

RICHARD THOMPSON - 2/23/76 - Interviewer, Mark Wood

This is Mark Wood. I'm interviewing Mr. Richard Thompson, the only black principal in the City of Middletown. He is the principal at Bielefield Elementary School. Thank you, Mr. Thompson.

Q: First of all I think it would be best if we get some background information as far as where you have done your studies at, your doctorate.

A: No, I haven't completed those yet.

Q: (). So, can you tell me, when did you come to Middletown?

A: I came to Middletown in July of '71. A friend of mine who is no longer with the Middletown school system had informed me that Middletown was searching for an elementary school principal and, preferably, a non-white elementary school principal, and suggested that I come over and take a look. I'll admit that I was apprehensive at the time because I had just completed a fellowship program at the University of Connecticut and I was actually seeking to enter into an administrative position in Hartford at the time because I had just completed ten years in the role of a classroom teacher in Hartford and I was desirous of obtaining an administrative position in Hartford. And, of course, Middletown is one of those towns that I simply didn't know very much about and he suggested that in spite of my apprehension about Middletown and the sincerity and the validity about really placing an administrator in the Middletown school system, preferably one who was non-white, I decided--I really came reluctantly.

Q: Fine. So, before you came you had no idea of what the Middletown system was like?

A: No, I didn't. I didn't have the slightest notion of Middletown.

Q: Now, can you tell me how many black teachers there are in the system?

A: This information, I must preface myself by saying that, well more than likely would not be totally accurate. It's the kind of question I've entertained but I've never done research to find out; but just from--just a cursory research, I'd say that black instructional staff in Middletown comprises about 8% of the total instructional staff in Middletown. That's less than 10%!

Q: Less than 10%?

A: Right.

Q: So, out of how many hundred?

A: I'd say approximately 370 instructional staff members. Now that does not include your special education people, I mean your psychologists, your social worker, your learning diagnostician. It doesn't include the school nurses. It doesn't include the custodial staff. It doesn't include the teacher aides. At that point you had--it doesn't include the cafeteria workers. If you add all of those combined people to the instructional staff, chances are you tend to have over a thousand people here. O.K.? But the instructional staff alone, I mean people who teach grades Kindergarten through Grade 12 in Middletown, I'd say comprise about a total of 370 individuals and that does not include

your administrative staff, O.K.?--your principals and your directors of instruction, your directors of curriculum and your directors of reading and your directors of guidance. It doesn't include those individuals.

Q: Now, at the elementary school in which you are a principal, Bielefield, how many elementary school teachers are black?

A: Out of a present staff of seventeen individuals, I have two who are black.

Q: Could you tell me, what was the initial response in both white and black communities when it was made known that you would be the first black principal in Middletown?

A: Here again I have to, out of all honesty, claim a certain bit of uncertainty about the reception that I got from the total community, and I think I can probably blame myself. My emphasis when I first came here was to come here and do the very best job that I could do. One, because I had discovered from bits and pieces in talking with fellow principals and talking with some members in the community that there had been, some bit of protest had taken place before I arrived on the part of the black community expressing their disenchantment with the way things were, the way, specifically, black children were being handled in the public schools in Middletown. They were the ones that seemed to be the most readily suspended and, of course, they were, of course, the individuals who seemed to be "creating the most problems in the Middletown school system". Out of this aura, a melee of unrest, came the desire on the part of the Administrative Staff, Central Offices, to try to find some ways of quieting the discontent on the part of the black community. So, and I think I stepped in in the midst of this, but I did not see any evidence of it when I arrived, I must admit. Things were relatively quiet. I must have come upon the tail end of the--

Q: So you would say that you were viewed by the black community as a saving grace?

A: I really wouldn't say a saving grace. I think what the black community is saying, that is that we are citizens in the community. We live here; we work here; we pay taxes here. They'd like a show of some evidence on the part of the "City Fathers" that indicates their respect for the part that we play in the total system, and they would like to see some visible evidence of the fact that blacks are, do make up, a dynamic part of this community. And I think they wanted to see it in evidence in terms of some person of color in a position of importance within the educational community, and I think that's most important. I think it's important too in terms of, no less important in terms of politically, that you have black representation. It's no less than what the founding fathers of our country, no representation, no taxation without representation, unless you have some visible evidence that the part they played was respected on the part of those individuals who made the laws and decided the destinies of the lives of people; and I think this is what blacks are seeking, too.

