

INTERVIEWER: Jeanie Meyer  
RESPONDENTS: Maj. Garrison - Sgt. Walter Parker  
DATE: June 2, 1969

INTERVIEW

M.C. These are some of my notes that I made

J.M. Oh, good

M.C. My report that I wrote at the conclusion, exactly where I was at

J.M. Hi

M.C. Hello Walter, come on in - Mrs. Meyer, this is Sgt. Parker

W.P. How do you do

J.M. Nice to meet you

M.C. This is the lady we were expecting the other day and she didn't get out  
They held her up downtown, they wouldn't let her come down, they had her  
upstairs

J.M. I was just telling Major Garrison, I'm with Dr. Wilkinson's study of the  
riot here in Kansas City las spring, and that one of our main concerns  
is going to be with the sequence of events during those 5 or 6 days. What  
I'd like to ask you both to try to remember as best you can- I know its  
difficult at this point- so - just starting at the beginning of the first  
day - the day of the march, which was Tuesday the ninth. Can you tell me,  
Major Garrison, how you first heard about - any sort of disturbance

M.C. Is that on

J.M. Yeah, I have it on now - If you could, rather than using - did you first  
hear about the disturbance - was it that Tuesday or the night before, or  
the week end before - when did you first hear

M.C. Well, I would say that on the night before, which would have been April the  
8th, we had earlier received information from the Community Affairs Officer  
that, Dr. Pickett, I beleive, who is the Suprentendent of Schools in  
Kansas City Kansas had dismissed classes in the Kansas City Kansas School  
District



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- M. G. and this information was related to me and the Staff Officers of the Department were to be in contact with, I believe it was Dr. Hazlett, of the K.C. Missouri Board of Education, to find out what they might do on this Tuesday - April 9th. With this in mind and the possible thought that there might be some dissention among the students among the one school system dismissing in Kansas and the one in Missouri not dismissed - I wouldn't say that we definitely laid any plans, but we kept in mind the fact that there could be some student marches or maybe students walking out of the school.
- J.M. Now, had you had indications of this through your Intelligence Division or --
- M. G. No, Mrs. Meyer, not especially, I think possibly that there was tension but where it came from was probably the Board of Education more so that the Police Dept., of course, we were in constant touch with - or at least, I assume we were in touch - by the Community Relations Officer, in Intelligence - with the Board of Education. Now, based on this - I had two conversations with Chief Kelley, regarding what type of security we might - what type of plans we might lay - for any type of demonstration
- J.M. When were these talks
- M. G. The night before - on Tuesday - I mean on Monday
- J.M. Were they - were you down at Headquarters
- M. G. No, telephone conversations
- J.M. Now, I had requested to bring in my downtown Servi-Car Unit, Sgt. was it 8 o'clock or 8:30, I had you in there that morning
- Sgt. P. We were here at 8
- J.M. 8 o'clock
- M. G. So we would have these men available on motorcycles = we could get them around a lot faster than we could cars



JM So, you had notified your men the night before

Sgt. P. Well, one deal that we knew, was that we had students out in that area, after school. So there were 2 of us assigned to this deal, several months before this came up - we were dealing with gang fights and things like this. It had started with Les and I, and then Les was transferred and Officer Hayes, was it Hayes - yes he was placed there and we had been daily - each day after school, we would patrol the street and until the kids were home, and that these of course, were gang fights, and there were no such rumors of any type of deal like this, but we had observed this and of course, with the new information of this new situation, had started coming in at 8 o'clock

J.M. Around what schools were these --

Sgt. P. Central

J.M. Central

Sgt. P. You know, the 2 Centrals - The High and the Junior High

I recall- for about a month and a half we had been over there from 2 to 4 or 5 o'clock

M.C. Yes, I had assigned these 2 officers

Sgt. P. There had been quite a bit of student unrest, quite a bit and gang fights and you know, kids walking the streets rather than go home, which was a normal deal, you know, and nothing was expected of it.

J.M. Were they - they students from Central or were they drop outs or --

M. C. Drop outs -

Sgt. P. Both, you know, the drop outs get involved with the students, and you can't - you just can't tell what's going to come out of it, out of a deal like this



Sgt. P. Now, are you saying there was more than one Saturday in which this happened?

