

1 them had never had a situation like this. Ninety-
2 nine percent of them had never been in a situation
3 like this before.

4 They pulled the man out. At one point I
5 thought it was the police who were hysterical and
6 not the man in the car. They were so excited they
7 didn't realize what they were doing. Fortunately
8 there were cooler heads who came and pulled these
9 police off. The man wasn't injured, not to the
10 extent he had to be hospitalized. I didn't even
11 notice any blood. He had just been pushed and
12 kicked. This was due to the fact that these men
13 were new to this type of action.

14 CHAIRMAN LILLEY: Any other questions? Thank
15 you very much, Mr. Romeo. I appreciate your
16 coming.

17 (Witness excused.)

18 - - -

19 Whereupon,

20 ROBERT I. MILLER

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

22 EXAMINATION

23 By Mr. Jaffe:

24 Q Would you put on the record your business and the
25 fact that you have been in a recent election and where you

1 Jay A. Hiller I live at 144 West Hudson Avenue in Englewood. I
2 am employed at Union Theological Seminary in New York City
3 as secretary of the Seminary and assistant to the president.

4 Q: How long have you lived in Englewood?

5 A: A total of twelve years.

6 Q: Just so we get on the record that you are the
7 Mayor-elect.

8 A: That's right. As of January 1 I would be inaugu-
9 rated.

10 Q: That is a two-year term, is that right?

11 A: Right.

12 Q: Mr. Mayor, we would like to hear your views on
13 problems in Englewood and causes of the civil disturbance
14 and how you view them with an end toward what recommendations

15 you might give us that we in turn can recommend to the

16 Governor. We can start you by having you generally discuss

17 the causes of the disturbance last summer and we can follow

18 from that.

19 A: To put a date line, I go to 1951 when I moved to

20 Englewood and was employed by one of the local churches but

21 became a board member of the Urban League. This is when my

22 education about the community really began. I have been

23 carrying around with me through three campaigns a booklet

24 on Englewood housing that the Urban League did in 1952

25 because some of the housing in it shows on the book cover

1 Jay Street near the park, housing that is still there and
2 in many ways this is symbolic of the lack of progress
3 through years even predating 1951, but I come in personally
4 at that point.

5 and I would say this is one of the factors that through
6 the years has caused us many difficulties. The particular
7 ones you are concerned with this last summer, certainly
8 this is a contributing factor.

9 The other things which I think have been building
10 through all these years were illustrated by other conditions
11 as long ago as 1951. At that time we still had two Junior
12 high schools, a Negro and a white Junior high school, which
13 in 1954 were taken care of by the State Supreme Court.

14 You learn of these things through the Urban League
15 meetings.

16 The Negro teachers in the Englewood school system
17 happened all to be teaching in the Negro schools, the Negro
18 Junior high school and the Negro grammar school. These
19 were concerns of the Urban League -- education and housing.

20 Another incident happened, and I think there were all
21 kinds of things happening like this. I just used this as
22 one illustration. Mary McCloud Bethune, a Negro educator,
23 was invited to one of the Legion auxiliaries to come and
24 speak. They engaged the facilities of one of the school
25 buildings, and shortly prior to the meeting they were

1 informed that because of her background she would not be
2 allowed to speak in such a building. They arranged for a
3 place for her to speak in one of the churches, but at this
4 time Mr. Charles Parlin was president of the Urban League
5 and evidently had known Dr. Bethune through the years and
6 came to her defense which eventuated in a special meeting
7 of the Board of Education at which he went through the
8 various charges leveled at her on the basis of which they
9 denied the use of the building. 1919 and in 1921 I became
10 angry. She was then invited to come back again and speak in a
11 school building. I think by virtue of some of these things
12 happening through the years a certain climate was created
13 by the stance of a local administration because the city
14 council and the Mayor moved in to directly uphold the Board
15 of Education and support them in that refusal. 1921 was a
16 forum. One other factor I think which couldn't help but con-
17 tribute to the lives of many people, I have learned just
18 within the last three or four months talking to some of our
19 young people, it wasn't too long ago that Negroes were
20 restricted to the balcony of the local theaters. I think
21 we have had things building for quite a few years, whether
22 we go back to 1912 or whatever. When people in May and in
23 June in New York, knowing I lived in Englewood and knew the
24 forecasts of long, hot summers, would say to me, "Do you
25 think anything will happen in Englewood this summer?" All

1 I could honestly say was we had all the ingredients. All we
2 needed was an incident, whether it was a shoving or pushing
3 or whatever. I don't think this was any particular wisdom
4 on my part. Anyone who had been in Englewood any part of
5 the time and had known the conditions and the background and
6 history I think could easily predict the same thing.