Q: So can you tell me, what is in the tenor of community relations?

A: Repeat that.

Q: What were the relationships between the community, with the white community, the black community? You've been here for five years. Have you seen any change? Can you tell me if there are any specific objectives that you have laid out?

A: In order to be very objective about it I would have to have a very good picture of what took place in Middletown before I arrived in order to have something to compare with, and I'm at a loss there, I really am. As to deciding what the whole tenor of white-black relationships within Middletown, as I say, I only got it in bits and pieces, but just from a layman's point of view, not as an expert, but as a layman, I say there has been some change. But the over-all relationships of blacks in Middletown in terms of power positions is still very relative, and by that I mean that if we were given, if I were to rate the power of blacks to influence the system as a pressure group from--I mean, making significant changes in terms of deciding, you know, who's Chief of Police and in terms of deciding, you know, the Superintendent of Schools, you know, who becomes superintendent of schools in terms of making some important decision about zone changes in the system, I think we're still in a relatively inferior position. There's simply not that much power to be held by the black community as a whole, but I think we still have an important part to play that whenever we find a system that's being attentive to our particular needs, I think it is incumbent upon us as citizens to make ourselves heard in the chambers of government whether it be at the Council meetings or the Board of Education meetings or the Zoning Commission meetings, wherever it is necessary for us to attend, writing letters to the Press, calling our councilmen, calling the members of the Board of Education, which is what the average citizen does when they have a gripe and a disenchantment with the way things are going. But I think this is a goal to be striven for. I don't think we have arrived yet and I mustn't kick myself too. I don't think I'm doing as much as I can in terms of trying to get this message across to the black community as a whole that they have a part to play if they sit down and delegate this responsibility. I mean, if they leave it to chance it would never happen. Change doesn't take place like that. Somebody must see a need for change and work purposely for change in order for it to take place. It just isn't going to happen. It will be just like the old spiritual, "When I get to Heaven I'm gonna put on my shoes and dance all over God's Heaven". Well, that's a hoped-for end without any effort behind it. It's simply not anything that's going to take place. I don't think--did I answer your question?

Q: Yes.

A: O.K.

Q: Now, as a principal, a black principal, what is your relationship with the School Board, the Board of Trustees, the Superintendent of Schools, your staff? Would you enlighten me on that?

A: Yes. O.K. My position with the Superintendent is within relatively the same as that of any other principal, really, in a sense that I am an official member of the Administrative Staff for the Middletown School System. I implement the policies that are decided upon by the Superintendent and the Board of Education, who, in turn, really are spokesmen for the community at large. Also, I think it's important to the black kids. I have to say this, as the principal I am the principal of all the kids, let's face it. If I were mayor I would be mayor of all the citizens of Middletown and if I were superintendent I would be superintendent and I would have to advocate policies that would be in the best

interests of the total community, not just the black community. And I think that as a principal of the school I have to be a proponent for policies that are in the best interests of the total school community that I preside over as principal. I can't be partisan but I think it's important that aside, I think it is important that black children are able to see black individuals in an important position of responsibility within the community and I think racism does not need a spokesman, it only needs symbols to regenerate. It's a fact that racism exists. For example: When members in the community look around and they look to see who is the Mayor of the City, who is Superintendent of Schools, who are your Councilmen, who is your Chief of Police, who is the Chairman of the Zoning Commission, when they look around in the community and they see who makes up the Instructional Staff they get a pretty good idea who the important people in the community are. They get a pretty good idea of the people who have power, so to speak, to influence change and to make the important decisions in the community. And I think that we, that blacks are going to develop a sense of belonging as equal members in a so-called democratic system and there must be visible evidences of this, and I'm just a small, very small, unit in this big picture where black kids can look up and say, they don't come out and say, "Well, there goes Mr. Thompson, the black principal", but they see me, and it's important, and also at the same time it's important that the white kids see me too and, you know, without being a, being a braggadocio is not my style, I like to feel that by doing a job and doing it well that speaks for itself. Just like being anything--if I were a carpenter, an electrician, a plumber or doctor, I'd like to be able to do it well, and I think that speaks for itself. It helps to tear down that fabric of some of the stereotype attitudes that people hold about us as a group--blacks are no good; they don't do their jobs well; that they're not responsible individuals. I think in anything we do it is important that we do it well, not just for the sole purpose of destroying the myths and stereotypes that have developed over the years but just from an internal desire on our part, the pride that we have in ourselves in doing whatever we do well. It does simultaneously give us pride in accomplishment and achievement in our own goals and objectives in life. At the same time it does help to destroy those myths.