You get these- there we had quite a few drop outs that hung around

No, the 33rd and Indiana- they had their what was that --- the Tuesday

M. G. Before Malt Shop

Sgt. C. Yeah, the Malt Shop, and a lot of drop outs coming around these

Have you kids, running from school to school in automobiles, you know,

Yes, I creating trouble. So, it was one of those type deals that, of course

Did you this was the deal that really got it going

M. G. Yes, I think there was another thing that started in the downtown area

Now, the and of course, Sgt. Parker was involved in this at the time, This this

this was squad worked in the downtown area - along with Sgt. Pierson on

Sat. - on the Saturday preceding this - we had about 25 or 30

young - high school age- both students and drop outs that were

trying to create some kind of incident, and they pasted on Katz

Drug Store at 12th and Walnut, signs indicating that fires would

group start - Did it start all of what

Sgt. P. Fire Bombs were in contact with some of these leaders down there and

M. G. They affixed these to the windows - We had -- as --

J.M. Yes, Were you downtown at that time

Sgt. P. Yes, I was at 11th and Walnut, and he noticed these people down there

M. G. We both were led by one of the --

Sgt. P. That was his assignment at that time, he has now changed- but at that

I think time he was down there all you - how did they do this deal, they went

through Of course, he had his men alert to this, I know, I spent one entire

of the Saturday downtown with walkie-talkies, we had Detectives, we had the

members of Intelligence, however --- running down the street and he flagged

Sgt. P. I think that Saturday we got a couple of store windows broken



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- J.M. Now, are you saying there was more than one Saturday in which this happened
- M. G. No, this was the Saturday before this - the Saturday before the Tuesday
- J.M. Before the Tuesday
- S. P. I think it was the Saturday - I'm sure it was the Saturday before
- M.G. Have you run into this prior
- J.M. Yes, I have
- M. G. Did you pinpoint it as the week before-
- J.M. Yes, The Saturday directly preceding the Tuesday march
- M.G. Now, this is my thinking, I can't recall exactly, but, and also during this time we had several unexplained fires, and I wouldn't say they were abandoned homes, but they were homes that were not being lived in
- S.P. Vacant houses
- M.G. Vacant houses, yes
- J.M. Now, this Saturday, how was your attention first attracted to this group downtown - Did it snowball or what
- M.G. I think Sgt. Parker came in contact with some of these leaders down there and they were at Emery Birds' that's when Emery Birds was --
- S.P. Yes, that's what it was
- M.G. and they were at 11th and Walnut, and he noticed these people down there in a group, being led by one of the --
- Sgt. Parker, was that LeBo, or Vernon Thompson
- I think it was LeBo - I'll tell you - how did they do this deal, they went through, as I recall - they went through Emery Birds, and they pushed some of the old people around- some kind of way, I don't recall exactly, and the manager of Emery Bird's came out and was running down the street and he flagged us down



Maj. Garrison  
Sgt. Parker

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J.M. So that was how you first --

S.P. Yes, that's how we got into it - and --

J.M. Was there that many, 20 - that had gone through Emery Bird's, or --

S.P. This is what I can say - I didn't see them, I saw the group out on the street, when the manager pointed and said, there they go, you know, it's hard to tell when you get a crowd of people - there could have been people there that wasn't involved, but he said, there they are - so I did observe some and I think -- and I believe it was Lee Bohannon that was in the group and they were coming from the parking lot and - at 11th and McGee, they had parked the car and were getting placards out, its --

J.M. Was this after they'd been through Emery Bird's

S.P. Yes, one group had - when it came to my attention and we all - we were all over downtown and we had spotted a group coming into the parking lot with signs, and taking them out of the car - they would come down toward Emery Birds . I think Bohannon, was one of them, we did have some of the names.

M.G. Now, I also think that Mr. Thompson was down there because he was checked by someone down there

S.P. Yeah

J.M. Now, where was Lee Bohannon's group when you saw - when the store manager said there they go

S.P. Well, he was with a group of people going down the street, and at that time I was - really I can't say this was Bohannon's group, I'll say that this was a group of youngsters, and as I recall, Bohannon was in it.

