.

GW Yeah.

JR Can you recall what some of the impressive highlights of that report were?

GW For the — going from '90-'91 up to the '94 the children were at and above the national norms in all the areas. And plus, they had, in the writing samples, were higher than the Calvert School.

JR And this was a writing sample that was done with other private schools

GW all over the country, yes.

JR all over the country.

GW The scores were really outstanding, really. And to have those—it showed the number of children who were on, receiving free lunch. And it just made a difference. It showed --Because then that's how we ended up getting the merit award? Or did we get it before?

JR I'm not sure, but we began--

GW I think we got it--

JR to get a lot of praise and support.

GW a lot of praise and a lot of -- well, I think we started getting visitors, people calling. Because we had — Sam — some people had set up and asked us to come to
meetings. We had gone to meetings, and then you started getting a lot of people. But you got a lot of praise, and the paper, the SUN paper—where is Kathy? — but the SUN paper and all

JR    She became the -- Kathy Lalley became the Russian Bureau correspondent for the SUN, she and--

GW    Oh

JR    and they moved to the Soviet, the former Soviet Union — to Russia

GW    Oh, ok. But Kathy Lalley and her husband, Will—

JR    Will Englund

GW    were really -- they stood by us in the fight and they were the only ones who were objective and told the truth as we went along. So that helped us. Didn't help them too much. (Laughter)

JR    Laughter. Maybe that's why they got exiled to Russia.

GW    Laughter

JR    A year before the Stringfield report —it was clear by then even that this program was doing very well-- and in December of '93 then, Amprey was quoted by the SUN saying that we really ought to explore having the Calvert curriculum in other city schools, and then after Dr. Stringfield's fourth year evaluation, the SUN began to run editorials saying that this curriculum should be extended to other schools.

GW    Right.

JR    Finally, in September of '95 Carter Woodson did adopt the Calvert program.

GW    Right.

JR    What are your recollections of how that came to be there.
GW Well, there were several schools who wanted it. And they visited Calvert, and Merrill visited their schools, and then Merrill talked with me. So Sue had really been excited about the Calvert--

JR This was the principal at Woodson.

GW At Woodson.

JR What was her last name?

GW Sue Spath. Dr. Sue Spath was very excited about the Calvert curriculum. And I felt, you know, I said to them, “Well, Cherry Hill really should get a chance. They’ve had such a bad write-up for years. If it -- that’s another place that can validate the program.” So that -- So Merrill was -- Merrill Hall, who’s the headmaster of Calvert, agreed, and that’s how the Carter G. Woodson got that program. And then they moved Peg, because we were at the end of the fourth year, and Peg was only promised for the four years, and they moved Peg Licht down to Carter G. Woodson to work with that school. She took a couple of our teachers, too. (Small laugh). But she moved down to that school. One of the things that had happened, too -- as a result of the fourth year evaluation: There was a meeting of the mayor, Dr. Amprey -- that was the only time he put his feet in Barclay -- he never visited Barclay -- Dr. Stringfield and Abell -- Bob Embry -- met. And because our scores and things were so high and the children were doing so well, they had, they decided that to give us four more years, to go through the eighth grade. And that was exciting, too.

JR It was.

GW Because we knew -- wait a minute, if these children have to go back into doing some of the other things, you know. So that, that was good.
JR  Except for Carter Woodson, no other city school ever adopted the Calvert curriculum. Why do you think that is so.

GW  Well, part of – you know, when we talked about it, Merrill Hall and I had talked about it earlier, and Bob Embry, too. ‘Cause Bob Embry in the beginning was really anxious to have a program that would help to pull up the city schools. And if it proved well at Barclay then there – he was hoping that this would give rein for other schools to be able to improve. Dr. Amprey had been so rude to Merrill Hall and had just done so many ugly things while we were working – during the time we were carrying out the program. And we had gone through so much with Richard Hunter and Amprey that --Dr. Amprey – that Merrill Hall did not want to deal with the city schools anymore. Now he has dealt with some of the independent schools, and they have had success with that.

JR  As you’ve already mentioned, when Woodson adopted Calvert, Peg Licht transferred there and became their coordinator, playing the same role there that she played at Barclay. How did you feel about losing her from the Barclay program, and what was the result of that change?

GW  Well, Peg was very strong and she really kept people on task, so that it made them stretch to what they could do, you know. And the kids—she was really an advocate for the children. I mean, she had children reading who normally would have needed special services. So she was really great. But she couldn’t handle beyond fourth grade. In fact at fourth grade other people helped her to understand fourth grade children. But you hated to see her go, because she was an advocate and she absolutely really lived and breathed the Calvert curriculum. So it meant that we had to adopt a different person to be the coordinator, and that was a disaster. (Laughter)
JR We'll talk about that a little bit more as we go through the steps here. Well, the collective mood of all of us participating in the Barclay-Calvert experience in December 1994, when that 4th year report came out, was practically euphoric. We were just so thrilled. But by the spring of 1995 the escalator had gone down. That spring you were nearly forced into involuntary retirement, and things started getting pretty inharmonious—

GW Right.

JR between Barclay and Calvert. The most serious conflict appeared to be between you and Merrill Hall. And looking back in the files, it looked to me like by the spring of '95 things were getting pretty rocky. There are two memos here that he had sent to you in the spring. I called them "c" and "b"—[handing memos to GW]

GW Right.

JR that kind of reflect the lack of the old harmony. The specifics of that all are kind of water under the bridge now, but can we talk a little bit about your responses at the time?

GW Well, what had happened earlier on—and that was during the time that Mary Nicholson—Dr. Nicholson—had been in. But we were a Title I school, which Peg Licht never understood either, what a Title I school was. Because private schools don't have it, where certain children who need additional work in reading and math must get that second experience. So it started earlier, where Peg had complained about two of the teachers. I don't know whether I should name

