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This is an interview with Reg Murphy, editor of the Atlanta Constitution, conducted in Atlanta, Georgia on April 30, 1974 by Jack Bass and Walter De Vries. Transcribed by Sarah Geer.

Jack Bass: How would you characterize the state of Georgia's politics?

Reg Murphy: Georgia's politics are schizophrenic in the sense that people will say all the time that they voted for Andrew Young and Lester Maddox at the same ballot box at the same time. That's how they both win, and they both will frequently win at the same - not frequently, but sometimes - will win in the same precinct.

J.B.: How do they explain that, the people who say that?

Murphy: Well, the blacks who say they do that say that they vote for Maddox because they think he tells the truth and they just like (portion obscured by noise.) I heard a fellow the other day in one of those pickup trucks with a gun rack in the back. White fellow, fairly red faced. Drove up to Andy Young and jumped out of the cab and Young said he was terribly afraid the fellow was coming to whip him. Went over to him, shook hands and said, "I just wanted you to know that you and Lester Maddox are the only two people I'm voting for this year." Looking for some kind of candor, and unable to find it in the group of politicians who they have been around in the last twenty years. They can't find it in Carter, you know. He's the old

namby-pamby kind of a fellow. Won't ever really be candid with them. Always looking for an honest expression of what a fellow feels, you know. Georgians really like to deal with a man's raw emotions instead of a slicked down version, and that's the reason the demagogues have been so successful, is because they like to deal with his raw emotions and that raw appeal. And I think that's more important than ideology in some cases. I think you have to deal with that. I think Georgia politics is not nearly as progressive as it was in the early nineteen-sixties. Afraid of Atlanta, as they always have been, but afraid of it in a different kind of way. Sort of jealous of the city, but also understanding that this is where their sons and daughters come to work. And live in boarding houses and finally in the suburbs. And that's important. I think they feel that they're very poorly represented in congress, but well represented in the Senate. Sam Nunn's election in the Senate race was an honest expression of what those people were looking for. A fellow who is relatively conservative, who is articulate, who is, they think, a square shooter, who is a new, fresh face, and who they anticipate is bright enough to make things work. And he probably comes as close as any they've had in a long time to symbolize what Georgia politics is all about. Nunn has solidified his strength because he's not always in the news, but when he is he's in something that really interests him. For example, he's into the. . . . He sort of revolutionized the budget-making process, if he's able to make it stick, by making them first declare how much money is available for the federal budget before they begin

the allocation process. If he can make that stick, if that law really is made to stick, that'll be a hell of a (Interfering static.) They liked what he did with that old troop withdrawals and that sort of thing.

J.B.: What did he do on that?

Murphy: He and Jackson were able to pass a bill that forces the administration to begin the gradual withdrawal of troops from NATO countries. People were. . . wrote for a while that Georgia was a great. . . making a great populist kind of a comeback. I don't know where the hell they got that data. There was no such thing. I just don't understand where that kind of attitude comes from. You know, if you were to have a presidential election today and had a whole bunch of folks on the ballot, George Wallace'd get more votes than anybody else. I don't know that he'd get 51 per cent, but I think he might. And really torn apart by the destruction of the Democratic party by the national candidates, the national Democratic party. The Republicans had an opportunity because of that to win some political races. They failed because they didn't have any decent local candidates in public office. And the potential for that doesn't seem to me to be as good as it was before. I think the reason there's not as much potential is that the Democrats have done a pretty good of re-building on a local basis, dis-associating themselves from the national politics for the last two or three years. The Republicans don't seem to ever grow anybody in the state who has any savvy about how to run a political campaign. And so they've really been unsuccessful. And they've tried

all this business of getting people to switch. They have five state house officers who've been elected who've switched to the Republican party all at the same time. And at the next election each one of them was either defeated or just didn't run because he had no chance to win it.

J.B.: Jimmy Bentley, who would not be exactly impartial or objective as an observer, but he does have a certain perspective few other people would have, he described the Republican party as too much involved in kamikaze politics. Was that fair?

Murphy: Yes, that's right. It really is. It really. . . . Georgia Republicans spend more energy trying to destroy each other than any political group I've ever seen in my life. They don't like each other.