J.M. Where were they on the street

S.P. On the south side, walking south of the building from the middle door of Emery Bird's going south down Walnut



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J.M. And then what did they do from that point on

S.P. Oh, they went around downtown as I recall

I think later on some of them kept trying to picket, they picketed Emery Birds's-others who didn't have to be involved in this - 12th and Grand is a good spot, for anything thats going on downtown. That little pin ball thing up at 12th and Grand

M.G. Penny Arcade

S. P. Yes, so --

J.M. Had those signs already been posted that you saw

S. P. Oh yeah, we had noticed the signs being posted earlier, even before this deal came up - and - not at that time being familiar with Bohannan, I can't say it was his group, I'll say, now that from knowing them, yes, there are fellows now in the group that were in on this deal. At that time Bohannan was just Bohanan

J.M. Yeah, sure

J.M. Well;, after that point, did the group leave downtown and - or what

S.P. No, I'll tell you, we had all crews downtown all day long, until closing time for the stores, and some of these guys were going around all day, now it could be, and we have a lot of it - kids like to have the Police officers following them around. To them, this is a big thing, you know, they get a bunch of policemen and they feel, we have all these guys down here just to watch us = So, other than, I can't be sure, just like a window was broken in one of the buildings, one of the stores on Walnut on the east side of the street



S.P. Now, whether it was that day or another day, I don't recall. I remember we got one broken window on Main Street and - in the 12 hundred block maybe and I think we had one at Adlers , I beleive that was- I think that was the day. We had several of them going into places and they would take merchandise and disperse, you know

J.M. Well, getting back to that Tuesday, you say, they gathered here at about 8 oclock,

M.G. Well, I brought my crews in early, inthe event that we did --

J.M. Were they notified the night before

M.G. Well, they were notified when they came in in, you see, they normally reported at - when at IO

S.P. IO

M.G. They normally stay downtown auntil 6. I also , we had at that time we didn't have our own helicopters, we had this - one of our officers was flying in the copter and - as a traffic observer, and I contacted him and asked him to take one of our police walkie talkies with him and kind of act as our eyes in the event that we did have a disturbance of any kind, that he would be in a better position to observe the streets

J.M. Who is this officer

M.G. Clif Winfield, he is the pilot in our helicopter now

J.M. Was this KMBC's helicopter or -- was it used on normal regular days for traffic survelience

S.P. They were used every day - every morning and every evening, as well as John Wagner, who is employed at KMBC, and acts as the observer now. Prior to that time we had furnished one. So, these were about the plans we had established if there was going to be any type of disturbance



Major Garrison  
Sgt. Parker

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- M.G. we would have our groups that could move around faster - those on motorcycles, and Service cars along with the helicopters into wider areas. That is about the type of preparations that we had
- J.M. And what were your instructions to your crews that morning  
What area they were to cover and what --- were they ---
- M.G. Well, we kept the bulk of our service cars in the downtown area because this seemed to be where the gathering spot was for the younger students they seemed to converge in the downtown area- and of course, we were relying on what we had heard, if there was going to be any type of massive disturbance or civil disorder. Most every other city had experienced it in their larger shopping centers - which would be the downtown area. That morning Sgt. Parker and Officer Hayes were sent out - did I send you to Lincoln or Central
- S.P. Central
- M.G. Central - to spend the time around Central that morning, in the event that the students did walk out
- J.M. Would that have been from about 8 oclock on
- M.G. Well, after roll call, and I think they leave there about 8 or 8 :15 and I was here at the office, at approximately 8 50 hours, I received the information from Major Caughlin that the dept. had been ordered into Tactical Alert, Phase II - thats the all out effort
- J.M. What was the scene at Central
- S.P. As I recall, it appeared to be normal around Central. You know, the few early arrivals standing around yaking and groups going back and forth we went, lets see, what we did, we cruised the area from Indiana to