JR That's ok, we don't need to—
GW So what happened—we thought that was straightened out. Because Pat had come over—Pat Harrison had come over and talked about the different things and it was—she understood, because she had been in public schools before. And Peg had too, and should have understood, because when she was in there you had ESEA, which was the same as Title I. What happened was, when we brought—when Peg left and we brought on the other coordinator, the other coordinator became a wolf in sheep clothing. She would go back and complain and tell—just make up things. I think she was sick. We did not know it, because she was an excellent teacher. And they believed her. Because of the way she would—and so in the meetings when she would say something and I would say, “that didn’t happen.” “Yes it did!” You know. And of course we had an assistant principal there at that time who wanted to be on the side—who was very close with that person and would not know what was going on in the school. So it started at that end. It just. And it was all really, really started about the Title I program. But by that time—which they couldn’t understand—we had become school-wide, through my pushing and pushing. We had become school-wide. And the—so it didn’t interfere. Because after going and meeting and all, the Board understood. The children were doing better. We had fewer special ed children. The children all were growing. That there wasn’t a problem but there—it just continued and continued. And I may be wrong, but by this time Barclay had received so much notoriety. There had become a sense of over-shadowing the other place. And I believe it was there. Because I went. One day I went out to—he came by and called me, asked could we go out to lunch. We went over to Hopkins Club. Had a great lunch. Laughing and talking. He wanted to know how I could help this person because she was just getting on his nerves. She came every day crying and complaining.
about Barclay and when he would come over — because he was still coming over, bringing the people all over — he didn’t see any of that. He still saw children learning and doing very well. But the next day, when we went to a meeting there was all this — everything was different, you know. I’m going, “wait a minute. That’s not what we talked...” So when we got down, when we met at — then Washington asked, Congress asked for me to come and speak. That, I think, bothered. But I asked him to go, and he delightedly went. I introduced him as the — and was very, he was very happy about being introduced and a part of it. But something went terribly wrong then. Because and I don’t know what. And so it never got together. But then these kinds of letters and things. And that meeting. I just didn’t understand what they were talking — And I will never to this day, and I do not know; will never to this day. I can — I can make up things and surmise certain things. I know there was. I don’t know whether it was the notoriety. The tales that were being made up. I know Bob was in on it, some of the things, too. I really don’t know. The other thing — Sam. Dr. Stringfield had started — for the first four years he had some outstanding college students there, working for him. And they used to come to the school with him in the beginning of the year and then from then they were there on a regular basis. And they had made the scheme and used — but they couldn’t break the code that they had used. So he was never able to continue in that way that it was done in the first year, in the first four years. And the first four years, you remember, we had sat down and talked about the objective and the subjective things that should be in the report. So I think we just got caught up in a lot of little people acting in a lot of little ways, which really bothered, which made a nice situation into kind of uncomfortable.

JR  Laughter. That’s probably an understatement, as I recall it.
GW Yeah. Oh, I don't—I don't know what you meant—"leave un.." I had said I
would leave if it was hurting the school.

JR Oh, well. We're gonna to come to that. But there was a point where Amprey
tried to move you.

GW Oh! Yeah! Oh.

JR Yeah, we're coming, we're coming to that story, too.

GW Oh. (Laughter) Ok. Right.

JR One of the things that perplexed me greatly at the time was—I was getting
calls and having conversations with Merrill sometimes and with Embry sometimes and
with their seconds in command sometimes.

GW Yeah

JR And they were saying, "things aren't going well" and "this program isn't being
implemented right" and so on and so forth. And that they were distressed.

GW Before or after Michelle [Peg Licht's replacement;left unnamed above]?

JR Be-- in the spring of '95

GW That was Michelle.

JR When Michelle comes in. But the thing that perplexed me was, when I would talk
to you about that, or would bring it up with you—and maybe this was your way of trying
to keep things moving forward—but you would say, "Oh no—uh -- that isn't..."

GW No, cause I didn't hear that.

JR Because you would say — yeah — that's--

GW Because see that was — I never heard that. I never heard that anyway. The letter
that I received down at that meeting with Merrill. I had never received that letter.
JR    Hm.

GW    See what I'm saying. So it was one of those back takes. I really didn't know. When you were saying, I was saying "well I wonder why they're saying that." Because he was still coming to the school, you remember? And they were taking the children's --what do you call it—taking the compositions and things. He was taking them when he'd go to meetings, having people to meet with them. I know I -- they -- there was a little problem when they had me meet at—with the lawyer club, down to Maryland Club, with all those lawyers. I know one time he said to me, "well they haven't invited me," which I went, "ok I'll never say that." Then, uh -- what's the prestigious club over there? I went over with -- they had invited me over and I had said, "well is Merrill coming?" "No, we hear enough from him." And it had gotten -- and then they had started sending -- see, they still have some of our money. I'll leave that out. But people had started sending money to Barclay, and that was -- I never know, see. And with Bob Embry who knows what? But he wasn't -- the first day he talked to me, really talked to me, was the day he came over to the school and we talked in there. And he said what Merrill had said. Merrill denied he had said it. So it was like --

JR    So it was really hard to know what was what.

GW    You may have another perspective on this. But I think it wasn't a coincidence that that same spring Dr. Amprey tried to transfer you out of Barclay. He knew that if he told you you had to transfer that that would force you to retire or resign. Bob Embry appeared to me to be influenced by the concerns that Merrill was expressing, and there's reason to think that Dr. Amprey was influenced by Bob Embry.

GW    Bob Embry. Well he did say that.
JR  Yeah. So as you look back----

GW  At that time they were having a lot of trouble -- they still are -- with a lot of schools around the city. And Dr. Amprey came by there one day, asked for "Mother Teresa".

JR  Laughter

GW  And anyhow, he came by to talk. And he said, "well you've had a lot of good times here with Barclay, and you've been very-- you've been very fortunate here at Barclay because you've had your program, you've had all these things where other schools aren't getting them." And he said, "I want you to go to another school." And he named the school. But I -- it just [inaudible] when he -- So I said "no." And he said, "I don't have to ask you". He said, "I can either make you go, or you will, you will resign." And I said to him I said, "okay, are you threatening me?" So, you know all the time I was there Mayor Schmoke had given me a number to dial whenever there was an emergency. So I dialed and I said, "Dr. Amprey is threatening me." And I said, "he's saying I'm to go or I can be fired." And of course when he got on the phone with the mayor it was, "oh no, I was just joking with her." And when he said to come in he said, "I'll be down right away." I heard no other word from him. But then, yes! What he said --where did we meet where he said he was doing?-- No, Tanya had gotten after him, Tanya-- about trying to do this. Didn't he say, "I was just told it was a good time?"

JR  He may have. He may have, I--

GW  No! He said that to me there -- not that -- I know he said that. Because I called you and said "Amprey said..." I'll have to think of where the setting. But he said, "I just thought Bob Embry said that it was time for..."
JR    Well, the night -- As you say that, it reminds me that the night of the School Board
- we heard that he was going to go before the School Board and make this
recommendation.

GW    Umhu

JR    I think it was Tanya and I and maybe a couple of other parents went to the School
Board meeting and we caught him when he came in the door.

GW    Right, right.

JR    And we let him know in no uncertain terms that the community was going to
oppose this completely--

GW    Umhu, right.

JR    And he said that to us.

GW    That's what I thought that you'd said -- that somebody -- 'cause, but that's how
you knew, cause you had said right away, "Bob Embry's behind this, because he's been
talking to me."

JR    Right, right.

GW    And, but, I -- the only reason I would think why was because, when they would
say and do things, I would say, "no, that's not true." And for some people they don't,
they don't like anyone to say, "that's not true." The worst meeting was down at their
office.

JR    At the Abell Foundation.