Q: That's true, very true. Tell me, you spoke of racism earlier. Upon coming to Middletown did you encounter racism? Have you seen evidence of racism in your school, among your school children and among your staff?

A: I find it difficult to say "yes" to that even though it is without a doubt that racism exists and exists very definitely in this community and very definitely is within the school system, but I couldn't point an accusatory finger at the administrative staff and say that they were racists in any--or discriminatory against with me, and I'd like to--maybe it's because of this... [Aside: Tell him I'm busy; I'll call him back. Excuse me.] The point I was going to make is this: If I internalize the fact that my colleagues are discriminatory against me, in some way I do myself a disservice. At the same time I'm afraid of a self-defeating concept. I would begin to use--by that I mean this: Whenever things don't go wrong or don't go RIGHT, excuse me--whenever things don't go right in my relationship with my peers, most of whom are white, I mean the administrative staff, and it means most of the instruction staff, it would be easy for me to say they are not doing right because I am black and they are white and, therefore, they are discriminating against me. I would rather, and I try to live by this, I'd rather first, when things are not going right,

when there is some friction between myself and the group as a whole, the first thing I do is, I look within myself to find out if I'm doing some critical analysis of my behavior to find out if, first, I behaved in a fashion that might have precipitated the situation. Secondly, if I had done my homework. I do all of the necessary things I should have done in order to prevent this conflict from occurring. Then, if I can honestly answer "no" to both of those questions, no, YES, I mean, YES, I did do my job well. YES, I did do my homework. NO, I did not do anything to precipitate this situation. Then I begin to look at the total picture to find out if it is possible then that the expectation level of the group with which I'm now interacting with is unjust and unfair. But I do suffer analysis first and I do this purposely because I don't want to allow myself the luxury of using racism as a scapegoat and I come back to the point I made: Sure, racism exists in Middletown within the school system, I'm sure, but I must honestly say I think on a whole, and I'll be honest about that, the way (I can stand) and within my staff, I think on a whole I have one of the best staffs, bar none, in the city and I think on a whole they are about as fair as they can be. They have a mixed group, economic mixed group, racially and culturally, and I think they do quite a good job in the inter-personal relationship with one another and with the kids and on a whole, again, overtly, on the surface. On the surface I have not encountered any racial overtones in my relationship, say, with the Central Office Staff. O.K.? But, here again, I'm not an insidious person. I don't look for it. And it is very possibly because I don't look for acts of racism, it is very possible that I overlook things that somebody else might see. See what I'm saying? It doesn't say the racism doesn't exist. It simply says that I'm not looking for it and hoping not to find it because generally we find what we look for. That's like the self-fulfilling prophecy, which I am very much on guard against in my job as supervisor and an administrator, those individuals who tend to place children in a conceptual frame of mind where children perceive themselves as worthless and incapable of achievement, because when a child is placed in that kind of a self-defeating self-analysis, then it feeds within a self-fulfilling prophecy. I think as a man is thinking in his heart so is he. So the kid thinks he's not going to be anybody and he won't put forth the effort and If he's got a model like a teacher there to reinforce that, it only makes it that much more real to him.

Q: As a principal in Middletown, could you enlighten me on the economic opportunities for blacks? Have they increased? Have they stabilized? Have they decreased?

A: I thought for a period during the late '60's and early 70's that we were, as a group of people, black, moving upward from "low man on the totem pole" to a more improved position in the socio-economic structure as a whole in the United States and I think this is true, that we did make great strides and gains during the late '60's and early '70's. But I think there's been a reversal of late with the inflation and with the shortage of jobs and with the increase in the price of oil and the so-called energy crisis it's reverted back to where it was before, to the mid '60's. It's almost like the Establishment is saying, "Every man for himself", Middletown more so because you is it is a middle class suburban town, heavy on the building trades, carpenters, bricklayers, electricians, plumbers, pipefitters, truckers. You follow me? And this group has notoriously been very zealous of this position. They pride themselves upon the Protestant ethic of work hard and save your money you can get ahead in life, get a good education. And they have been the ones that

we as a group, I mean blacks, we have followed them, have been tailgating them in the socio-economic structure, and this is the group which has been very reluctant to open up the doors of opportunity. They are the ones who are more quickly to stereotype us as blacks, saying that we don't want to work, you know, we want things for nothing and we have to constantly prove ourselves to this group; and I think we are constantly doing that. We have to constantly do that, constantly proving that we are capable of excelling in whatever we do.