[Democrats] don't particularly like each other either, but that factionalism has been around forever and they can deal with it. And they can all get together [at election time] . Bentley himself got wiped out out of DeKalb County because it looked like he was going to run pretty well in Fulton County, you know. And the DeKalb County Republicans said, "Hey, we can't let anybody who's running well in Fulton County be elected governor of this state." And Bentley just got destroyed. The Republicans also never have, in this state, found a man like Holshouser or somebody who has the ability to bring a fairly broad respectability to the party. There has never been in Georgia politics a really respectable Republican who got elected as a Republican to a major office, who could make it an attractive kind of a situation. Fletcher Thompson is a congressman here who is

not really an attractive political candidate. And then Blackburn, who announced for congressman from the Fourth District, is not really an attractive statewide candidate either. They capitalize on local situations, but they're basically small minded men.

J.B.: Would Mike Egan be able to fill that role? Is he more inclined to, or is the fact that he's ivy league and Catholic be too much against him?

Murphy: He comes closer than anybody else, and I personally would like to see. . . . I don't care about his political affiliation. I'd just like to see him run for governor because I think that'd be an interesting race. If it would ever catch on, I don't know, but if he ever got elected he'd be a damn handsome office holder to a lot of people, because he brings the kind of understanding to politics that these other very conservative guys don't bring. And he's not mean-spirited. He has some pretty good public spirited attitudes about politics. For example, he'd be much broader than a man like Mervin Grissom or a man like Jimmy Carter or a man like Lester Maddox in the governor's office. It probably would be. . . you know, probably would make an interesting governor. He certainly would make it possible to begin. . . for local organizations to begin holding up their heads and say, "See, that's one of ours. He's doing very well. Isn't he an intelligent man, and he's the kind of man we could follow." I don't know that I believe in political parties that have one hero. I doubt that I do. But I do believe that it's necessary to have a symbol somewhere that a political party can rally behind in a state that never has had

Republican office-holders to any degree before. The Georgia Republicans just never have had the symbol that they could deal with and make an example for the rest of the state. The Democratic party is doing some better now. Reuben Askew was in town earlier in the spring. He spoke at the Jefferson/Jackson day dinner. And there were about eight hundred Democrats at a fairly expensive fund-raising dinner. And they were more enthusiastic and more optimistic than I'd seen them in two or three years. They are beginning to have a goodly number of attractive political candidates again. *[This year]* the half a dozen attractive candidates in the race *[for governor]* may end up killing each other off defeated. But there are a lot of them in the category. In the lieutenant governor's race there are more people like that, very attractive, and would be quality kinds of people to hold office in the state. And I think in Zell's case he's probably going to get elected. Because, just because he is a man who has been involved in the things like prison reform and trying to deal with the Pardon and Parole Board. Get it straightened out so that there's not the built-in bias against blacks or built-in bias against the poor. And I think he will run very well. Plus the fact that the Democrats have not really, except for that one hemorrhage of state office holders, they haven't really lost any of their attractive political candidates in the last few years. They haven't lost many. . . . They've lost in a few places, like in Macon and Savannah. They have lost either the courthouse or the mayor's office. In Savannah the Democrats have won it back now, and. . . .

J.B.:

Republicans have taken over. . . .

Murphy: And in Macon there's a very unattractive candidate. . . I mean, mayor, ~~up~~ down there that the Republicans have. He got the hell beat of him at the congressional race. Just got slaughtered by Bill Stuckey.

Columbus is different population centers. And it probably is going to stay that way. Dale Aaron, who is the mayor down there, was. . . now, he was as close to an attractive political figure as the Republicans have had in this state. And had he not been killed in an accident, he might very well have been a serious candidate for governor. I wouldn't be surprised if he wouldn't have been a serious candidate for governor. But in a. . . . It's amazing. People always say about southern politics that there's not. . . . the southern voter knows how to split a ticket. Like hell they don't. They don't ever vote for Democrats in the presidential races any more than they don't ever vote for Republicans in the local races. They're expert at splitting tickets. And .

J.B.: How do you assess the state of black politics in Georgia?