GW    And I don't like either one of them. Yeah. Because Merrill sent me a note, but I
still--at retirement he was sorry he couldn't come, but he enjoyed working with me
through the eight, eight years and blah blah. And I think I tossed it. Because I speak to
him when I see him out, but I don’t know what was behind it, but I do know that — I really think, I really think that they wanted to get Cecelia — a yes person

JR Oh, as the principal?

GW The principal.

JR Well, at -- do you remember enough of the immediate feelings of that time. How, how did you -- how certain or uncertain were you that that was going to be the end of your career at Barclay at that point? Did you really think you were going

GW Were they afraid? Oh

END OF SIDE B-TAPE XIV

TAPE XV SIDE A

GW I was angry with him. I would have given him a run for his money. But, no I did not think that he could do anything about it.

JR Well, parents and community rallied.

GW Umhu

JR Carl Stokes, who is currently a candidate for the mayor --

GW Umhu

JR at that time told the SUN that he had carried the message back from Barclay parents and community to the mayor and that they — parents and community — thought you were great; not just the Calvert program was great, but you were great. And so Dr. Amprey backed off. But, interestingly, the press kept pressing.

GW Played it up, yeah.
JR    Uh, Harold Jackson wrote a column in the SUN in May '95 and he referred to
reports of trouble between Calvert and Barclay. He said, “if that’s so, the Calvert people
aren’t saying. Maybe there’s no problem, or maybe the Calvert administrators are just
not ready to talk about any problems.” How do you think the SUN knew that there was
tension.

GW    I don’t – I think they were guessing around after – after the headlines hit out that
– that hit before. Or maybe they called. I don’t think Merrill would say anything to
them. But Bob would. Bob probably – if he had talked to Amprey, he talked to the SUN.
JR    That’s sort of my suspicion, too.

GW    Umhu.

JR    Well that summer – we’re still now in 1995 – two meetings were held to discuss
Abell-Calvert concerns about Barclay and the Calvert program there. The one meeting
that you particularly referred to is the one that took place at the Abell Foundation—

GW    Right.

JR    and Bob Embry—

GW    That was the day after Congress.

JR    You had gone to Congress the day before with Merrill and with Stringfield, I
think.

GW    Stringfield went, ‘cause Stringfield drove. He knew how to get right to the
capitol. And I had asked Merrill did he want to go and he says “oh yes!” So he went.
And he was very excited and we laughed and talked all the way down.

JR    So you had that happy day. And then the next day we went to the Abell
Foundation. Bob Embry was there. Sita Kulman was there. Merrill Hall was there.
Was Pat?

GW  No, Pat wasn’t there.

JR  Pat wasn’t there. It was Merrill Hall. I was there, and you were there.

GW  Yeah.

JR  And then the other meeting occurred at Barclay, short later in the summer. And there your assistant principal, Mitchell, was there and Bob Embry was there. And Merrill Hall and Sita and Stringfield and Muriel Berkeley.

GW  Was that the meeting that Stringfield got up and walked out?

JR  Yes. Yes.

GW  It wasn’t

JR  That meeting really kind of followed from the first meeting—

GW  first meeting

JR  because in the first meeting Merrill Hall made some statement to the effect that—or maybe Bob made it—they quoted Stringfield as saying that Barclay was only 60% successful or 60% effective, or something like that. And you said you wanted Sam to say that to you directly and explain it.

GW  That’s right!

JR  So we had the second meeting.

GW  And explain that.

JR  Yeah.

GW  And— but even if you were on the 60th percentile you were above the national norm—which Bob could never understand. He would always say, “well, out in such and such a school—“ He would always send you something—“they’re at”—some wealthy
private school (laughter) – where they were at 75 or 80 percentile. And you’d say “so what? They’re not going through some of the things that you’re dealing with.” Bob had it-- But the meeting at, at--

JR Abell Foundation.

GW the Abell Foundation made me disgusted with both of them. Because they were less than men, you know. They were like – evidently the two of them had gotten together and had listened to Muriel—not Muriel—

JR Michelle?

GW Michelle, who had become really tight with Muriel, too. And when I think back, I remember Muriel tried to become the coordinator when Peg left. And I said, “no”, you know, “it wouldn’t be fair to the staff.” But then—

JR Why did you say that?

GW Because she hadn’t been in the program and Muriel is not a good teacher. She was not a good teacher at Roland Park. She was just there because Evelyn wanted her for prestigious – because of the fact that she knew these different people – for prestige. But anyhow, that meeting was so disgusted. Because they had sat there and come up with these little things that they could have asked, things that half weren’t true, that someone had talked to them about it, and then Bob with this 60 percentile was stupid. But it was like you had been called to a trial and you didn’t know what the trial was about. You know what I mean? It was like, they were sitting there. And they had they. And they, they were together, ‘cause they kept -- and Sita was with it, too. Because she would then come in and say such and such a thing. But then she would try to come and talk to
you. I guess then I knew that there would never be any working conditions between me
and either one of them.

JR And again, I was so surprised that you were so surprised, because --

GW 'Cause I didn’t know!

JR because I had – I’m repeating what I said a minute ago. But I had – I kept hearing
from them that they were really –

GW But then they were coming and they were --

JR things were really critical

GW but they weren’t saying things – well you knew they weren’t critical. But they –
and I just thought, “well here they go, tryin’ to” – you know how Bob Embry – but I
really, no: I was really – you knew I was shocked.

JR Oh, I know. No, it was, it was quite a, quite an affair.

GW It was – But you know it’s very few people that you just dislike. And it takes me
a long time to dislike someone. Instantly, instantly I disliked both those men. And Sita I
just rub off because she’s just -- But they had gotten together. Neither one had been man
enough to either come over and sit down and talk. If they had had some concerns. And
that’s why I said to Merrill: “If you had concerns, why didn’t you just come there.
You’d been in the school and you brought people.” And even after that day that we’d
been down there – – what’s his name, the head of Cal—the head of the board brought all
these other former board members and visited the school. And they came back and they
laughed and talked—how they enjoyed it, in seeing the writing. But, so there was
something—

JR It was a very schizophrenic situation.
GW  It was! Because on one hand there was this -- all this people coming in -- and
people coming from Calvert, Calvert parents and all. And I remember -- But if I had
thought back, I wouldn't have been so upset and [dog shakes tags; GSW briefly startled:
Oh! shocked me] and taken off guard if, if I had just not worked so well together with
Merrill before. You know, all through the fight and everything. And Merrill had
constantly written vicious letters to Bob -- and saying "you have to decide are you
working with us or against us." 'Cause Bob would say one thing one day and then the
other. But then Merrill and evidently and Bob had gotten to talking. But Merrill knew it
was a lie, because he had been in the school. And Sam. Sam hadn't even been in the
school, when he talked that day. That's why I asked him, "when did you visit the
school?" He couldn't even -- he wouldn't know because he hadn't even been there. And
he had taken a message from what's her name -- Michelle -- who really hated the Calvert
curriculum. Michelle didn't like it. She said the children wouldn't -- but see, if I had
taken Peg's word, she would have never been in there.