7 Then I jumped to 1961 and for part of the period 1951
8 to 1961 I was in Winetka, Illinois for four years and away
9 from the scene. We came back in 1959 and in 1961 I became
10 engaged with a group of people who were holding a series of
11 Human Relations workshops on "Englewood at the Crossroads"
12 to look at housing, education, recreation and other community
13 needs. Growing out of those workshops came a Human Relations
14 Council which was to be a non-action body, a group which
15 would not even take positions on issues, but was merely a
16 forum for the expression of community opinion, not even for
17 individuals as much to have representatives of community
18 organizations come together on a subject, have presentation
19 papers, and then table discussions with perhaps findings
20 reported at the conclusion of a meeting and hopefully these
21 community representatives go back to their organizations
22 and talk about the subject matter.

23 The council as I became its chairman moved into two
24 fields -- education and housing. I think the education is
25 germane to this Commission because it was a contributing

1 factor. The feelings which were not solved in any way com-
2 pletely by the integration of the schools must be considered,
3 but I think we have achieved something there which, if it
4 had been done in greater quantity with more cooperation from
5 the local administration, could have avoided some future
6 difficulties for we had people of opposing viewpoints ex-
7 pressing from the platform how they felt and then broad
8 segments of the community around tables discussing this and
9 getting to know each other. We had good support from the
10 total community. We had good attendance.

11
12 (Page 136 follows)

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14
15
16 Then we moved to the area of housing in the Housing
17 Relations Council, again under my chairmanship. While they
18 could get the same community groups to give suggestions and
19 make suggestions, our invitation to the Housing Council, who are
20 currently mayor also, to the majority members of the council,
21 to the Housing Authority, the Planning Board, the Citizens
22 Advisory Committee on Urban Renewal were either ignored or
23 turned down, usually the reason being given that they were
24 busy or had another engagement.

25 I was raised finally by the committee members of the

1 We had a wide range of community organizations -- the
2 ministerial group, the League of Women Voters, three or four
3 civil rights groups as they existed at the time, the PTA,
4 the Community Development Committee. There was hardly a
5 community organization of any stature that wouldn't send a
6 representative to the Human Relations Council. Initially
7 we had difficulty with the Board of Education, but they
8 changed their stance, and I think they saw that they had
9 more to gain from cooperating with us than to stand off.

10 I think we were able to support the actions of the
11 superintendent and the Board of Education, not by a position
12 but just by creating a climate. At the time we saw a telltale
13 evidence of the one basic feeling in the community on a
14 referendum on neighborhood schools, but, of course, the
15 program went ahead in spite of that referendum.

16 Then we moved to the area of housing on the Human
17 Relations Council, again under my chairmanship. While they
18 could get the same community groups to give viewpoints and
19 make suggestions, our invitations to the then mayor, who is
20 currently mayor also, to the majority members of the council,
21 to the Housing Authority, the Planning Board, the Citizens
22 Advisory Committee on Urban Renewal were either ignored or
23 turned down, usually the reason being given that they were
24 busy or had another engagement.

25 I was asked finally by the executive committee of the

1 Human Relations Council to seek an audience with the mayor
2 and our executive committee to explore possible ways of our
3 cooperating rather than continuing to invite representatives
4 and their continuing not to see them. I was told that I
5 could come alone for an audience with the mayor, and I did.
6 He had one of his colleagues present and before I could even
7 raise the question about cooperation I was told that
8 Englewood did not need a Human Relations Council; that
9 indeed if the administration had thought there was a need,
10 they would have established one; that in so many words they
11 resented our presence, and this was the gist of the
12 evening's remarks, that there would be no more cooperation
13 in the future than there had been in the past.