Murphy: In the city of Atlanta, the blacks politics is very healthy. The absolutely equal split in leadership responsibility in the city on the city council makes that pretty healthy. The mayor is making his share of mistakes, but he'll get through them. And when he gets through his share of mistakes he'll be an interesting political figure. Andy Young is one of the really bright people that the South has produced in the last 25 years. Blacks don't feel that they're a part of either of the political parties in the statewide elections. And for good reason, 'cause they've been ignored until

this governor's race. There's active competition from a couple of candidates in the governor's race, George Busby and Bert Lance, for black votes in the primary in August. And they all feel more a part of the political process than they have in the recent past. That applies to Atlanta blacks. Now, the Atlanta black political attitude is somewhat different from what it is in the rest of the state. It's more militant and a lot more sensitive to slurs, both real and imagined. There are a lot of blacks in south Georgia who still vote for political candidates who say horrible racial things and take horrible racial positions. They wouldn't be forgiven in Atlanta, but they are forgiven in some south Georgia counties. Overall, the blacks have not really yet been brought into the leadership of the Democratic party, and really there aren't any in the Republican party. Except there's one interesting exception. Stan Scott, whose uncle is the publisher of the Atlanta Daily World, is a special assistant to Nixon. And Stan has been able to work in the White House, and do a lot of important things. And he's pretty well accepted and understood in the Atlanta black community and that's the only break-over, really, from the Democratic politics that ordinarily is black.

J.B.: And I think there's a city councilman over in Columbus.

Murphy: Yeah. Yeah, that's right. I can't remember his name, but he didn't really. . . . He doesn't really have any impact on a very wide basis.

J.B.: Is race still the key to understanding politics in Georgia?

Murphy: Race is a key to understanding Lester Maddox's politics, I

guess, to some extent. But, no, I don't. . . I don't really think so. I really think that if you look at the racial breakdowns in the Atlanta mayor's race, it's the key to understanding who voted for whom in the race. And Sam Masell just ran a racist campaign in that run-off, and that's the reason the split was the kind of split that it was. But. . . .

W.D.V.: I'm thinking back to what you said about schizophrenia at the beginning, when you've got Maddox and Andy Young. Could that schizophrenia also relate to racial problems?

Murphy: It probably. . . .

W.D.V.: in the state, and it appears that Maddox has got about forty points. . . .

Murphy: It probably does. I haven't ever really explored it in exactly that way. My guess is that most Georgia voters think of themselves these days as having kind of come a long way in racial politics toward a more moderate position on race. But that at the deadlock they'd probably vote on that basis on some races. For example, the governor's race, if it were not for the race issue, Lester Maddox would not be as strong a candidate as he is.

(Static on tape.)

J.B.: Roy Harris told me that Lester Maddox. . . the reason Lester Maddox runs so strong is he reflects the racial views of most Georgians, but not only that. He's perceived as being sincere in his religious views and he's perceived as being an honest man.

Murphy: I sure think that being sincere in religion and perceived as being an honest man, that's the reason he does as well as he does with a lot of people. I think that it's. . . (Static on tape.)

. . . at the point of a pistol at an inaugural speech he was saying something entirely different from that. Saying that they have to be brought into the leadership and the time for discrimination was past. Well, he didn't say exactly that. I don't remember the quote now, but it'd be fairly easy to check. But he said a lot of things in that inaugural speech. Maddox is. . . Maddox's popularity is really that he is a personality, unlike any other personality that this state has. And it's tied to his early attitude about race, but it's tied also to the fact that he's just a super salesman for himself, and that he knows how to merchandise all kinds of attitudes and thinking and everything so that he. . . . I don't think most of the people who are going to vote for him this summer are going to say, "I'm going to vote for Lester Maddox because he is a segregationist first, last and always." I think most people are going to tell themselves, whether they're being candid with themselves or not, they're going to tell themselves they're voting for him because they think he's honest. Which is easy to dispute, and people will dispute it all

summer. He just did not tell the truth about a couple of votes in the legislative session. But people choose to overlook that because he has done such a good merchandising job over a period of time on his own honesty that people have [forgotten] .

nobody else could follow him, and nobody else will ever be able to take the kinds of stands he has taken and get away with them. And in that sense your earlier question is really relevant. the Race is a part of/key to understanding Georgia politics, but not the key to understanding where Lester Maddox is in state politics right now.

J.B.: Isn't part of Maddox's reputation for being honest the fact that his position on race is what it is, and a lot of people say, "That's the way I feel, you know, and the others really believe that. They just won't say it."

Murphy: I think that started out to be the case. I think that was the case four or five years ago. I don't know that I. . . and that may be a residual effect that is a holdover that I don't see now. It may be that down inside that's what a lot of people are thinking. But I would argue that most people that I see who're going to vote for him don't admit that any more. That they argue

J.B.: Oh, yes.

Murphy: psychologically down inside you may be right, but as a practical matter, I don't think that's what it is.