JR  She would never have become the coordinator.

GW  'Cause Peg knew it. Peg knew it all the-- Peg knew that she hated the Calvert
curriculum. But she said, "I told you that -- don't get her. She's the worst person." But
I really didn't want to go any further, you know. So

JR  At the end of that Abell meeting, after we'd all -- the meeting was adjourned and
we'd all left the room -- Bob asked you to stay for a minute and you and he had a one on
one. Do you remember that?

GW  I remember. You know Bob does dirt and then he wants to ease his way out. And
he wanted to let, you know, me know that he's still behind the school. I told him I --
You know it was like, how dare you do something like that -- the two of you. They're not men. And he says, "well, you know--" But I was so angry. That's why people should never have guns. (Chuckle)

JR   Laughter

GW   I was so angry, you know. I just couldn't believe him at first and then the anger came up, you know. And I said, "I really don't want to talk anymore. I don't want to talk to you and I don't want to talk to Merrill" and I said, "and that's it." And so that's when I came out and that dumb Sita asked for lunch. (Hearty laughter)

JR   Hearty laughter.

GW   And that dumb Sita asked wantta go down to lunch. Now!

JR   I had warned her that that wasn't a good idea, but she hadn't picked up on it.

GW   (More laughter) And that dumb Sita!

JR   OK. We tried in the early part of the new academic year, 1995 to 1996, to help the two Calvert coordinators. At that point you had an elementary and a middle school coordinator.

GW   Oh, right.

JR   Michelle --

GW   Michelle

JR   was elementary and Maxine Blackman was the middle school coordinator.

GW   That was the other disaster.

JR   You --and I was then chairing the school improvement team, so I was brought in to it—you and I and sometimes Muriel Berkeley had meetings with these two
coordinators. But any remedy that we thought we might be developing turned out to not be a remedy.

GW  Right.

JR  Why do you think we couldn’t create a stable, functional way for them to operate.

GW  Because those two were sick, you know. And [another dog interruption, pawing her arm: OO! You’re going to break my arm, honey.] Those two – and they

JR  That’s the dog you’re talking to, not me

GW  Laughter. That’s why I’m saying. Oh, I’m sorry, I was talking to the dog about breaking my arm. But they were—they had gotten together in a very sick manner and were working together.

JR  When you say “sick” can you –

GW  Michelle – and I should leave her alone – was not well, and you really did not know it until you saw her in action. I really fought against them taking Maxine because Maxine wasn’t competent. Michelle was an excellent teacher, Maxine wasn’t. Michelle was an excellent teacher but not a capable coordinator—not capable of working with people. And that didn’t show up. When she was working she was smiley smiley and huggy huggy, and how nice, and it was always so complimentary to teachers. But if I had been aware of – that the teachers didn’t like her – and that they had seen some of this. So I blame myself for not really being on top, but I did back off about keeping Michelle out.

JR  You mean Maxine.
GW  Maxine out. And they asked Miss Mitchell – Cecelia Mitchell, “well, how do you feel about it?” And she said, “Oh, well, it’s alright with me if you think it’s ok” So that’s how Michelle got in it. But Michelle was totally – not Michelle,—

JR  Maxine

GW  Maxine; Maxine was totally incompetent. And Michelle couldn’t handle the teachers. So that’s when a lot of that – you couldn’t deal with them because they had gotten together and just decided what they were going to do.

JR  So your perception is that there really wasn’t a solution; that they were just both not competent to handle those jobs.

GW  And we need to leave this out. But then what you really didn’t know until Michelle was out for like a long while, and when she came back she just had the doctor’s – a name signed that “she’s under my care”. And I really --. But there wasn’t any number or any heading and then the nurse who was there – not this one whose crazy knew who that person was and she said, “she’s under psychiatric care.” And then when I found out all the things she was going through. You know her husband’s a head of a national rifle group here. And he wasn’t working. And she was having all – I guess part of that – you can look at it and see part of that causing you to go off. But then Maxine was – was just simple. I ran into her -- [inaudible] and them aren’t working together anymore. Maxine --

JR  Oh, they aren’t.

GW  Maxine is now working in a school as a liaison.

JR  Oh.
GW  [chuckle] See, special ed was her, her forte. She had been trained in special education. But she got out of the other she said. It was just a rather stupid program and she couldn’t deal with it. But I didn’t want to talk with her.

JR  Well, can we talk for a moment about Muriel Berkeley. Could you go back and talk about your relationship with Muriel from earlier times and then how she becomes involved in this whole situation.

GW  Okay. And see that’s another person who was carrying tales back from

JR  Right.

GW  Right. And Muriel Berkeley I had met when we were both on the Fund for Educational Excellence. She came in later. I had started earlier and then Muriel was brought on board. And we, during that time, we used to discuss education and all the concerns and everything. So the members on the board knew that I was really upset with Baltimore City’s public schools. And Muriel then arranged for me – and what’s the person who died? – to visit Calvert. And that’s how we got in with Calvert. She said, “you know, Calvert is – you might want to visit Calvert.” Her children – one was still there; the other one had graduated. And then I had met Anne Perkins and Anne Perkins had talked to me about Calvert. So there were a number of people who had, who had solidified the quality of Calvert. And so Muriel had set up the appointment, and we used to meet and talk about it. And a couple of times we had gone out to lunch. And so we, we were friendly. And she – I thought, “oh, my what a nice person, ‘cause she’s doing all this...” And then, she wanted a job. And [inaudible] and you know, there wasn’t any opening at Barclay at that time. So Evelyn Beasley hired her.

JR  This was at Roland Park Public.
GW  Roland Park, at Roland Park. And she worked at Roland Park for a good while.

And then — which Evelyn never knew what was the thing between, behind Bob and what had brought her down was that she wouldn’t listen, finally, you know, even with some of the other things. Well, Muriel and Bob were tight. And see Muriel, once she—then when she left and went up to Downing Town, Pennsylvania where her husband’s job had taken him. When she came back she called and wanted to know if she could work part-time at Barclay. And at that time I didn’t have space. And then when Peg left she called and asked what about the job as coordinator. And I said, well the staff would be upset because of the fact that you’re a new person coming in and there are others who had more standing. So she said that was okay.

JR  The other thing about her was that she was on the Board at Calvert?

GW  Which I didn’t know first — until later on she told me that she was on the Board at Calvert and she would back us up in anything which was going on. And she -- at that time, David’s mother had said to me, “You watch her.” ‘Cause David’s mother was on the Board at Calvert.

JR  This is David Clapp who we haven’t talked about yet.

