

1 the Englewood office dealing with interviewing  
2 placement?

3 THE WITNESS: Jobs? In what?

4 MR. GIBBONS: In the Englewood office of  
5 Employment Security.

6 THE WITNESS: Repeat that, please.

7 MR. GIBBONS: Are there any Negroes in  
8 background the Division of Employment Security office in  
9 Englewood who deal directly with people who are  
10 coming in looking for jobs?

11 THE WITNESS: The State Employment?

12 MR. GIBBONS: Yes.

13 THE WITNESS: Not to my knowledge. No,  
14 there isn't any. It is mostly whites.

15 MR. DRISCOLL: Anything else? Thank you  
16 very much for coming. We appreciate your coming.

17 (Witness excused.)

18 Whereupon,

19  
20 PRESTON AKRIDGE

21 called as a witness, first duly sworn, testified as follows:

22 EXAMINATION

23 By Mr. Jaffe:

24 Q Your address.

25 A 83 Lewis Street, Englewood.

1 but the Q: How long have you lived in Englewood?

2 like you? A: Twenty-six years.

3 Q: How old are you?

4 A: Twenty-six.

5 Q: Did you go to school in Englewood?

6 A: Yes.

7 Q: Could you briefly sketch your educational

8 background for us?

9 A: I only went to the seventh grade, elementary,

10 first year junior high.

11 Q: Could you briefly sketch for us what happened

12 in Englewood during the summer?

13 A: During the disturbance?

14 Q: Maybe I can start. You met with the mayor,

15 didn't you? and seeing what is going on. A couple of

16 young boys? A: Yes, the committee met with the mayor.

17 Q: When was that?

18 A: It was in July. I can't recall the exact date.

19 Q: Was it before or after the riot?

20 A: After.

21 Q: Let's go back to before. Could you tell us

22 what you observed?

23 A: When it first took place I was there. I was

24 down in the vicinity. First there were like rumors going

25 around about a riot. This was Friday the riot took place,

1 but the first I heard it was on Friday. On Friday we had  
2 like patrol cars, Englewood Police cars and from other  
3 communities riding around with shotguns and stuff, hanging  
4 out the window. Everybody was asking questions, "What is  
5 going on?"

6 Q Tell me about the rumors that you heard. What  
7 were those?

8 A I hang down on the corner of William and Jay.  
9 This is where the whole thing took place. A guy would  
10 say, "There is supposed to be a riot." I would say, "What  
11 riot?" I wasn't even aware until the patrol cars started  
12 moving around, like, you know how people start usually  
13 congregating. It is usually not that large, but with  
14 police cars you are curious, and hanging out on corners  
15 and looking and seeing what is going on. A couple of  
16 young guys jeering at the cops or stuff like that. Then  
17 later on two stores on each corner, one of them had a  
18 window broken. This is when it really started. That is  
19 when all the cops moved in.

20 Q I notice here on my sheet that you were arrested,  
21 is that right?

22 A Yes.

23 Q Are you presently under charges?

24 A Yes.

25 Q What has happened to your case?

1 A I am under charges now. They arrested quite  
2 a few people. I am under two counts of burglary.

3 Q Does that arise out of the riots?

4 A Yes. The store --

5 Q I don't want to hear about it. It does arise  
6 out of the riot situation?

7 A What I am telling you is known anyway.

8 Q Do you have a lawyer?

9 A Yes. I be out there.

10 Q Who is your lawyer?

11 A Mr. Ray Brown.

12 Q Who is a member of this Commission?

13 A Yes. It's like nobody hanging on the corner.

14 Q Does Mr. Brown know you are here today?

15 A I am not sure. I haven't spoken to him in  
16 quite a while, not since the last time we was in court.

17 Q The reason I want to caution you is because  
18 this transcript can be made public at a subsequent time,  
19 and it is possible that the Bergen County prosecutor  
20 could get hold of this transcript. I don't want you to  
21 say anything in any way that is going to do any harm to  
22 you. It might be better if we talk about your general  
23 attitudes and what you can tell us about the causes up in  
24 Englewood without getting specific as to what happened  
25 during the riot. Would that be acceptable to you?

1 A (Witness nods affirmatively.)

2 Q Would you tell us what you think are the causes  
3 of the riot?

4 A You mean what caused this riot?

5 Q Yes.

6 A Well, really it wasn't even a riot, but what  
7 caused the incident I think personally was just the police  
8 in the area. This happened on a Friday, but every Friday  
9 night people will be out there.