S.P. Cleveland, about 34th or 35 th Street - this is the patrol we use, and  
at approximately that time, I was cruising, Hayes and I were cruising  
S.P. they began to come over to see what was happening, and Hayes and I  
east on Linwood and we approached Central Jr., Dr. Fields, the principal,  
went over to try to disperse this crowd, you know, keep it from getting  
too big there, well -  
problems inside, and they were destroying furniture and knocking over  
J.M. there were more cars there than usual  
things inside the building , and he asked us to come in. We went in and  
S.P. Yes, there were, there were quite a few and even some with  
this was true, they were a group of kids, I can't remember, or I don't ---  
County licenses  
Mr. Fields will have to tell you whether they were all students or not,  
J.M. When you first went into the school, did you notice an unusual amount of  
but - they were going through the building using profanity, breaking  
cars  
windows, pushing over desks, and hollering " come on, lets go". When we  
S.P. Well, no, I wouldn't say - see, we were on Linwood, at the north end of the  
went through the halls and got these fellows out, you know, these kids  
building - and I wouldn't say - there were a number of cars, but you  
out, and they went outside on the south - out the south door there, they  
see, there's always a number of cars. These kids park their cars out there  
congregated out there, of course there was just the two of us, and  
and you just can't say that it was unusual. It was normal deal, but  
you know, you can't - we were trying to keep the thing calm, and as I  
there was an unusual number of cars on 33rd street, when we got  
recall some kid had broken the window out of the transom above the door  
back there, and as I said, we did notice there were some Wyanotte Co.  
They broke that out then, and I can't say the kids were throwing at us,  
license cars back there. Now, these kids, had just began to - you know  
this could have been from the inside, I don't know where it came from,  
the crowd got too big and we couldn't control it, and it started getting  
it was unexpected, but that transit window was broken. I didn't go in.  
of hand and as I recall, a group of these rascals, one old man, over  
At the time, it was a deal, you know, -- when you get a crowd, you  
turned two automobiles on 33rd st, at that time, that was when I called  
try to get them to move, you try to keep them moving, so they were  
and told you its getting out of hand now, I said, when they start turning  
moving ahead of us and our deal was to walk on behind them, to follow  
over cars, then a few rocks and bricks started coming our way, well - then  
them and get them on out of the building. As we passed the rooms, there were  
it was gone, then you couldn't - then I knew it was getting beyond -- As I  
desks that were pushed over and I could see that they were pushed over,  
recall it was a Volkswagen was the first car they overturned, and I can't  
and I couldn't see any that were broken then, and the kids were screaming  
recall what cars, I know there was a Volkswagen and somebody told me  
and hollering so they did go out. After, they went out, we went out, got  
it belonged to a teacher, I don't know, someone had told me this. But,  
on our wheels and came back - on around Cleveland, and back up to the  
the surprise was - there was nothing we could do -  
school- Then ---Crowds from Central Senior and Central - and all up and

Cars?  
Motor cycles?



- S.P. they began to come over to see what was happening, and Hayes and I went over to try to disperse this crowd, you know, keep it from getting too big there, well -
- J.M. Were there more cars there than usual
- S.P. Yes, there were, there were quite a few and even some with Wyandotte County licenses
- J.M. When you first went into the school, did you notice an usual amount of cars
- S.P. Well, no, I wouldn't say - see, we were on Linwood, at the north end of the building - and I wouldn't say - there were a number of cars, but you see, theres always a number of cars. These kids park their cars out there and you just can't say that it was unusual. It was <sup>a</sup> normal deal, but there was an unusual number of cars on 33rd street, when we got back there, and as I said, we did notice there were some Wyandotte Co. license cars back there. Now, these kids, had just began to - you know- the crowd got too big and we couldn't control it, and it started getting of hand and as I recall, a group of these raskals, one old man, over-turned two automobiles on 33rd st, at that time, that was when I called and told you its getting out of hand now, I said, when they start turning over cars, then a few rocks and bricks started coming our way, well - then it was gone, then you couldn't - then I knew it was getting beyond -- As I recall it was a Volkswagen was the first car they overturned, and I don't recall what cars, I know there was a Volkswagen and somebody told me it belonged to a teacher, I don't know, someone had told me this. But, the surprize was - there was nothing we could do - surprizingly we did



S.P.

get this crowd dispersed, because we had put out a call for assistance and we had said that it was getting out of hand and other policemen to cruise through, and other district officers, just to cruise the area, that was all, when policemen started cruising, the kids dispersed but they'd form a big crowd over here and then form a big crowd over there - and started going round in circles and it actually turned into a mob then, they started ---

J.M.

What happened when you got the call from Sgt. Parker - what did you do

M.G.

Well, when I got the call, we had received information that students at Lincoln had walked out and they had formed into a group heading in the direction of Manual High School. We were getting this information from a helicopter and also from the officers from the area down there, and apparently, they had established some sort of contact among themselves with what they described at that time as walkie talkies

J.M.

The kids had

M.G.

Yeah

J.M.

How did you hear about that

M.G.

We heard this from the officers and also from - that they had some kind of contact or apparently that they thought they had between their

J.M.

Because they said, they knew what the other group was doing

M.G.

Well, they were incontact with one another, or at least we were led to believe this- I don't know, I didn't see this myself- I just heard it

J.M.

Well, you heard this over the radio

M.G.