GW  Clapp, at school. Yeah, David Clapp’s mother was also on the Board, but got -- stepped down off the Board when David started working at the Barclay School. And—because she didn’t want any conflict of interest. But she always knew the members and things on there. So she had said to me, you know, “you need to be careful.” But then—and Merrill had said -- See, these are the kinds of things that are really serious, because Muriel had gone to Merrill and asked about working as a head person and he had said no.
And he tells me all this stuff. And he says, "no I wouldn’t want her. She doesn’t – and you have to be careful; you can’t take her on there." Yet, he put her in charge of working with Barclay and with Michelle. And that’s when the stuff hit the fan.

JR  Ok. So in this school year of ’95-’96, Muriel is the Calvert liaison appointed by Merrill. And by October she had allegedly told Merrill Hall who apparently told Bob Embry, who told us that the Calvert partnership, quote: "faces problems that cannot be resolved."

GW  There you go!

JR  And at that point I said to you, "the whole school needs to know that this problem is looming—

GW  this problem is going on—

JR  because they shouldn’t hear it from some other source."

GW  from somebody else. Right.

JW  So we went to the whole staff, and you let me kind of give ‘em a blow by blow of things that had been happening. And the staff voted to have Dr. Berkeley come and explain her statement, ‘cause she’s the one who had written it.

GW  Right.

JR  And she didn’t come right away but—actually her husband was having cancer surgery, as I remember, and that put her behind in a lot of ways.

GW  Right, right.

JR  But she did send a letter, and we have a copy of that letter here – I call it “attachment E”. [Rustling of paper]

GW  Oh, here.
JR  She denies that she ever really said that problems can't be resolved, but she says there are problems.

GW  Right. And she -- but she denied a lot of what she had said to you and had said -- because she had never been in the school, you see. And had never met with me.

JR  Yeah.

GW  And to -- Yes, She had gone to lunch with me one time--

JR  Yeah, yeah.

GW  and had said, "Well, I'm behind you and I'll be working with, with -- so whatever comes up." So she was buttering me like -- and I was saying, "oh no, why would she say that when we had just had lunch," you know, "and she hasn't said anything about it?" And--

JR  She said, in this last paragraph on the first page of her letter, "Disagreements between Barclay and Calvert derive at least in part from Barclay's need to maintain its autonomy and Calvert's requirement that there be strict adherence to Calvert guidelines." What do you think she was talking about there, and do you agree in any way that this was a question about our autonomy?

GW  No. And it had been brought up in the beginning. And if that was something that was new -- you remember when we started the program it was understood that we would use the Calvert curriculum, but we had to do the tests from Baltimore City and from Calvert, and that there were -- we were still a public school and that there were certain things that were mandatory that we carried out. So that was understood before we even went into the program. And that was, I think, was written into the program, when we started. I don't have that there. But it was understood that we were still a public school.
So I don’t know what else she’s talking about – about their autonomy. But we still had to adhere to certain public school guidelines.

JR   Well, in December –

GW   And Merrill never complained about it.

JR   Except for the

GW   That meeting—

JR   fact that they didn’t understand the Title I

GW   Title I

JR   stuff. That was always—

GW   And it got mixed up by Peg saying that Truemella and Sandra were interfering with her. That’s the one who started it.

JR   In December of ’95 we invited Muriel Berkeley, Merrill Hall, and Bob Embry to meet with the entire staff.

GW   Well, I thought we invited just Muriel, and she brought the whole group.

JR   She may have suggested when we invited her that she wanted the others

GW   The whole group, because that’s they got there. She didn’t want to come by herself.

JR   We had agreed that you wouldn’t attend that meeting

GW   Right.

JR   – that there would be a follow-up with the two coordinators where these guests would sit and talk with all of us.

GW   Right.

JR   I was really disappointed in that meeting.
GW  Yeah, you told me.

JR  And I was disappointed in the staff who just either didn't say anything, or if they said something, they went off on tangents—

GW  Umhu

JR  that were irrelevant or made things worse. Why do you think that happened.

GW  I don't know. I really do not know. Because --

JR  We were putting the staff in a place where we shouldn’t have put 'em?

GW  I -- I really do not know, because then afterwards, they came to me very upset, very angry; not understanding what was going on. I really think they really did not understand thoroughly. Because Merrill had been coming back and forward to the school and all. There was a division with the lower school and Michelle. But they really -- and they didn’t know why Muriel Berkeley was in it. ‘Cause Lane’s [Barclay middle school teacher, Belinda Lane] child — daughter — was taught by Muriel, and I had to go up [to Roland Park School] and get Lane one day, because she went off in the classroom and Evelyn [Beasley] called me. So there I really don’t know. If I had been in there to hear what was being said — I really don’t know.

JR  We had anticipated that without the coordinators there, in this kind of vacuum sort of situation, that at least some of the staff who were really upset with uh, uh—

GW  Michelle

JR  Michelle, would have spoken up and would have said this has happened and that has happened. ‘Cause we had a whole list of things she had done that were irritating the staff--

GW  Uhuh
JR  But --

GW  Nobody said—

JR  nobody said a word.

GW  Or else it could have been that they didn’t trust them, either.

JR  Oh.

GW  Bob Embry and Merrill and -- and they. Well not many of them knew—

JR  Muriel

GW  Muriel. But it may have been that they did not really know what they were seeking for, or what was going on. I really don’t know why they hadn’t spoken up, because they did speak up with Sam. And I really don’t know — I think: if I’d have to guess it’s because there was a sense of alienation and they really didn’t feel comfortable in talking. I really don’t know, because there are some people in that group that speak out.

JR  Yeah. Usually there are.

GW  Yeah. And it just — it just — So I don’t know. I was surprised when you told me, but then the staff; then they were really angry. But, you know I said

END OF SIDE A- TAPE XV

START OF TAPE XV – SIDE B

GW  So it may have been some kind of alienation. If I had just been sitting in the room they probably would have just gone on and said what they felt.

JR  Yeah, and said it.

GW  And that could have been bad
JR    Yeah. Well.

GW    Huh. Go ahead.

JR    At the same time that Barclay and Calvert and Abell folk were experiencing these tensions, the new state assessment program was also causing a challenge, presenting a challenge. In December '95 Bob Embry sent you a letter pointing out that Barclay’s MSPAP [Maryland State Performance Assessment Program] scores for 3 and 5 were lagging. What was the challenge for Barclay as far as keeping with Calvert and meeting the MSPAP standards.

GW    Well, the point of it is. When we had gone through a lot of this; when we had – that’s what brought it up—with – and Muriel had gone -- We had met to say what we needed to work through and with the Calvert introduce some of the things that are in the MSPAP. ‘Cause we had done well in the beginning, and then it dropped. But we had done well, because they just read and just went on and I guess it hadn’t been that hard.