Q: Can you tell me what is the level of black involvement in local politics?

A: On an individual level, I mean one or two individuals, I mean, like you have one--I am the only black administrator in town. We have Mr. McRae who is the only black Council member. We have Mrs. Davis, Miss Davis, I'm sorry, who is the only black member of the Board of Education and we have members in industry and private business who are in positions of importance. But on a whole, here again, we don't have a real strong power base. I think this is something that we have to work at and I think those of us in the community who know of this relative position of power on the part of blacks, I think it's important that we get out there and sort of beat the bushes, so to speak, to alert people to the fact that unless they become active in the political machinery they're going to always be in an inferior position. They won't be able to exert any pressure on the "powers that be" to change the direction in which their lives are going and we're going always to be the protestors, so to speak, you know; we are the ones who cry the loudest the system is unfair. We're going to have to remember that the system isn't going to always be unfair to us because the system is predominantly white and it's a power position. O.K.? And power isn't--no one is going to give away power. It's a very slow process, a very slow process of change. You're going to have to get out there, you know, and when it comes time to register and vote, go register. When it comes time to vote, go vote. You're going to have to kind of show the political system that you know here is a possibility of a thousand votes or two thousand votes that we can use to put those individuals who we feel are the most attentive to our needs in office and if those individuals who are vying for these political plums don't listen to us then we are able to place those votes behind that individual who does. Until we arrive, I don't think we are there in that position yet, and that's why I don't think the system is as attentive to our needs as it can be. When we arrive at that point in time that we can say, "Here, we do not like this" or, "We don't like the way you are doing that" and we let our expressions be felt not by a brickbat through a window but by the power at the polls, then people are going to stand up and listen to us. And that's the way the system is changing and that's the way we're going to make our presence felt. We have to let people know that we can influence change and we can influence who gets into office. O.K.? As long as we are not able to influence who gets into office we're not going to be able, much, to dictate the way people treat us who are in those offices.

Q: Can you tell me what type of social activities or organizations are available for the people, black people, in Middletown to involve themselves in and what type of organizations do you involve yourself?

A: O.K. I must admit that from a social point of view there is very little that this town offers me and I don't know what it offers to the general population, most specifically the

black population, if any. As far as my own personal life is concerned, my wife and I came here from Hartford. Much of the socializing that we do are with friends that we have in Hartford. Since Hartford is such a short drive, eighteen miles, it's easy for us to go back and forth to Hartford and socialize with those friends that we still have in Hartford and also in Bloomfield. From a professional point of view, I belong to a graduate chapter of a college fraternity in Hartford and I attend their affairs, the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity. From the professional point of view, I belong to a graduate chapter of a black college fraternity who has its location in Hartford. I attend scholarship dances and other inter-fraternal affairs with that group. I also belong to Phi Delta Kappa, an honorary scholarship fraternity whose current office is in the University of Connecticut. Also, I belong to a local administrative group and we hold affairs occasionally. Other than that, there is this sort of entertainment with friends within my home or I visit theirs in town. I may take in a movie or go to a local restaurant, or something like that. That's about the extent. I think the city as a whole has done a lot toward improving the social offerings to teenagers and young adults in town. That's an area which could be vastly improved.

Q: What activities in Middletown have been restricted to you or black people because of your race?

A: Here again, that's a difficult question to say what's been restricted to me because of my race because I can't see any, I'll be honest with you. I can't see any because to say I can't go this way because of my race would be an affront to my dignity as a person. It shows me a person with a lack of imagination because today, you know, if an individual wants to, with a little amount of imagination and just a little amount of money, the person can go almost where he wants to go. It doesn't take very much to board an airplane and [snap of fingers] you're there. You know, California, Florida, in the Caribbean, you're there. So I certainly don't allow people to restrict my, the extent of my enjoyment, if only to the extent of my imagination; and there is no extent to my imagination because there is no extent to the kinds of things that I can enjoy myself with.

Q: So as far as (you are concerned) there is very little offered here in Middletown?

A: There's very little offered in Middletown and it doesn't, I should say as a citizen with a global point of view, I should be concerned. As a citizen from a global point of view I should be concerned about the citizens at large rather than myself.