10 Q You mean congregating in front of the tavern  
11 on Jay Street?

12 A Yes. This is where the police usually hang out  
13 anyway. They don't like nobody hanging on the corner.  
14 That is the only place they have a No Loitering sign.  
15 That is the only place in Englewood with a No Loitering  
16 sign. There is no place really for people to go except  
17 in the park.

18 This summer when you go in the park they had cops  
19 to patrol the park. This is just recently. You can't  
20 drink out there or anything like that. Sometimes they  
21 chase you out the park and there is no place to go but on  
22 the corners. They come down on the corners and say, "Get  
23 out of the park" back and forth.

24 I think what caused the riot is just all the cops  
25 in the area. Then there is name calling and that's what

1 really started it.

2 Q What do you think are some of the causes of the  
3 tension in the area?

4 A If you have ever been down there and looked at  
5 the area --

6 Q Why don't you tell us about it?

7 A There is really nothing. It is like a dump to  
8 me. The housing is poor, very poor housing. Even when  
9 the mayor went down there to visit one of the houses, a  
10 rat ran across his foot. This is right after the riots.  
11 As a matter of fact, it was during a couple of days of the  
12 riot. He came down at night, that is when he checked  
13 the house. They were suppose to start doing something.  
14 Until this date the only thing that I have noticed that  
15 has been done, they tore down one old house. There wasn't  
16 nobody living there anyway.

17 He was supposed to start programs of this here and  
18 that there. We had a meeting with him. We was like telling  
19 him what people really need like housing and recreation.  
20 The meeting lasted about two or three hours, more than  
21 that. The only thing that came out of it, he said that  
22 he will look into it. To this date I guess he is still  
23 looking.

24 Q What is the employment situation in Englewood?  
25 Does everybody have a job that wants one?

1 good. A No, not everybody.

2 Q Is it a problem getting a job?

3 A A problem getting a good job. The average  
4 factory now is mostly employing people coming from New  
5 York. General Motors, that is a good plant, but we went  
6 down there some time this month. We was going in as they  
7 was coming out. It is a big plant, if you have ever  
8 seen it. This is the day shift. I don't know about the  
9 night shift. I don't know how many hundreds of guys came  
10 out, but I couldn't count even ten colored people coming  
11 out as far as being employed.

12 MR. DRISCOLL: Are you employed?

13 THE WITNESS: No, not now.

14 Q How long since you have  
15 been employed?

16 THE WITNESS: The last job I had was at  
17 New York State, Rockland State-County Hospital.

18 A I couldn't hold that. I didn't have a car. I

19 was being late constantly. I have to take

20 buses to get up there. I had to let that go.

21 MR. DRISCOLL: Are you married?

22 THE WITNESS: No, I am single.

23 By Mr. Jaffe:

24 Q Did you try to get a job at General Motors?

25 A No. I have a record. They check you out pretty

1 good. If you have get a record, they let you go. I have  
2 experience, but they just let you go right away.

3 Q Do most employers that you go to ask about your  
4 previous record?

5 A Any application you fill out they always have,  
6 you know, "Have you ever been arrested?" and so forth, and  
7 what for.

8 Q Have you ever gone to any of the job training  
9 programs, the one that is run up in Englewood?

10 A I have been up there, not for a job like this.  
11 I was supposed to be getting in this program, but I don't  
12 know what is going to come out of it now. This Rutgers  
13 program.

14 Q the Community Action Training Program?

15 A This is Rutgers University Program, it has  
16 nothing to do with Englewood.

17 Q Is that a program run by Bob Carvin?

18 A No.

19 Q What kind of a program is it?

20 A They suppose to give you training, you know,  
21 something like social work, you know. They place you  
22 after you finish so many weeks. They get you a license,  
23 get you set up. You work in communities where there are  
24 problems.

25 Q Do you have any kind of a skill now?



1 A No.

2 JUDGE WACHENFELD: Do you live with your  
3 parents?

4 THE WITNESS: Yes, my grandmother and  
5 grandfather.

6 JUDGE WACHENFELD: Are your father and  
7 mother alive?

8 THE WITNESS: No. They died when I was  
9 two or three.

10 By Mr. Jaffe:

11 Q Have you been to the New Jersey Employment  
12 Service?

13 A No. Well, all that don't make no sense for me  
14 to go up there when you have to fill out all that stuff.  
15 My record is not just for driving without a license.  
16 When they see that, "I will call you," or something like  
17 that.

18 MR. GIBBONS: What is your record?

19 THE WITNESS: I got atrocious assault and  
20 one for marijuana. Well, that is narcotics.  
21 The rest of it is like, you know, fighting,  
22 atrocious assault, you know.