That’s what Muriel went -- I mean, Michelle went back and said that we were now going to just deal with the MSPAP things, instead of saying that we were going to integrate into. Because, remember at the second meeting when we met with Merrill and that came up, and he said, “well there’s not a problem.” You know. Well, he looked at Michelle and he said – remember he looked at Michelle and said, “I’m hearing a lot of concerns, concerning you.” I don’t know what she said; I don’t even know if she said anything. But he went on to say something about, “I think you can; there is no reason why you cannot in your compositions and things...” You remember? So I think what was happening – in isolation people were talking backwards and things. Well, I blame Merrill
for accepting, hearing things, instead of coming to me and saying, "Tell me Trudy, this is happening. Tell me what it is, 'cause I'm concerned." But he never did that.

JR  Calvert aside, for a minute. As an educator and as somebody who was trying to keep a school going along a path of excellence, did the MSPAP further that goal or was the MSPAP a distraction from an educational point of view.

GW  Oh, MSPAP was a distraction for every school. And I think if you gave the MSPAP to the Calvert School they would have the same--they would have had the same difficulty. You have -- and maybe not. You have questions that are asked of children that they will never face in life. They talk about -- I'm trying to think of -- arranging a golf club and a field for golf and how many holes would you need to set up; what are the handicaps. [In high pitched voice:] Kids in -- they're not playing golf! You know. And a lot of -- later in life, if they move up on the field and they start dealing with it or Tiger Wood come over here because he has set up some in a lot of other places, they would be dealing with golf. But they're not dealing with golf. The children can read everything that's there. Like one little girl said, "I can read it, but I don't know what they want me to do." And that's where it came in. So that's why when last year -- and then I had met with the teachers and said "you're dealing with it, but you're on the edge and another one and you're going to have a problem. So we had been meeting and working and dealing. But what threw us over the edge that year was chicken pox in the eighth grade. There were a number of kids absent in the third and fifth. And that's why last year we just did activities for the kids. They never knew what afterward so that most of the children were there and they came. But the year before was just a disaster. Plus that was the year that I
had had the brain tumor. Bossard and Thornton; Taylor was already gone. There was nothing but substitutes on that third floor. And see Bossard never came back that year. Thornton—I think she came back; I think she came back; I don’t know whether she came back or not, ‘cause the baby died.

JR The grandchild.

GW Yeah, the grandchild died. And it was—it was just a bad year. And as Dr. Grasmick [State Superintendent] said, it was just a shame and should have been investigated. But the point of it—Barclay had been in the upper percentage and one year we’d won $25,000 for continuous growth, though it was little.

JR People, when they talked about MSPAP and more traditional curriculums like the Calvert curriculum would say things like that the Calvert method is a teacher-directed method and MSPAP is trying to have a student-involved method and teamwork and things like that. What’s your take on that.

GW No. The Calvert curriculum is not all teacher-directed. Children are involved in things. The MSPAP test has been written by industry and it’s—you’re given an outcome-based education. Calvert is not. Outcome based education does not call for children to write legitimately; to spell. They can draw a picture if it tells what it is. Well that’s—Calvert is designed so that the children work toward perfection in reading and math and so forth. But in all the other tests the children do extremely well. They come out really high in the city. The MSPAP is designed in a different way for outcome-based education. So what you have to do with the children is help them to understand how—what they expect. To have them understand the test-taking skills. So that—they can read it—but to understand how to do it.
JR    So it’s more a matter of learning how to play by the rules than ---

GW    Play the game.

JR    necessarily a test on content

GW    Right. But you can – you can take that test but it doesn’t call for a lot of
knowledge. It doesn’t – it calls for just that: what they’re asking you to do. I’d love for
you to see. You remember Carl [Stokes] said he took that fifth grade test and failed it?
I would love for the whole public to see that test that they’re expecting the kids to do at
the third and fifth grade level. I think, I really believe that by the eighth grade level that’s
when they should start dealing with it that way. But third grade children have just started.
If you’re really teaching them, you’re having heavy, heavy skill development,
helping them to read and understand and do all these things. Well by third grade they’re
just beginning to do it pretty well. And those kids can read it, read it well. It’s just that
they cannot – it’s translating it into whatever that comes down. Nancy Grasmick should
be ashamed of herself with that test, I’m gonna’ tell ya’. [laughter]

JR    Laughter

GW    But since it’s there, then, I think that the children should do it. Because in life
you’re going to be thrown challenges that you’re going to have to make it, you know. So
I think they should do it. But you’ve had Brocotto out – the fifth grade – Brocotto out
with here baby. And the eighth grade should do well.

JR    This is this year you’re talking about?

GW    Yeah. So it’s the fifth grade – the only handicap. Now they were a handicap –
they grew, but they didn’t grow as well as the third and eighth grade last year. And they
had the bright kids last year. They were super bright. But they did not know how to
handle super bright kids. They could not have kids talking through and working through problems. They just drove them crazy, you know. And that’s where they would have done extremely well. So –

JR  Well by early 1996 the Abell Foundation had decided to support the writing of a new curriculum that would be quote-un-quote “Calvert like.” And Muriel Berkeley was identified as the director of this new curriculum. She asked to come to Barclay and observe as part of her preparation for her curriculum writing project. What was your reaction to that request.

GW  No.

JR  Why. Because see, Muriel really – her children had gone to Calvert. Muriel had been very obnoxious toward us. She was part of that whole little deal. But she had told the people that she was developing another program that was just like Calvert. But Michelle couldn’t help her and neither could Maxine. So she really wanted to come to the school. I said to the staff, “Mrs. Berkeley” – by this time they knew who Muriel Berkeley was from the meeting – “would like to come and observe the – you know – you at work.” And they all said, “no.” So I said “no”.

JR  Turning down Muriel’s request – and we did it by also sending a memo to Merrill Hall where we asked if this wasn’t a kind of conflict of interest on her part because she was acting as liaison between Calvert and Barclay and she would be then in this new role as observer – doing that appears to have really angered Mr. Hall and Dr. Berkely. And apparently one of them or somebody else discussed it with Sam Stringfield, who also let us know that he found it offensive.

GW  Right.
JR    Why do you think they were all so upset about this? And do you think, as we
look back, that it was a mistake to have handled it that way, on our part?

GW    No. I don’t think it was a mistake. I think if she wanted to see it – because I did
say to her, “you need to see Calvert; go to Calvert like we did” – I’ll get that when I
[referring to something that has been dropped] I’ll get it, that’s alright.-- You need to go
to Calvert and ask Merrill Hall to see. Merrill didn’t let her observe and work at Calvert.
And we also had promised Merrill that we were working and dealing with him. But I
think it was just another little something that they wanted to add to the whole situation. It
wasn’t a matter of the anger – was so angry. She could have seen it there. And one of
the teachers -- the teachers stayed friendly with the teachers over there, at Barclay – had
said, “Merrill didn’t let her come there.” So it was just another something that was
pickyunish.