J.B.: But I'm saying. . . .

Murphy: But that's important, however. They used to articulate it four or five years ago. That was the reason for

just some kind of attitude change. Oh, I think it's a tremendous attitude change. You see, I think that what people who

try to relate all politics in America to race now are doing, are misleading themselves. They're misleading themselves. I don't deny that it's a significant important factor, but I deny. . . but I would argue very vigorously that a man starting out as a racist and going into politics now would just get the hell beat out of him. He just simply wouldn't get started. And I think you have to take that as one of the keys. You know, if we started today at Five Points with two guys, one of them a very articulate man arguing the far-out segregationist point of view, and another one arguing the moderate point of view, the guy. . . . And all other things were equal. The man arguing the moderate point of view would win. And that's the reason I say that racial politics is being over-stated in most of the reporting that's been done in the South.

J.B.: Been over-simplified too. That's a big part of it.

Murphy: Yeah. Yeah. And I. . .

W.D.V.: Or they put a reverse twist on it. They say, "Well, now the politics is playing to the black."

Murphy: Yeah.

W.D.V.: So, you know, that's why it's still fairly important.

Murphy: Well, you could. . . I see how you could argue that, but it seems to me that if you had taken - I don't know much about this race - but if you had taken that Wallace race in the Democratic primary in North Carolina in 1972, and if Sanford and Wallace had not had any other factors involved in the race, but Wallace was just arguing the segregationist point of view and Sanford was arguing just a moderate point of view, and there weren't any other factors involved, then I

think Sanford would've won that race. But that was not the sole determining factor in that campaign.

W.D.V.: Is that the major change in southern politics in the last twenty-five years?

Murphy: The [style] of the campaign rhetoric and therefore the new ideas about race is exactly what has changed most dramatically and most drastically.

W.D.V.: Why did that happen so easily, or what appears to be so easily? So rapidly?

Murphy: You know, a lot of people have theorized about it. One theory is that it's just too heavy a burden of guilt to be able to sustain the argument once it was all out in the open. And that no politician is tough enough to sustain a flat-out racist posture once people have begun to look at all aspects of the racial question. I can't think of one who's that type any more.

W.D.V.: Most people we've talked to, as they think back ten years ago, you ask them, "If you put yourself back in time ten years ago, would you have foreseen what has happened?" Inevitably they say no. They wouldn't have seen the changes occurring that fast.

Murphy: Yeah, but they were also. . . . Well, that may be, and it may be that I have convinced myself of things that I didn't believe ten years ago. But if you believed in the voter registration, in the voter education process, if you believed in the Civil Rights Act, and the Forced Accommodations Act and so forth, and if you believed that that was going to get the question out on the table for everybody to examine, and if you believed that it couldn't stand the light of

examination, then that kind of change was inevitable. Now, maybe it did come. . . I guess it did come faster than I thought it would come. In fact, I know it did. But looked at objectively, racial politics didn't have a snowball's chance in hell of surviving as in southern politics once all the questions were raised in the open.

J.B.: Where in that does the Voting Rights Act fit?

Murphy: Well, not as importantly as in the raw question. There's a lot of sort of rhetoric going around at the moment that the reason you don't hear as much racial politics now as you used to hear is that blacks got the right to vote. And that's true in the city of Atlanta, of course, but it's not as true in a statewide race. In a statewide race, you would. . . if you were to use my example again of two guys starting from Five Points to run a race, one of them a flat-out segregationist and the other a moderate or a liberal - make it a liberal on the race question - hell, there's not enough voter registration to have changed that many minds. That's not what did it. What did it was the honest examination of the question. Lot of people here came right up against it, had to deal with it. Think that's true. It's a very. . . or, at least, I believe that's true, but I can see how some people can say that that's really masking. . . that the South has just learned to mask a lot of its racial attitudes.

J.B.: Do you think. . . you think there's a genuine change in attitudes here. Do you think the change has resulted because of what's been, in effect, forced experiences and forced changes in their relationships. Fifteen years ago, blacks didn't eat in the restaurants whites. . . whites went to a restaurant, blacks weren't there. The children didn't

go to the same schools. There weren't blacks at the P.T.A. meetings whites went to. Weren't blacks clerking as tellers at the banks that whites went to. The whole personal experiences based on everyday relationships.