14 This eventuated in a kind of dying out of the vitality
15 of the Human Relations Council because we found we were
16 talking to ourselves.

17 To me these were the kinds of attitudes that brought
18 a counter attitude in the community, not just in the Fourth
19 Ward, the Negro community, but in other areas, in avenues
20 like a Human Relations Council and discussions and
21 workshops, as good as they may be in many situations, were
22 plainly not going to be the thing that would help
23 Englewood move ahead. I think individual organizations
24 discovered this.

25 As I returned to Englewood in 1959 I again was

1 invited to join the Urban League Board and later became
2 president. Here again I found this same inability to get
3 very far with city hall. Talking about how we could avoid
4 difficulty or how we could somehow face problems, it just
5 wasn't happening. I think that spells out in a broad way
6 the things I saw happening through the years that eventuated
7 in this summer. There were more specific things which I am
8 sure you have heard from others.

9 As I moved through the community these last few months
10 and people have asked what I thought happened this summer,
11 one thing I think I have referred to stands out again
12 symbolic rather than as the main contributing factor. But
13 not knowing whether in past summers tear gas was tested
14 by the police and the Fourth Ward Pistol Range -- I have no
15 knowledge of this; I haven't inquired -- but whether it had
16 been or had not been done in the summer, if there was one
17 summer not to test it in the Fourth Ward it would seem to
18 me any logic would prevail to move it to another location
19 or get along without testing it.

20 Q When was that tested?

21 A In June or early July. Certainly before the
22 disturbances. There was some write up in the paper about
23 it as Mr. Tibbs raised an objection.

24 Also I think if there was a time for a lagging
25 administration to have some presence in the community,

1 moving through at least to talk to people, this would have
2 been a time for it. As I understand it, it took place only
3 after there was trouble.

4 I think other than that I would be glad to answer
5 questions of clarification or more specifics.

6 Q I gather that you conceive one of the big problems
7 in Englewood is the lack of communication, that there seems
8 to be an inability to understand the needs of the Negro
9 community and inability to communicate this.

10 A If I put any umbrella over anything I have said,
11 communication.

12 Q What are your thoughts and suggestions as to not
13 only Englewood but for other parts of this state? How do
14 you improve this problem of communication? How do you open
15 the kind of dialog^{ue} between the community, the alienated
16 part of the community and the so called power structure,
17 whether it be political or business or whatever?

18 A Naturally I have concentrated so much on Englewood
19 that I haven't given close attention to other localities,
20 and what impresses us in Englewood is our problem is really
21 as compassable. We are a small community. You can walk
22 around it easily and you can see all the problems in one
23 day. You can see it in the morning.

24 I think of Newark of New York City, the massiveness of
25 it dictates a different approach and solution. You just

1 don't do it by opening up a simple channel of communication.
2 You have to open up hundreds and thousands of channels.
3 You don't do it by one person being present; you have to
4 have more people who are represented closely to the
5 community and to the power structures who are getting the
6 feedback and hopefully spreading some signs of hope and
7 promise and action.

8 But I couldn't help but notice the difference in
9 New York City with a John Lindsay being in the community
10 long before probably even rumors of difficulty. I think
11 this made a difference in the attitudes of people. Whether
12 there was an immediate improvement in their condition or the
13 things they were concerned about, they had a hope. I
14 really couldn't go too much further than I think for other
15 areas massive is the word that comes to my mind in terms
16 of program and help. It is certainly going to be money,
17 not that we didn't need money in Englewood. It is going
18 to be more than just channels of communication. We are
19 going to need federal aid for housing and other programs.
20 But we have such an easier time than just getting to the
21 community with whatever we want to say through community
22 leaders and groups.

23 CHAIRMAN LILLEY: Obviously you had a
24 successful campaign so you must have paid good and
25 fruitful attention to the Fourth Ward in your

1 campaign. Do you have the feeling that people
2 listened to you and voted for you that night have
3 been involved in the incidents? We have had these
4 people describe in various ways, and I wouldn't
5 attempt to categorize it. You are one of the few
6 men that has come before us that is talking about
7 the problem that is going to have something to do
8 with it. I would be interested in your experiences.