JR    All through the years since the Calvert program had started at Barclay, every year
Calvert hosted a luncheon for Barclay, every December. And at these luncheons Dr.
Stringfield would present his most recent evaluation. In 1995 the December luncheon
was postponed until February ’96. And in February ’96, on Valentine’s Day, the
luncheon was held. I know you remember that luncheon.

GW    I certainly will.

JR    Would you describe it for the record?

GW    A number of the staff did not go because they had had enough of the agitation and
the ugliness that had happened between that whole middle situation. And I didn’t urge
them, because I felt if they didn’t want to go, they shouldn’t. And we all should have
stayed home, because we ate, had the lunch, and Merrill, where he used to be talkative
and we went around and nothing— not too much. We had the lunch and then it was time
for Sam to give his report. Instead of giving his report he got up and gave a lecture,
which just put down the Barclay School. And everyone in there was stunned, even
Merrill, who got up and left the room --who was stunned by his attitude, what he was
saying and really lies. And he was still angry from the meeting that had been held at the
school where he had been challenged on what he was saying and he had gotten up and
left in a hurry, angry and had left the meeting.

JR    This is Sam.

GW    Sam Stringfield. You remember how he turned all red when Bob challenged him
to what we had challenged him to answer – which he couldn’t. He got up and left. So no
one said anything, we just sat there and looked at him. And then everyone got up and left
and came back to the school. And that was the last luncheon we had had at that school

JR    I do remember – I think I was the only one who asked a question.

GW    I think you asked him a question.

JR    I couldn’t not. [Laughter]

GW    Yes you did!

JR    I couldn’t not ask him a question so I think I did ask, because–

GW    You did ask him something.

JR    he had brought the School Improvement Team into it.

GW    Yes he did.

JR    This was the first time he’d every acknowledged that there was a School

Improvement Team.

GW    Yes.
And I asked him something about when he had interviewed the School Improvement Team, or something.

Yes you did.

And then there was some exchange after that.

Yeah. When had he been in the school. That's what it was.

Right, right.

Different people: "When did you come; when had you been in the school?"

And then he had to leave early, remember? He said he had another engagement

Engagement

and he was sorry that he couldn't stay for questions, but

he was going to say what he had to say and then he was going to leave.

Yes.

But he got very angry; he was angry when he left, because he couldn't even answer when he had been in the school. He hadn't! He had not been in the school. He had sent Barbara over—who is now working down at Carter G. Woodson—

Oh, is she?

who—but he had sent Barbara one day, and she didn't know what was going on; had talked to Trumella and David. And I suggested to them that they were making a mistake, that they needed to go with her as she walked through the building and jot down what she was seeing. But Trumella said, "Oh, she is so nice; she does not want to do anything wrong. Which of course she had to swallow. Because Barbara came there just to validate what he was saying.
JR  Well, since Stringfield left the luncheon for another engagement and there wasn’t time for a real discussion about his “draft” of his fifth year evaluation which – as you say – wasn’t even really that – it was more of a lecture –

GW  lecture

JR  we asked him to come to the school to talk further with the staff. And he did that a week later. According to the notes I have from that meeting, the points that you were most intent on pressing when he came to the school were things you’ve already mentioned: that he and his assistant had not conducted as many observations as in previous years; he had not had a prelimentary discussion with you, as previously he always had before he did his report.

GW  Right.

JR  And – so what do you think was really going on with Sam at this point? And as you look back at the whole thing now, what do you think of his apparent change in method?

GW  Well, I really believe that Sam lost it when he couldn’t break the code of the young man, the student who had graduated from Hopkins. He couldn’t break the code and couldn’t continue the quality of writing that had gone on by this young student – and there was a couple of other people – there was a tall red haired girl and so forth – who just was there all the time. They would come in. They would just pop in and view. So that agitated him. He had made up things along the way, and we had challenged him. And he himself had, in one of the things, had said we needed – I think in the fourth year [inaudible]—that we were getting a new person and we needed to monitor her carefully. And in the talking he had said he did not think Michelle could handle it. But Sam
Stringfield, which turned out, he, he talked a big game, but he couldn’t carry it out. As long as he had someone else to deal with it, and write out things and help him come out. But Sam really, after that, you didn’t hear about Sam Stringfield at all. He lost his clout about going this place and that and flying this place, and taking the Baltimore – Barclay – Calvert program. He lost all his clout. And that was angering him. And then Bob Embry was pressing him and he couldn’t give it.

JR Now, Stringfield denied that there was ever any code to be broken and that that wasn’t the issue.

GW He’s lying! Yes he is. He couldn’t break the code. Barbara told me that. She came several times to get the materials from ’90-’91 and I had it and we would sit and she asked me to talk, you know, to help her. She would come back again for more. And I said, “what’s the matter, Barbara?” and she said, “We can’t break the code.”

JR Well, there were other discussions after that day that Stringfield came to the school, with Dr. Stringfield and with the Abell Foundation about the fifth year report. And finally we came to an understanding that it would not be made public. The sixth year evaluation also remained an in-house document.

GW Um-hu.

JR It was equally uncomplimentary to Barclay. Did you have, or do you now, as we think about it, have any qualms about how it looks – uh – for a researcher to be forced to keep his findings under wraps because the people that he’s evaluated don’t agree with his evaluation?

GW Well, you know, all we requested was he just tell the truth, that he give the documentation. He never gave any documentation, and you remember at the second
meeting David—who really was kind of like, “Well, let me talk to him because he’s not this bad a fellow”—and had gone through what he had stated and pulled out from the actual record that he wasn’t telling the truth, that what he stated in there was not the truth. And you know when he went off on David, you remember he went off on David?
Because David had actually taken all the information and the documentation and then measured against his and he was showing him where what he had put in the record was not true. Sam was—uh, uh—Barclay Calvert was his big introduction to the world. And it was exciting to him, those four years where he had someone who wrote up and could present. And he made the things and he put them up on—I still have them on the, what do you call it, that you put up on the screen—
JR Oh, the uh—yeah—
GW for video. And he was a sham, and he wasn’t writing actual reports. He was letting out his agitation, or someone else’s agitation, basically with me. Because I just wouldn’t shut up and go away, or that I would not go along with what was being said. I think he was trying to play into the whole thing that Bob Embry and Merrill Hall were trying to say, and then they turned their back on him, and he was just left out there. Because he thought he was moving into the game and when that day Bob Embry challenged him, that was to his dignity. And it shocked you to see how thin skinned he was, you know? He turned red and he just [chuckle] left the meeting. So, no. I think it was our right to say, “if you can’t give a true documentation”—we didn’t ask for any flowers; we didn’t want him to say we were doing all these magnificent things. We just wanted measured where we were, and it was not the truth. In fact, it showed that our children had continued to move in a steady way, much higher than we had done in the
years before and were sustaining certain skills, where we were losing them after the first time when Joe and Elinor and all that group had been in there. They did magnificent things. Then we started moving into a group that was going down. Well, with the Calvert curriculum we had moved up. And they still ‘til today – they’re way above where they were when we started the Calvert curriculum.