Murphy: I hate to admit it, but I don't think it's because of those forced changes. I really think that as a moral question it got out on the table, and people examined it as a moral question. That's when the change had to come because they no longer were able to sustain their segregation argument as a moral position. And in a Bible Belt state like this, people just couldn't sustain that kind of. . . .

J.B.: I was going to ask you what was the role of organized religion in that?

Murphy: Not much, if you look at it as the activities of churches and ministers individually. But very great if you look at what quiet ministers and quiet churches in little towns all over the South have been saying for a hundred years. The word "brotherhood" was a hell of a lot more important in a Baptist church in Gainesville than it was in the civil rights movement, for a hundred years. And when you transfer that moral argument and begin to apply it to the kinds of inequalities that have been sustained, the argument fell in a big hurry. And there were people all over - there are still people all over Georgia, and there are all over everywhere - who say, "Well, you can't. . . you really can't argue for racial politics anymore, but the blacks had better stop arguing racial politics too." And we really are about to get to the point where race is about to come back into politics on the other side. But that won't. . . that's really a flash in the pan

kind of attitude, 'cause if there's anyplace that traditional biblical kinds of people that're more powerful than they are in the white community in the South is in the black community in the South. And that's really what I think. I don't think. . . .

J.B.: What was the white reaction in Atlanta to the election of and his. . . a minority, but a substantial black support, against

Murphy: What really stunned Atlanta was just his getting into the run-off instead of Wade Mitchell getting into the run-off. Wade Mitchell, by the way, is a very decent sort of fellow. He has the reputation for being more conservative in that campaign, but really didn't deserve to have. . . . He was one of those guys who gets a little bit of the cake both ways. People were saying just because of the . And they had made a deal to give him some votes

Maynard Jackson.

He didn't deserve either one of those kinds of attitudes. But when [Hosea Williams] got into the run-off instead of Wade getting into the run-off, there was a sort of an initial burst of concern that sharing as a political process was essential and that got to get the presidency of the Council because that man was going to win the mayor's race. Then I think it surprised some people that Wynch was able to do as well as he did in the race. It shouldn't have been a surprise. In fact, what should have been a surprise was how they got as many votes as they did in the black community 'cause he's really not all that much of a factor in black politics in Atlanta or anywhere else. But there was that feeling of solidarity that was inevitable.

J.B.: But what was it that forced this confrontation with the moral issue. Was it the change in the legal status?

Murphy: No, I don't. . . I'm in the minority of one about this, and I understand that I am. I think the fact that he came into everybody's living room every night and with everybody's coffee every morning, the question of the public debate of it was what had infinitely more importance than the laws that eventually were passed.

W.D.V.: You mean like you couldn't avoid the debate?

Murphy: Yeah. That it permeated everything, every thing that people did, over and above what they did in their businesses or professions. That it was impossible to go into the barbershop without arguing about it, or at least discussing it. That it was impossible

That it

That it permeated the whole news structure for so many years, and because the news media, all of them, were dominated by a group of people who knew better than anybody ever had before how to use the public media to get an issue into the minds of everybody, and to begin to get the argument started. And the argument really. . . . it really was the key to it. It wasn't the law that finally got passed. Hell, the busing law is going to destroy it. (Interruption for phone call.) And so was every town square, and so was the deacons talking at church on Wednesday night about what do we do if somebody shows up. So with every other discussion that went on in the South for all those years. And it's that kind. . . maybe I'm just a Pollyanna, but I think the most important thing that

happened is that the country argued about it, openly and vigorously and vociferously. And sometimes violently. And came face to face with it.

J.B.: Not just the country, but playing devil's advocate for a minute, didn't all those arguments at the barber shop or wherever - my impression always was that, you know, with rare exception, that you had a little band of liberals gathered together somewhere, someplace. But generally you had a consensus that it was going to be an awful thing. And this is something the federal government's trying to ram down our throats.

Murphy: I think all that's true.

J.B.: But that after the law itself passed. . . someone today, I think it was Bobby Rowan, his contention was it was Georgians, southerners, tended to be law-abiding people and if the law says you got to do it, then you got to do it. And that's putting it all in a different light. And of course once it did put it in a different light, then you had to confront it on a different basis. That knocked all the legal underpinnings, which a lot of the moral argument was used on. I mean, you could defend it morally on the ground that it was up to the state to decide or whatever.