Q: Are there local clubs like the Masons, Elks, etc., things like this?

A: O.K. Speaking of the Elks Club, the Elks is a fraternal organization and, of course, the controversy that's been in the local newspapers lately wherein a group of black brothers and sisters have spoken up, and I call them my black brothers and sisters because we enjoy a commonality in experience and that whenever an individual is denied an opportunity based solely upon his race, even though that individual were not me, I feel as though I myself have been discriminated equally as that individual and, therefore, the controversy here in which the local Elks Club has gone on record as, has gone on record in the paper recently saying they do not have a policy of overt discrimination against any group. But from what I have understood in talking with individuals that the national organization had withdrawn its policy of denying non-white membership in its

organization and left it up to the individual branch offices, branch lodges, across the country the decision to determine who can become members. And I think Midtown's Lodge was one of those lodges that stood out against abolishing this by-law in its constitution that only white males could belong to its organization. O.K.? I personally, from a personal point of view, it does not bother me if they wanted to keep that policy in there because, here again, I won't limit my horizons to the point that simply because the local organization says they only want white males, allow white males to belong to it, I say, "All well and good" because the same reason I spoke of before, I have MY friends and, again, I can get in an automobile or train or a plane and I can go places where I'm welcomed with open arms and enjoy myself immensely without any feelings of being a second-class citizen, you know, or looked upon as some guy from Mars. But from a member of being a part of a group such as the black constituency in town for which this organization in the past has vowed that we cannot belong to its membership solely on the basis of race, that--I'm against that. I'm against that in principle that if the same restriction was held against any other racial group then I would consider it fair, but to restrict us membership in this organization strictly on the basis of race, I think that is discriminatory and I'm not going to go and picket in front of the organization or anything like that. Of course, as I said before about my affiliation, would say in effect if I did that that I would perceive this organization as somehow restricting my right to enjoyment. And I don't see it restricting my right 'cause I don't have to attend its affairs. I don't feel limited by the Elks Club in any way.

Q: O.K. I'd like to step into another dimension and that is the relation between the community as a whole and Wesleyan University and what you feel the relationship should be or shouldn't be a commitment. Is there a commitment? What is being done to better the relationship between Wesleyan and the community?

A: I think any--Wesleyan University, like most universities, are your elitist institutions. They are centers of learning and centers of educational involvement at a very high level for supposedly the best minds, the best young minds that the community can supply them. It serves as a laboratory to develop alternative strategies and solutions to problems that are faced by the community as a whole and I think that universities, Wesleyan notwithstanding, has an important part to play in providing its resources to the communities within which it is located, as a laboratory to try to find out solutions to the problems that the community faces. Now, there are some drawbacks to that. Why the university, why the community at large would benefit from the professional expertise that is incumbent within, encompassed within any university limit its power on the other hand began to take a sort of defensive look at the university, they begin to see it as snobbish. They begin to see the university as sort of an elitist group. I think that they have the expertise and know-how to everything. They have a know-it-all attitude and in some way there is an entrenchment on the part of the community why they want this institution to provide it with some insight and to finding solutions to problems that it faces. It doesn't want that university to take on the role of being the answer to all, you know, for whenever it encounters a problem it doesn't want the university or those individuals who are representing the university, namely, the students or the professors or such, to move in and say, "Well, we have the answer to your problems". They somehow perceive that as meddling with internal affairs even though the university is located within the physical

boundaries of that community. So, in answer to, if I haven't gone off on a tangent, yes, the university has an important role to play, especially at a time like this when people are beginning to question authority. They begin to question processes and procedures within government, within educational communities, I mean like your school system, and they begin to ask, you know, "How can this job be done better and more efficiently, more economically?" They begin to look at the university for some assistance in finding the answers to these problems.

Q: So, in your opinion is Wesleyan doing as much as it possibly can?

