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1 Meeting of the Florida Advisory Committee
2 to the
3 U.S. Commission on Civil Rights

4 April 21, 1992
5 1:00 P.M. - 4:00 P.M.

6 Holiday Inn Conference Center
7 7617 NW 8th Avenue
8 Grenada Room
9 Gainesville, Florida 32605

10 REPORTED BY: Judith Ann Hyde, RPR
11 Notary Public
12 State of Florida at Large

13 COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

- 14 ROBERT BRAKE
- 15 ALICIA BARO
- 16 VIRGIE CONE
- 17 ROBERT DOCTOR
- 18 BRAD BROWN
- 19 ROBERT KNIGHT
- 20 JUNE LITTLER
- 21 HARRIETT BROWN
- 22 LINDA GARCIA
- 23 SOLOMON AGIN

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P R O C E E D I N G S

1
2 CHAIRMAN BROWN: Let's have everybody just briefly
3 reintroduce themselves. Those who did this before and then let
4 the new folks give their names.

5 MR. BRAKE: I'm Bob Brake, I'm from Coral Gables.

6 MS. BARO: Alicia Baro from Miami.

7 MS. CONE: Virgie Cone from Jasper.

8 MR. DOCTOR: I'm Bobby Doctor, Nevada Regional
9 Director of the Commission, Southern Regional Office out of
10 Atlanta.

11 CHAIRMAN BROWN: Brad Brown from Miami.

12 MR. KNIGHT: Bob Knight, Civil Rights from the Atlanta
13 Regional Office.

14 MS. LITTLER: June Littler, Gainesville.

15 MS. BROWN: Harriett Brown, Orlando.

16 MS. GARCIA: Linda Garcia, Tampa.

17 MR. WRIGHT: Thomas A. Wright, Gainesville.

18 CHAIRMAN BROWN: In the green shirt here?

19 MR. CHARLES: Yes, my name is Clevern Charles
20 (phonetic), I happen to be on the County's Commission of the
21 study, the charter that we have in place already. And
22 presently I am studying the unification of police and also the
23 second member districting.

24 CHAIRMAN BROWN: Thank you.

25 MS. WILLIAMS: Rosa B. Williams.

1 MR. CARTER: I'm Jack Carter.

2 MR. PHILLIPS: Mike Phillips.

3 MR. LEWIS: And I'm Hal Lewis, Gainesville.

4 MR. DOCTOR: Okay. For those of you who were not here
5 before, Hal is the former chair of this advisory committee.

6 Linda, I don't know whether you were around back then
7 or not. Virgie, I don't know --

8 MS. CONE: I was still in high school.

9 MR. DOCTOR: Okay. These folks up here are young
10 chippies.

11 MS. CONE: I got my masters here in 1956, that's
12 almost 40 years ago.

13 MR. DOCTOR: Hal is also -- I think you're retired
14 now, is that right, Hal?

15 MR. LEWIS: I've been retired 13 years.

16 MR. DOCTOR: Okay. From the University of Florida,
17 Had was a professor over there while he was serving as chair of
18 the committee, and again we're indeed very pleased to have Hal
19 with us today.

20 MR. LEWIS: Thank you.

21 CHAIRMAN BROWN: We've just been going around with
22 introductions, I won't do it again but I will ask you to
23 introduce yourself to us, please.

24 MS. HANSON: I'm Holly Hanson, I'm a graduate student
25 at the University of Florida.

1 CHAIRMAN BROWN: We are please to have you with us.

2 MR. DOCTOR: Last name again?

3 MS. HANSON: Hanson.

4 MR. KNIGHT: Hanson, thank you.

5 CHAIRMAN BROWN: Why don't you say your name, too.

6 THE COURT REPORTER: Judy Hyde, I'm the Court
7 Reporter.

8 CHAIRMAN BROWN: Yes, okay.

9 Let me ask -- I'd like to ask Reverend Wright to talk
10 first to us, since I know you have to leave.

11 MR. WRIGHT: Yeah.

12 MR. DOCTOR: Reverend Wright, may I ask you to move
13 around so that the Court Reporter and the members can get a
14 better angle?

15 REVEREND WRIGHT: Uh-huh.

16 MR. DOCTOR: Just in case they want to take some pot
17 shots at you and get you in full sights.

18 Before we get started, Mr. Chairman, I note for the
19 benefit of the audience we have a number of publications up
20 front. When we take a break you can feel free to come up and
21 take any publication you choose to.

22 REVEREND WRIGHT: I have a list of some concerns here
23 that may not be packed with tension right now but some concerns
24 that might deserve some consideration.

25 There's some doubt about emphasis on rezoning

1 neighborhood schools that we're going through here in Alachua
2 County. There are those who feel and ask questions about as to
3 whether this is an attempt to resegregate schools and also feel
4 that we have not really achieved integration to the fullest
5 extent. And we really don't have integration until you have
6 integration of curriculum and all activities that exist in the
7 school system.

8 Now, I realize that there are those who are saying,
9 even African-Americans, that they are tired of small children
10 being bused a long distance, but if you start out doing this
11 with a large number of small African-American children being
12 bused several miles, you have got to expect this kind of
13 reaction to the extent that African-Americans would join others
14 and say that we need to do something about rezoning and
15 neighborhood schools. So there is some concern about that.