9 THE WITNESS: I think I have been fortunate in
10 these last eight years especially to have been in
11 the Fourth Ward as much as I have. Part of it has
12 been preaching in the churches and so people have
13 come to know me at least as a person there. This
14 has led into being invited to other social functions,
15 whether it is teas at the churches, garden parties,
16 dances, speaking to the young people or whatever.
17 So I have had opportunities to speak as well as
18 informally listen in social gatherings.

19 But I think in addition to whatever trust
20 individual people may have in me because they know
21 something about me, the fact that many of their
22 community leaders seem to have that kind of trust
23 and confidence in my viewpoint has helped. This
24 would be true I think in terms of the councilman,
25 Vincent Tibbs, some of the clergy and other

1 community leaders who are closer to the people
2 day by day than I would have been in the Fourth
3 ward.

4 In the three political campaigns I have waged
5 I have been conscious of wanting to touch base
6 with all people, and I wouldn't say have deliberately
7 gone into the Fourth Ward anymore than any other
8 area of the city. To the extent that cottage
9 parties were set up that I attended, if they were
10 set up in other areas, I attended. This year,
11 however, contrary to other years, there was a new
12 kind of political effort -- I am not saying that
13 the interest maybe was any greater. It would be
14 hard to measure that -- but the number of people
15 who wanted to go with our candidates door to door
16 to meet people was great. In the past there had
17 been some of this, but this year there seemed to
18 be a real interest with a large number of people
19 to go with the candidates to the homes of people
20 and introduce them. So I think this undoubtedly
21 gave us more exposure there.

22 If I were to interpret the election, I would
23 certainly interpret it as a vote of confidence for
24 Councilman Tibbs as a community leader against all
25 kinds of efforts, some of which I am most unhappy

1 about, but I think that is a real vote of confidence
2 for him and the way people trust him as a
3 community leader. I can't help but feel I am
4 somebody in the shadow of that despite what effect or
5 appeal I may have as a person.

6 CHAIRMAN LILLEY: Swinging over the other way,
7 I don't know Englewood as a community, but I would
8 appear to me since you ran against the administra-
9 tion and won that you don't have a problem of any
10 kind of a backlash in Englewood. You obviously
11 had a pretty broad base support in the city. Does
12 this indicate that the white population does want
13 to see things done right?

14 THE WITNESS: I think a lot of them do, but I
15 do think we have active vocal and dedicated
16 the word opposition. If you are just going to analyze the
17 there. voting figures, you would see without the large
18 margin we got in the Fourth Ward, the Negro
19 population -- this was the first year I had carried
20 my own ward, the Third Ward, and we needed both of
21 those to offset the first and second. The Second
22 picking ward we ran into difficulty with because of our
23 I have no housing proposal, which is to put relocation
24 housing in the Second Ward.

25 If you even look at the district in which the

1 housing was proposed you see there the vote went
2 heavily against us. In door to door calling I
3 case face to face with this kind of out and out
4 bigotry. I wouldn't attempt to assess its strength,
5 but I know we can't ignore it. We have got to
6 deal with it educationally, not just try to override
7 it. But I think we have community leaders who will
8 life for help carry that for us.

9 CHAIRMAN LILLY: The hopes expressed in my
10 question aren't quite as optimistic as I thought
11 people they were as far as this reaction. It is a common
12 thing, and I thought perhaps Englewood was a little
13 second different.

14 By Mr. Jaffe:
15 Q What was the reaction in the First Ward? That is
16 the ward with the highest income, the bigger homes being
17 there. What was the reaction to you in the First Ward?

18 A I must have lost there by a thousand votes or so.

19 Q How many people vote there?

20 A The wards are pretty evenly divided. Roughly
21 2,000 to 2,500 in each ward. So all we hope to do is keep
22 picking up in Wards One and Two, which we have. Each ward
23 I have managed to gain.