JR That pretty much answers the next question I was going to ask, which is what was your evaluation of where things were at the point when he was telling us they were going down hill. Was there any grounds for him, or for anyone, to feel that some ground had been lost, or that the progress wasn’t as exciting as it had been in the previous years?

GW With the MSPAP; with the MSPAP. And then there were – some years weren’t as high as the other years because some of the children who were coming in – they were throwing kids in there who hadn’t even started. And what he had taken were – he wasn’t measuring the children who had started with the Calvert curriculum. He was measuring those children who had been thrown into the school. Some children who started in there, who hadn’t been to school until second grade and things like that. Where I used to have the transition class. The money – when we lost the Abell Foundation’s funding after the seventh year -- but they truthfully had used up all the money they had promised us, because the city had cut money back and Abell would put that money in to keep us abreast, so they really had, truthfully, they trained the 7th and 8th grade teachers, and had really used the money that had gone on before. It would have been well if they had given us another year, but by that time we weren’t hugging cousins anymore. [Laughter]

JR [Laughter] Well, the final question for today. Shortly after our meetings with Stringfield there was what we called a progress meeting at the school one afternoon.
Merrill Hall and Muriel Berkeley and I don’t remember who else was there. But it was a cordial meeting, as I remember it. Some new test result had come in, and Merrill was very pleased about that and was showing that to us. But at the end of the meeting Merrill and, again I don’t know whether it was Pat Harrison or Muriel or somebody asked to speak just [to the two of us.]

END OF TAPE XV, Side B

TAPE XVI, Side A

[They handed us] a letter stating that Calvert wished to conclude the partnership with Barclay at the end of that school year, the ’95-’96 school year.

GW Right.

JR What are your memories of that little exchange?

GW I don’t really recall. Start it, and then I’ll recall. I don’t recall. I remember the meeting where we met and that Merrill had said that they wished to stop at the end of that year. And that was the year – who was the coordinator then?

JR Maxine.

GW I think Maxine and Michelle. I don’t recall. Isn’t that terrible? Give me – start it. Do you recall?

JR Well I think that we just accepted the letter.

GW Yeah.

JR And they walked away. [Laughter]

GW I don’t remember any challenges or argument.
JR  No.

GW  Because by then we just felt we weren't working any more with them, anyhow.

JR  Um-hu.

GW  Because of that last meeting down at the Abell Foundation - there really wasn't any love lost after that. And by that time -- but then that summer, when David became the coordinator, in that summer Merrill took the summer -- because he's usually never there the whole summer -- and trained our 7th and 8th grade teachers. So it was like an oddity. But then they had achieved the notoriety that was necessary for them. You would hear people say, "who is, where is Calvert? What is it? Who is Calvert?" And they also had maintained better status among the private schools, where they weren't really that healthy. And they gained a lot of money from us. We validated that program. So I just never -- I felt that they got just as much from us as we got from them. And people said, "I wonder why they would work with you?" Through all of that, work with a public school, where the children -- you know -- needed free lunch and all. They knew. They knew. And they got a lot. Made lot of money. People from all over the world now. They went from 43 -- 4,300 people that they delivered home teaching to close to 30,000 people who get that curriculum and different schools and programs now, all over.

JR  Well, just the round out the whole experience -- as I recall after we received that letter and accepted it, we decided that we should go on the offensive in letting the information be known rather than have somebody else tell the story.

GW  That's right.
JR So we decided to call Kathy Lalley, and we gave her a press statement, actually saying that the partnership was officially coming to an end – I put the actual way we had worded it –

GW But a lot of people misunderstood.

JR “Barclay has enjoyed a fruitful six year partnership with Calvert School. At the end of this school year Barclay will begin a new phase of curriculum reform, implementing it in grades 7 & 8....”

GW And you remember I had talked to Mayor Schmoke, because some things had kind of bothered, leaked out kind of something, and he said, and I told him what was happening and so forth, and that’s when he said “I think you should make a statement.”

JR Make a statement. So we said, “This is a fitting point for Barclay to assume full responsibility for the program.” And we explained we’d go on using the materials and so forth. And we were going to seek funding support for grade 8. But anyway, the next thing we knew the article that Kathy wrote had gotten the title, “Maryland Tests Torpedo Successful Program.”

GW Right.

JR And it was stated that because we were doing poorly on MSPAP we were breaking our partnership with Calvert, which--

GW Which was not – And I called Katy Lalley early that morning and they said she wasn’t in the office. And I said, “You find her before I find her!” [Laughter]

JR [Laughter]

GW And she came, and she was so upset. She said, “I didn’t choose the title.” She said someone else in there chose the title. But I said, “That’s not acceptable.” I said,
“We trusted you. We gave it to you. No one else.” So she went to Nancy Grasmick’s house. And she called, Nancy Grasmick, [Laughter] and Dr. Grasmick said she was really so upset. Well, I had talked to Dr. Grasmick already and explained that that was not true, that nothing about the MSPAP had come in. And she said, “Well, Trudy,” --

You know she said [mimicking] “Truuuudy, I understand; people try to get things all mixed up.” I said, “Of course, it’s a difficult test, but if it’s demanded our children are going to do it.” So then she called me and said, “Trudy,” she says “you must have socked it to her.” [Laughter] She said, “she came to my house.” And she said -- no, her office. And she had called and said “I must see you.” And she said she had explained that in no way had we said anything, and that how it had happened. So that --

[Laughter]

JR But that -- unfortunately it left the impression

GW Impression

JR with a lot of people that

GW Dead.

JR we were giving up Calvert.

GW It never ever—

JR And we’ve never really gotten over that.

GW No, because people will say, “Oh, are you still having the Calvert program?

JR Or isn’t it too bad that you lost it.

GW So it’s beginning to pick up again, knowing that it’s still going on. But now we need to meet -- and I’ll call Gloria -- we need to get together and back David up on this, they are really giving him the hammer on the Calvert curriculum and we have to deal
with that. I promised -- what's his name -- Scott, that I would go over and look at his daughter's work and see what was happening and talk with him. So he said, "well if you do that, Miss Williams, I'll feel better, he says, "because Ms. Bass is a sweet person but I get double, you know, statements, signals from her." But I think that. And then I'll call Gloria and I'll tell David we're just going to call a meeting. We're going to call the Board. We'll call Dr. Tilden. There's no point in working with Booker.

JR    Let me wind this up first.

GW    Ok.

JR    The battle goes on even as we speak. [Laughter]

GW    That's right.

END OF SESSION VIII