Murphy: But if you walked into any small town in Georgia today, which side had you rather be on? Had you rather be arguing the moral position, or had you rather be arguing the law itself? Which one would you. . . you know, if you wanted to win and you wanted to win against white southerners who had been segregationists, had you rather argue the moral position or the law itself.

J.B.: Well, I'd argue the moral position and the only way I would

disagree with you basically is I think the moral position came as part of the legal position. That that was. . . when the legal position changed, that's what forced it onto the table in the South. I don't think the arguments before the passage of the laws themselves changed a lot of attitudes among white southerners. I think they were all hardening, still resenting, you know, all going to vote for Goldwater because he voted against the Civil Rights Act. There was just a lot of resentment. They were. . . . Someone told me that the reason there's so much support for Nixon in the South is that he's beleaguered by the same people who used to beleaguer us, is the way it was phrased. Murphy: Well, if the country as a whole, however, was convinced by the moral arguments before you got public accommodation and voting rights and all that, I think. . . .

J.B.: Yeah, I think. . . if you're talking about the non-South, I think the moral argument was made through the media, as you say. You're denying people the right to eat in public places. You're denying people the right to vote who met all the qualifications. You. . . there was no moral defense.

W.D.V.: Well, I think that what he's saying is that that prompted a debate in the South as well.

Murphy: I don't. . . I can't. . .

W.D.V.: . . . or regard it as contributing to it.

Murphy: See, I don't draw the distinction between the South and the rest of the country. Atlanta is the most liberal city in the country.

J.B.: You're talking about today or ten years ago?

Murphy: I'm talking about both times.

J.B.: Atlanta may have been different, now, you know.

Murphy: Yeah, well, I been rattled around in cell, I've been shoved in lots of different towns. And I've been denounced on every goddamn stump in Georgia, I reckon. But that's. . . what I'm trying to say is the passage of the public accommodations law didn't change nearly as many minds in my hometown as the argument for three years about whether or not black folks ought to be allowed to eat in the Dixie Cafe on the square. That argument was the one that was important, and the passage of the law sort of ratified that decision.

J.B.: Okay, you're saying then that this moral argument paved the way for the ready acceptance of the law when it was changed.

Murphy: Look, I don't know how you're putting this, and I don't mean to be very picky about it, 'cause I could be. . . .

J.B.: No, I'm trying to get it down to be precise, and I think we're sort of getting it down to be. Because it's an interesting argument. It's an interesting position.

Murphy: I don't buy the idea that southerners changed their minds, though I am really fond of Bobby Rowan. I think he's a fine man. But I don't really buy the argument that southerners or anybody else changed their minds because a law gets passed. I never have bought that argument, though I have argued for most of the laws that have been passed. But that's not why voters respond like they do to different kinds of political campaigns. The voters in Georgia a hundred years ago didn't. . . they in part responded to the reconstruction laws, but they responded a good deal more to. . . . (Interruption in recording. Side two.) So if the Voting Rights Act were not extended. . . .

W.D.V.: If you repealed all these laws, just a hypothetical. . . things would not go back?

Murphy: They would go back, but there wouldn't be a rubber band effect of going all the way back. It would go back some. And there would be more individual abuses than there are now, but Atlanta would not return in any way to segregated restaurants, if you repealed that law.

J.B.: What about the schools?

Murphy: If you repealed. . . if you didn't have the federal court rulings we would still have the majority to minority transfers, but we would not have busing. That's true. But the proponents of the busing argument have already lost that argument in the United States and there's no way in the world they can win that argument. 'Cause the people just don't believe that. They may at some point in the long range future, but they sure as hell aren't about to win that argument now. Not in the black community .

W.D.V.: Well, you can't go back very far to maintain consistency of the argument.

Murphy: That's right. Well, but you see. . . .

W.D.V.: Except for some individual abuses. Whereas the society as a whole cannot go quite that far back. If they had the argument with themselves, you know, proved. . . .

Murphy: If you're saying that they. . . the Brooks County schools might revert to black schools and white schools, if there were no laws, I don't know whether they would or not.

W.D.V.: No, I'm saying that going back into an oppressive kind of society again, something like you had say ten years ago, there wouldn't

be anybody pushing anybody off the sidewalk like there was ten years ago. There wouldn't be the personal individual abuse on a maximum. . . they wouldn't put up "Colored" and "White" signs on the water fountains, you know. There wouldn't. . . . The South has been at least sensitized to that kind

(TAPE TANGLED - 20 min. yet to transcribe)