24 Q Was there the same kind of hostility and bigotry
25 expressed in the First Ward as in the Second?

1 A I didn't get door to door. It is harder in that
2 area. It wasn't that evident. Even in the cottage
3 gatherings where you attend to meet the people, most of
4 whose are interested in your side and they come to hear you
5 whereas, in the Second Ward at the cottage parties they
6 would show up to say, "I am not prejudiced; I am not bigoted,
7 but I am concerned about property values. I worked all my
8 life for this house. I moved out of New York to get away
9 from this kind of thing, and I know what will happen if you
10 put this kind of housing in." But then going door to door
11 people would say it much more plainly than that.

12 Q What kind of housing did you contemplate in the
13 Second Ward?

14 A Our proposal called for something to meet what the
15 federal government is most interested in, that is, a
16 balanced program. We called for low and middle income and
17 housing mixing all income brackets to be integrated
18 fifty-fifty from the start, doing this first by having
19 housing for the elderly, which is a great need there. This
20 would help to have some white community people there, but
21 also meeting the needs of city employees and school
22 teachers and that middle income bracket.

23 Q What kind of physical facilities do you contemplate?
24 Garden apartments?
25 A What we have called it most, cluster and garden

1 because we wanted to get away from anything that would
2 remind someone of a project. So we have been interested
3 in architecture similar to that done in Greenwich and Mt.
4 Kisco where it is no more than two attached units and
5 architecturally designed to blend in with the neighborhood.
6 There is a mixture of income or value housing in the area,
7 and we wanted it to not detract in appearance from that.

8 Q I just would like to ask you one final question.
9 I wonder if you might have some specific suggestions or
10 recommendations that you would like to make to the
11 Commission -- this transcript will be available to all the
12 members and will enter into the deliberations of the
13 Commission -- that you think would be helpful in the
14 Englewood area or in the state.

15 A For the future we are interested in taking advantage
16 of county-state-federal programs to whatever extent they
17 bear on the Englewood problem, and here we have an Englewood
18 problem to match any county, state or federal office whether
19 it is human relations training for the police, whether it
20 is legislation having to do with housing codes, health
21 codes, aid to dependent children, Englewood could benefit
22 in all of these areas whether it is legislation or a
23 community affairs department. We want to reach out and get
24 the cooperation of all of these. So I would be interested
25 in anything done, for instance, on the state level to improve

1 the existing situation legislative-wise, whether we are
2 talking about fair housing or civil rights or aid to
3 education. As the state moves ahead with this type of
4 program, Englewood can benefit. We benefited from the
5 State Office of Education I think in terms of our school
6 integration. While we are fighting the contests with one
7 hand before January the first, it is not impeding us as
8 much as they wish.

9 Besides communication and the size of Englewood, the
10 thing that we have said is my deepest conviction is
11 Englewood's tremendous potential in human resources. We
12 have more than ample of any type of leadership, whether
13 we are looking for an architect, a planner, a human relations
14 person or a finance person. Englewood is so rich in this,
15 and I have been impressed not only during the campaign to
16 have people say, "I would be glad to help you," but since.
17 The messages of congratulations have said, "I want to help.
18 If recreation-wise I can give you a hand, let me know." So
19 it follows.

20 The people who want to be harnessed up to move
21 Englewood in the direction that we said it can go I mean.
22 So what we are going to do is show New Jersey and the
23 nation a few things.

24 CHAIRMAN LILLEY: We certainly hope you do.

25 Thank you for coming.

(Witness excused)

Q You might want to briefly state your business.

Whereupon, RUSSELL MAJOR

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

EXAMINATION

By Mr. Jaffer:

Q Mr. Major, I wonder if you could state for the record your present occupation, where you reside and how long you have been active in the community in Englewood.

A I live in Englewood at 212 Englewood Avenue. The only official position I have, I am a board member of the Englewood Urban League. I am on the board of directors there. As far as being active in the City of Englewood, I guess I have just been active the last six or seven years through different organizations. I belong to civic groups, civil rights groups.

Q I understand you are a member of the executive board of the Bergen County Urban League.

A Yes.

Q And chairman of their housing committee?

A That is correct.

Q And I have a note you were appointed by Governor Hughes to be the newly appointed city housing commissioner.

A That's correct.