23 MR. DRISCOLL: How long were these records?

24 THE WITNESS: I have been out two years,  
25 going on two years.

1 JUDGE WACHENFELD: What was your penalty?

2 THE WITNESS: I did about sixteen months.

3 Q What? JUDGE WACHENFELD: How many?

4 THE WITNESS: Sixteen.

5 By Mr. Jaffe: This housing problem and

6 the ad. Q Did they teach you a trade in prison?

7 A No. Trade? No.

8 person down there. JUDGE WACHENFELD: Were you convicted or

9 the federal did you plead to the indictment?

10 THE WITNESS: I pleaded guilty, you know,

11 plans. He my lawyer's advice.

12 better deal. By Mr. Jaffe: a lot of them down there.

13 Q Did you have Mr. Brown, then, too?

14 A No, some lawyer from Tennessee. I don't know

15 who he was. He was appointed.

16 Q Have you tried working with any of the anti-

17 poverty agencies set up in Englewood?

18 A This is the only one that I knew that ever came

19 along like they have now. They just developed recently.

20 There was never none I knew of.

21 Q What are the attitudes of young people up in

22 the community, people your age?

23 A Right now there are more militant than they

24 ever was. I mean they talk.

25 Q When you say militant, what do you mean?

1 just begin. A Talking and all this here, they are tired of  
2 that now.

3 Q What do they want do you think?

4 or some A They want better housing. They want a better  
5 deal than they are getting. This housing problem and  
6 the administration in there, all they are trying to do  
7 is box the Negroes in the Fourth Ward really. The average  
8 person down there, this voting thing they had, you know,  
9 the federal housing and this private plan, the average  
10 Negro doesn't even know the difference between them two  
11 plans. He don't know too much what will give him a  
12 better deal. I talked to a lot of them down there.

13 with my Q What is the attitude of the average young Negro  
14 in the Fourth Ward toward the white man since the riot?  
15 Has it changed any?

16 A Well, it has changed somewhat. It is more or  
17 less hostile, but it is mostly like the administration  
18 they have in Englewood, you know. When you say white  
19 man, the first man they think of is the mayor. The  
20 police, that is where they need the check, the Police  
21 Department. Their tactics, that is the only place they  
22 really make an arrest, right down there in the Fourth  
23 Ward, you know, where they congregate. This place on  
24 Hamilton Avenue, I go up there a lot to the football game.  
25 See the white kids. They be around. There is no trouble,

1 just hanging out like kids do anywhere. I see cops, they  
2 just ride right on by.

3 Any time in the Fourth Ward they tell you to move  
4 or something like that, or get off the corner, when you  
5 say something back they are going to take and lock you  
6 up.

7 MR. DRISCOLL: Any questions? If not,  
8 we thank you very much for coming and appreciate  
9 your cooperation.

10 By Mr. Jaffe:

11 Q Is there anything you would like to say?

12 A I can't say too much. I want to say what deals  
13 with my case.

14 Q MR. DRISCOLL: I think for your own  
15 protection we ought not to deal with your own

16 case.

17 there ten years. JUDGE WACHENFELD: We can take it off the

18 record if you want to say it.

19 A No, I MR. DRISCOLL: I don't think so. You

20 have able counsel, and I think before you talk

21 to third parties you will have to talk to him.

22 By Mr. Jaffe:

23 Q If you want to say anything other than about  
24 your case, you are perfectly free. Do you want to say  
25 anything else?

A No.

in New York City. I am directing a field project at 112 South Orange Avenue in Newark.

MR. DRISCOLL: I think your case makes a big difference. I think we might place you in some jeopardy. The transcript might find its way into the hands of the prosecutor.

Thank you very much.

(Witness excused.)

educational background.

- - -

New York University, majored in languages,

Whereupon,

education. I have worked as a checker in the Department

SHIRLEY M. LACY

of Welfare, New York City. I have a background in civil called as a witness, first duly sworn, testified as follows: rights activities that goes back to 1961 with CORE.

EXAMINATION

Q Are you still a member of CORE?

By Mr. Jaffe:

A I am a member of CORE.

Q Mrs. Lacy, could you give us your address and

how long you have lived there?

A No, I have never held a selected position with them. I have been involved as a chapter member since there ten years.

1961.

Q Prior to that did you live in Englewood, too?

Q How large is the CORE organization in Englewood?

A No, I did not. I lived in Brooklyn.

A Active members, we are about twenty-five. We

Q Are you presently employed?

have a number of people who support us, and that runs to

A Yes, I am.

several hundred.

Q And where is that?

Q Have you been active in the civil rights movement in Englewood in the years you have lived there?

A I am with the Scholarship, Education and

Defense Fund for Racial Equality, and the headquarters is

A Yes.

Q I wonder if you might talk longer.