Yes - and telephone calls coming in to the office here



- M.G. the reason that I get most of them is because my job is the Field Command Post leader or who ever has this assignment - so from this - we were able to determine if there was a line of marchers or where they were going and whether they were headed in a south direction, and then they converged at Manual and they started towards -- we heard they were going to Central
- J.M. Who would be calling you, would this be the dispatcher
- M.G. Well, they were calling to the dispatcher, telling him this and he was on the radio and I have a monitor here - I was in my car, I was headed out towards Central - I'd already left here
- Well, when I left the office, when I found out we had gone into Phase II, I went out and got in my car and headed toward Central High school, because that seemed to be where the build up was headed for and I used a small lot there on 31st street - at about Bales, as a temporary Command post, to gather my officers and my commanding officers from this area
- J.M. Was this the rental lot
- M.G. No, it was Smacks Drive In
- J.M. Oh, I see
- M.G. I later moved to - across the street to the Rental lot, but at that time I was calling all my solo motorcycles in there and Sgt. Parker and Officer Hayes also came down there to give me information of what they had heard from Central and what had been going on - and the cars being overturned had come out over the air
- J.M. So, you didn't really - did you talk to Sgt. Parker



Sgt. Parker  
Maj. Garrison  
Maj. Garrison  
Sgt. Parker

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M.G. Yes, down at 31st and Bales

J.M. But you'd already left here when he tried to call you here, is that right when the National Guard came in - How were they incorporated into

M.G. No, he had not tried to call, he contacted me in person out there

J.M. I see first I'll say, the Highway Patrol came in and operated in the

M.G. All the other information that I'd received, was either by telephone or by radio we had about 30 or 35 troopers in the downtown area at that time, is

J.M. I see right

M.G. So, I tried to call the dispatcher on the telephone -- and of course at this time, we had a break down in everything - we had no communication down there outside of radios, the telephone calls were out, so I actually the only eyes I had was the two Servi-Car officers, Sgt. Parker, and Officer Hayes and I dispersed them around in the area to inform me as to what was happening was going on over the city. I heard reports of what happened at City Hall, I know that they requested from the Command Post that they send down as many officers as possible to the downtown area to City Hall and I assigned my response cars and my line beat cars, and kept them in the area - not isolating any areas or sealing off any ones again this was - we didn't want to do this, but when we had found out what had happened in other cities and this only tended to confuse people more by keeping them in an area, and not allowing them to go back if they wanted to go home and get away from the crowd, because they were not considered one of the mob, or one of the rioters or whatever you wanted to call them General Bailey was in charge of the

J.M. I'm sorry, I didn't really intend to keep you so long, I just wanted to ask you one thing more and then I'd better let you go



Maj. Garrison  
Sgt. Parker

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Supra

JM About when the National Guard came in - How were they incorporated into your -

M.G. Well, first I'll say, the Highway Patrol came in and operated in the downtown area, now, I think at the time that we had the gas at City Hall, we had a bout 30 or 35 troupers in the downtown area at that time, is that right

S.P. Yeah, I know there were Troupers there, and I would imagine --

M.G. The Chief's office had notified the Mayor and the Governor that we thought we would need the National Guard, I think about 10 in the morning - and I think they started arriving in here late in the afternoon, because I was in the Dog Watch at the Command Post. So we stayed until the first parts of the National Guard started arriving, and I think we assigned the first group of N. G. at 9 o'clock that night and they were--

J.M. Did they go then with your men in the cars

M.G. Yes, we were relieving our men who had been there the most hours and putting N. G. in with the new crews

J.M. Were they just -- were they subordinate to the police officers

M.G. Well, yes, more or less, they had their own commanding officer at the command post, and I was in constant touch with them. - We were working together

Who was that - can you recall

M.G. Well, General Bailey was in charge of the

J.M. But in terms of where to go and --

M.G. Yes, yes, we would tell them where we would need some men and they



Maj. Garrison  
Sgt. Parker

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And also if there was any large amount of breaking windows and  
looting - why - four men didn't do very much

M.G. would furnish what we could not furnish, but we also furnished officers  
with the National Guard

J.M. Did you have any response squads - was this from the dispatcher's office

M.G. Yes depending on the nature of the call

J.M. About how many cars did you use on that at that time

M.G. Well, I don't know exactly the numbers

J.M. Were there any cases where - is that the way it always worked, or were  
there any cases where the response car went first

M.G. In the earlier part of the day the response cars went first

J.M. I see

M.G. But we had 150 and 200 men at one scene, we had too many officers, so  
we sent them to the command post and then send them where they were  
needed

J.M. I see - so, generally -- were line beat cars directed by the dispatcher  
or were they --

M.G. Well, they - what ever happened - what took place out there, if they could  
see it, they would notify the dispatcher what had happened, if something  
was reported by a citizen, these calls went into the dispatcher and one of  
the line beat cars were sent to that location

J.M. I see would he first send a line beat car and then a response car  
or would he send

M.G. Well, depending on where it was -

J.M. Why, I don't understand

M.G. Well, if - they're not going to send one four man car in there

J.M. I see - they would send more



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M.G.