A: I doubt that seriously. I don't know enough to answer that question intelligently but I doubt seriously whether its doing as much as it can. I'm sure it derives some type of ego boosting by the mere fact that it is a university and it is considered an upper-middle-class-type of university for the upper middle class child. And it wants to maintain that image to receive some type of tangible benefits from knowing that O.K., we have a Wesleyan University. We consider ourselves a small university as universities go but we consider ourselves a university that has extremely high academic standards and only the best minds can enter in and exit through the graduation process from our portals. And so, therefore, I think to that extent it does NOT give this total capacity for change to the community because it perceives itself as being an agent for change by graduating students. Many of these students, when they graduate from Wesleyan, do not stay within the Middletown area. They go elsewhere and so I can't perceive that as being very helpful to the greater Middletown and quite frequently, too, that dilemma of the town seeing the university as being a system wherein you have some elite minds who have possibly some answers that could help them with their problems, that system doesn't want those minds to move in and make any noticeable changes because when you make changes that influences the power positions and, plus, that power is not given away. You just don't give away power! I think there's a purpose in all design and almost our whole way of life, the way it is structured, who has what and how they arrived at what they have, you know, the types of devices that determine who gets into your institutions of higher learning, such as your tests, GRE's and Miller's analogies and your STEP writing tests and your other institutions such as, I was thinking of the Princeton, your scholastic aptitude tests. These devices are used by the establishment to help determine who gets into these institutions and who gets out of these institutions. Plus, we know that not everybody who graduates with a sheepskin gets a good job, of course. You have such great numbers and you have such limited jobs. But, nevertheless, you and I both know that if you want to use a breakdown in terms of race to determine who gets out of those institutions of higher learning, you know that particularly minorities, lower income people, are absent, are conspicuous by their absence, so to speak.

Q: Now, Wesleyan's response is the Upward Bound Program. This is a group of students from both Middletown and Meriden. What is your opinion of this program? Do you feel that it is beneficial for the student, and how can it be made better?

A: Here, again, I sort of, I don't know enough about the Upward Bound Program as I should. I know in general what it purports to do. I know it purports to take in low income and minority students with promise who have academic problems and provide

them with an opportunity of gaining an experience in an institution of higher learning and, hopefully, encouraging these students to want to better improve their set of circumstances by looking upon a career as a student and a student of higher learning as a possible avenue of improving on their unique talents, such as they are. I don't know of, here, again, I don't know the number of these students who enter into Wesleyan University and I don't know the number who once they have entered have actually gone on as students at that university and graduated; nor do I know the numbers who have sort of seen the light, so to speak, and gone from Wesleyan University to other institutions of higher learning like Central or Willimantic or UConn, etc., you see. If I could say that, if I could see those numbers, I could state more. I could make a more realistic statement as to the sincerity of Wesleyan University in this effort, so-called, to provide an avenue of opportunity for these students; but from hear-say, and it's bad to speak from hearsay, I know, from hear-say the word is, "No, the university isn't doing as much as it can". It just has been rumored that some students who have been in this institution have been encouraged not to apply even though they had been there as high school students serving in Upward Bound. I've heard the rumor that they have been encouraged not to apply as full-time academic students for a full-time academic course there. The reasons for that lends itself to speculation which I'd better not go into.

Q: Well, we've touched upon a little of everything as far as your educational point of view. Are there any afterthoughts that you'd like to give me as far as a point of view as far as the Middletown educational program consists of in its relationship; what you see as the future?

A: O.K. I felt--I think Middletown is a nice place to live in, O.K.? It has potential. Here again, the potential for the town can be realized to the extent that all of the people who live within the physical boundaries and the political boundaries of the community somehow have a say in the direction in which this town takes. I think that, as I stated earlier, there needs to be more representation and more participation on the part of minorities in the political process in Middletown. I think that the opportunities for jobs ought to be opened up to a larger segment of the community. I feel that, especially when this happens, I feel that when the political process opens up so that there can be more representation of low income and minority groups, when job opportunities open up so that more of those individuals who are out of power are able to instill in themselves a sense of worthiness by being able to be self-producing, not necessarily self-employed, but being able to hold meaningful jobs so that they can feel a sense of belonging to the greater community that's called Middletown, then I think that not only are these citizens going to be doing themselves a service, but, the town itself will feel the impact of this collective, of these collective energies. I do think that whereas in terms of the teaching where I'm involved in the educational system, I know that the Administrative Central Office goes on record as declaring itself positively inclined by hiring more minority instructors and knowing that standards should never be lowered to pave the way for anyone. You should always maintain high standards and still feel that a greater push should be given on the part of the educational community to see to it that, wherever possible, the employment of minority instructional staff should be had. I think it's, in a way it's kind of shameful that we only have less than 10% instructional staff that are minority at this time. I feel that that can be improved upon.

Q: Thank you very much, Mr. Thompson.

A: O.K.

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