And also if there was any large amount of breaking windows and looting - why- four men couldn't do very much

J.M.

I see

M.G.

So they would send a response crew along with it also - with different crowds at the different locations - well, four men and a line beat car aren't too effective

J.M.

And then when the response crew took over, would the line beat cars stay there or would they get back to their ---

M.G.

As soon as everything was settled - or whatever - they would -- you see, the officers knew that we didn't have too many people - so they would do as much as they possibly could - but they wanted it under control before they left - Of course, our wagons were handy in case we had to make any large amounts of arrests

J.M.

Now, they were sent out from the CP also, the wagons?

M.G.

Not at first, we did keep them there later on - we had someone to send out at all times later on

You asked the question and I was thinking of something, I can't recall what it was now - of course, at first we were sending our line beat cars to check on all fires - reports of fires

J.M.

You mean, before the fire dept was called

M.G.

Before the fire dept, yes We sent them out to see if the fire actually existed and in other cities they had learned that fires were set for looting - so we had an arrangement with the fire dept that we would send a car out to see if the fires did exist and then they would report back

M.

Had you made this arrangement before

M.G.

Yes

M.G.

I don't like to be egotistical about it, but I think we were better



Maj. Garrison  
Sgt. Parker

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cocktails

On some body would call and say, theres a man down here with a

M.G. prepared than most of the cities, because we learned from experience,  
we had - I had just returned from Memphis Tennessee about a week before  
this. Lt. Fleming and I - we had brought back the response car idea  
and everyplace they were being called away --

J.M. Did you have any idea if that were going on here

M.G. Possibly

J.M. Did you notice or have a feeling  
M.G. Well, yes, it didn't have a chance to happen cause we had made arrangements  
so that it wouldn't happen

J.M. Well, yeah, but there were calls which you did answer, which were not a  
large fire

J.M. M.G. True - But we still had one and two man cars, only in the critical area  
which we found - we didn't have too much of this - they handled the  
normal police calls. We had forces in our shopping centers, they had hit  
the Landing earlier that day - they didn't take anything - and of course  
they tried to get into the Plaza and we got them there, and also Ward  
Parkway. We kept hearing rumors you know, these rumors kept flying that  
they were going to the shopping centers

J.M. When you say rumors, how do these rumors come into to you

M.G. Well, they would come from citizens who would call the police or they'd  
call the rumor mill or ---

S.P. And they'd say what about so and so - I heard

M.G. They'd say there was a man with a shotgun under his arm or a sub machine  
gun or we saw five thugs down here with bottles looking like molotov



M.C.  
S.P.  
cocktails

Or some body would call and say, theres a man down here with a 5 gallon can filling up bottles

M.C.  
And we'd go and chack it out and it wasn't even so

M.C.  
Or somebody would say they saw someone with a truck load of weapons

We'd get these call all the time- we have a whole folder down here full of rumors where people were coming into Kansas City with guns and

S.P.  
that there were houses with arsenals in them and all kinds of things

Yeah, it was quite a deal- people would stop you in the street -- I remember a woman

M.C.  
Of course, generally they're not, but you still have to take the same action if - as if it were, cause the first time you don't, thats the time you have trouble

J.M.  
You mentioned a file that you kept on rumors, We're going to treat this separately as an important factor in riots --

S.P.  
I think this has been going on in Kansas City prior to -even before this disturbance, the summer before we had this one, rumors were thick

M.C.  
And on every holiday

S.P.  
Just like - Memorial Day, we were goign to have trouble they said, and the next day they were going to tear up Paseo High School, stone by stone

M.C.  
These are the things that we try to cover - but you can't - it's just not possible part of it is just playing cops and robbers

S.P.  
Just like now, a policemen can't go into a restuarant and enjoy his dinner Right now, when I go to eat I'll hear all about whats going to happen out at Paseo, I wish they would leave me alone, they come up and sit down and I feel like taking the plate and throwing it in his face



- M. G. Thats right
- S.P. But you can't do it - Last Friday I spent almost 6 hours on a rumor this rumor was weapons, the guns got the license number, got names, everything we checked it all out, and it took - really more than all day. I ran the deal down as far as I could, and I got off and I passed it on to the people that followed me and finally they located the car and that was the end of the rumoe
- M. G. Like this morning now, and over the week end, when this Paseo thing broke
- J.M. a friend of mine who has a restuarant, ---
- J.M. I appreciate your taking this time this morning in terms of the police proceedure thing, things that lay men don't know a lot of times
- M.G. ? → This is where any police dept, I had charge of public relations for 6 years and I know that we're too much at fault in not trying to familiarize the citizens with the operation and the procedures of the police dept.
- J.M. Of course, thats not oyour full time job either
- M. G. Well, when you're in public relations your job is to bring the citizens and the dept closer together and try to give them some idea of the working of the police dept, they're tax payers, they pay our bills - so why shouldn't they be entitled to this
- S.P. I think they would understand it better too - People feel that you're pulling a deal here where is you're doing a ---
- J.M. You have to strike a balance
- M. G. Right - you see, Lt. Evenas and I started this - in public relations on this school visitations program, I don't know if you've heard of it or not - but- at first I used Walt pretty good on it - to go into our



S.P. grade schools just to talk to children, to get over their fear that that man got a uniform on cause he's a policeman. Every mother uses this, if you don't behave, I'll have that policeman get you, so we started going into the schools - 4th grade level, I think - 4th or 5th with the cooperation of the school board to see, if by the officer going and talking we could get closer together, to bring us together and to show them that we're no different from their fathers or their families

J.M. Yeah

S.P. It's been real successful, of course it's still new, we've only been doing this 4 or 5 years

J.M. I hope that will be one of the things that our study will do kind of acquaint people with ---

M.C. Several days - I would go out and take over the class and talk with the children about the dept, what we do  
Like - what's this cop stopping him for - there's a logical explanation for everything we do - this is police procedure

J.M. I want to ask- you say you have a rumor file, I wonder if that would be accessible to us - to show what kind of influence rumors would have

M.C. Well, I don't know, you can talk to Major Kaufman

M.C. There are very few officers on the force that can't attest to this, because they're stopped on the street like the Sgt. says - you can't go to lunch or you go out- and people know you're a policeman, you go to --

S.P. You can't go to the movies, you can't go anywhere



S.P. Your friends know you

J.M. Yeah

S.P. If they're not talking about the traffic ticket they got or their relatives got, or some friend's got---

M.C. It's always something

S.P. There's going to be a big disturbance out here

You know, I've been a policeman for 19 years, it's awful rough to be a Black policeman, it is - it's rough

M.G. Well, I'll go a step further, it's always rough to be a Black policeman

S.P. But, Major believe, me, it's rough now - it's really rough - and here, I don't know how you do it, I mean, every time your phone rings, you have to be - I realize that - but now, especially, you know, your friends, even your close friends, they let you know what they think, they say, what do you think,, you know, and I tell you, I'm thinking about taking my phone out, so nobody can call me

J.M. Yeah

S.P. Because it's really rough - people take offense to everything

Everything - You, know, excuse me Major, I had a friend to call

last night who is an intelligent person and I know, and we've been friends a long time so she called my wife last night and I happened to answer the phone and she said, you guys got all your big deal ready now for the Paseo High students, and I tell you the truth, I almost lost her friendship, cause I almost blew up - and she didn't realize what she was saying

J.M. Yeah



- S.P. So, what can you say, you know, I don't know, it kinda got to me, you know  
This lady is a school teacher she doesn't teach in Missouri, she teaches  
in Kansas and you know, I don't know, just what do you mean, and then I  
thought, she's going on rumors
- J.M. Umm humm'
- S.P. Rumors, so she feels that this is going to be a great big thing and they're  
a lot of things that you can't tell people and like I had to say, there's  
some things like here, if you just - you just can't tell, and there's  
a lot of things you can't tell me about school - you wouldn't tell me.  
and if I say I don't know, you wouldn't believe me, so - why are you going  
to ask
- J.M. Kind of rough - you get called names on both sides
- S.P. Yeah -
- M.C. This is what I was trying to say, I know this for a fact, the Black  
officers  
in the community, think of all the pressure he's under, they don't  
like him, and if they say anything, it's against, and then he also  
gets it from the white folks in the community
- S.P. You get it from all sides
- M.C. So you see, there's no way to get away from it
- S.P. This Panther group, they indicated, well - I don't know if they're as  
vicious as they claim or if they just speak with their mouths, but this  
is a terrible thing, to have this man here, who is my Sgt. and they  
come in and they say -- well he knows he can take care of himself but ----  
what should you do about your family. His wife, his children
- M.C. It is - it really is
- S.P. I wanted to ask you



J.M. Go ahead officer

S.P. I wanted to ask you- Okay, what are you making a survey or

S.P. what --, I've been thinking about a deal here, we need a --

J.M. It's a study, I was telling Major Garrison before, they tell me of all the studies, you know, all these studies that have been made about riots in other cities, and all these different studies, they've never done what they call a social history, you know a day by day history of what goes on during a riot, what say - a Black Panther group or a group like that is doing at the same time the police dept, is making their preparations and carrying out its duties, just to kind of get an understanding of how - well of how - misunderstandings take - come about, rumors, how rumors come about, the part that rumors play and - how they aggravate the situation you're doing something for me, why can't you talk to me

SP. Also, -- and so -- I don't know, I was just wondering - you might have

J.M. Hopefully, what this kind of study will do, hopefully, some day help the community leaders --- of getting some of these people together with

SP. Do you how in this study other interested people in the community, have

J.M. Unn humm thought of that

SP. Also talk to the Groups, lets say, like the Militant Groups I think

J.M. Yes re exactly right

SP. Would you tell me what kind of response you get from them here, I was

J.M. I haven't personally but other people on our staff have - we have a couple of interviews with Lee Bohannon - we've gotten a pretty good response - just because they see us as a neutral body, sort of in between what we want to do is try to present gripes - you know, that both sides have - then try to clear them up, so - I think we have had pretty good cooperation



S.P. You know, I've been thinking about a deal here, we need a - some dialog between- this is personally how I feel - Between these groups you know like with these Panther boys. I ve had only one opportunity to talk with these -- to Pete ONeal and Henry Binley - you know - and most of the time you can't talk to them, and I realize, I told Pete, I realize- that its necessary for you guys to stay away from the police and call the police names and not have anything to do with them in order to keep your thing going , as you call it, and really, I know this and -  
But, I told Pete, if <sup>you</sup> you guys expect to accomplish anything, so you fell - like he said to me, I'm doing this for you, I'm doing you a favor and I said, if you're doing something for me, why can't you talk to me lets talk and so -- I don't know, I was just wondering - you might have something now there if --- out of the line of work that you 're doing Some manner or some way of getting some of these peole together with the police and - all the other interested people in the community, have you ever thought of that

J.M. Yeah, this is what we'd like to get at to get to that point, I think you're exactly right

S.P. Yeah, this is what I thought- since they had their Chapter here, I was wondering if - well, I dont know, these group meetings, or fund raising meetings, but I feel that all segments of the total community should be interested and have some point, something like a great big mass open public meeting, guys like Pete ONeal, Bobannan, Vern Thompson, all these various different groups, along with the - well - some of the police, some of the city officials, representatives from that and then bring it down to a



S.P.

smaller group where you can really get some dialog and we can understand each other

I feel this would help, there isn't enough of this if any- Because these boys feel that they're doing something, and I don't know, every body has got their own little way of doing something. I look at Bohannan, really this - the first time I saw him was April 9th, the day of the riot, take Pete Oneal, Pete Oneal was made when he went down to the United Funds and decided that he would organize a chapter of the Black Panthers, alright so now, when you think of those guys, they were nobodys and now Mr. Bohannan is - well, Mayor Davis would go out and talk to him, he's got a voice now and he's -- it isn't him that I'm worried about but his followers, people out there that don't know that these guys are leading and I kind of think that we - I'd like to see somebody, I don't know who it would be, would get this thing going and would start getting these people and we have to have dialog, and have some type of understanding where one guy could get out there and really get something going

J.M.

Right

S.P.

And I don't know, we let it go too long, I agree with Mr. Hoover, we'd better get moving before its too late - every one of those guys you look at, oh that just Bohannan or ONeal, but you don't know how many sympathizers he's got and thats what you gotta get to and I don't think we're doing enough of it

J.M.

You think, seems like so often these groups are harping on the bad points of the police dept and the police dept - they too, just see the side that - LeBo and those groups are deliberately - they intend to be antagonistic, do you think its possibel that both side could meet together and discuss



J.M. this thing and --

S.P. I'm sure it is

J.M. Do you think they want to

S.P. I'm sure - now this - that's it, that's what we gotta find out, whether they want to - I think that we should want to, see, I 'll say this - heres one thing that I found out with these groups, and they - you'll find out with all of these groups, -- and - basically they all came from one group - you know, and there'll be another group - because some guy gets over here and Le Bo

*out of tape*