16 There are some businesses that African-Americans
17 patronize in large numbers and they do not hire
18 African-Americans, and I have been saying to African-Americans
19 don't spend your money where you can't work. And there is some
20 concern about this. I have been watching some things that
21 happen at Shoney's where you might see African-Americans at the
22 cash register or in the kitchen, but you don't see a large
23 number of African-Americans on the floor at Shoneys where I
24 drop by to patronize. I don't have to tell you that the money
25 is made by those persons who wait on the table. And this has

1 been a concern by some of us.

2 Florida Pest Control is another place where a number
3 of us patronize but you don't see many African-Americans
4 working at Florida Pest Control.

5 Name calling has come to be a common thing again,
6 ethnic nickname calling. It has become to be very common. I'm
7 surprised at some of the things that I hear. Even driving
8 across campus, the University of Florida, just driving across
9 campus, I was called something that really shocked me driving
10 across campus. It would not have happened I don't think two or
11 three years ago.

12 There's several reports of persons being fired after
13 working on jobs several years and they come and they say how
14 long they have been working there and what happened to them.
15 I'm really shocked at how a large number of people are being
16 dismissed after working in positions for some time.

17 African-Americans are not very visible in local postal
18 service at the windows out front. They may be working in the
19 back. And I have called the person in charge and he has said
20 to me that, well, you see those persons who work out front at
21 the windows, they are there based upon seniority. And I have
22 not accepted this as a good reason. And there are some
23 African-Americans in the postal system who have been
24 complaining about promotions, been in the system a number of
25 years and there are others who come in and they are promoted

1 over them.

2 I have some concern about crimes African-Americans
3 commit over against Caucasian and the crime might be the same
4 but the punishment is not the same. And there is a feeling
5 that there may be a deliberate attempt on the part of the
6 system to pack the jails with African-Americans and this we
7 hear about a large number of African-Americans being in prison,
8 there's some feeling that this is not accidental, this is
9 deliberate on the part of the system to put African-Americans
10 in jail and they somewhat see the prison system as a kind of
11 industry and the African-American male may be seen as their
12 best product to keep the system going and pack the prison.
13 There is some concern about that. As to whether we should
14 study the situation crimes that are committed by
15 African-Americans over against Caucasians and others and the
16 crime might be the same but the punishment, great difference.

17 There's a great need for more local and Federal judges
18 to the extent that you would get a more accurate judgment and
19 ruling based upon the crime committed.

20 Those are some concerns that I have been hearing, some
21 that I have been trying to look into on the local level.

22 CHAIRMAN BROWN: Okay. Thank you very much, Reverend.

23 Do you have any questions or comments?

24 MS. CONE: Interesting enough, those are some of the
25 concerns that I have picked up.

1 MS. LITTLER: I had a question, Reverend Wright.

2 Several years ago we were working on trying to get
3 some of the banks to employ tellers, black tellers, how is that
4 doing these days?

5 REVEREND WRIGHT: They go and they are there for a
6 while and then they disappear. The bank where I patronize, a
7 particular bank, just a few months ago they had three working
8 there and they have disappeared. I have thought about asking
9 this particular bank what happened to those African-Americans
10 who were working here and they disappeared. I don't see as
11 many now as I used to see. I don't know the reason but I'm
12 concerned about it.

13 MS. CONE: Any one bank in particular or banks in
14 general?

15 REVEREND WRIGHT: I think it goes for banking in
16 general. And another thing we need to think about, it's
17 amazing, if a concern hires 50, 100 people and if they hire one
18 African-American they feel that this thing is integrated. It's
19 amazing how one person could be used and say we're integrated.
20 You might have 50 or 100 people there and if we got one we're
21 in good shape. A lot of concerns feel that way.

22 MS. BROWN: You mentioned the postal service and the
23 nonvisibility of persons out front, are minorities still being
24 hired routinely by the postal service or is that dropping as
25 well?

3
1 REVEREND WRIGHT: I talked with the head man and I
2 told the head man that I was concerned about that and he had me
3 to believe that there's a reasonable percentage behind the
4 scene, although you don't see them. But the person behind the
5 scene have been saying to me you ought to ask him for the names
6 of those who are behind the scene and compare the numbers. You
7 will discover that it's not what he told you and they are
8 not -- they are not being promoted at all in terms of the years
9 that they have put into the system.

10 CHAIRMAN BROWN: You mentioned this increased people
11 losing their jobs, that is essentially a recent increase? You
12 say you see more people being laid off their positions, not
13 being kept on than you had seen a few years ago?

14 REVEREND WRIGHT: Yes. And according to what they are
15 saying, it is not the economy that has anything to do with it,
16 it's what's happening. And when you look into these cases and
17 talk with the persons who are supposed to be in responsible
18 positions, the answers that they give you, they are so vague
19 and many cases just don't make any sense. And some of these
20 people feel that the closer I get to retirement the worse it
21 get because we can let you go and now you won't really qualify
22 for retirement after many years.

23 MR. KNIGHT: Reverend Wright, are there any groups or
24 organizations in the area that deal with this type of thing or
25 are they visible or not visible? Or are you --

3
1 REVEREND WRIGHT: We have -- we have an NAACP branch
2 here. I guess we could be stronger. I guess we could be
3 stronger. And since I am the president of the local
4 Ministerial Alliance and was president of the local branch of
5 the NAACP for 17 years, a lot of people still see me as
6 president of NAACP so I get a lot of this stuff and so I look
7 into a lot of it. As president of the Alliance I look into a
8 lot of it. I call a lot of people. I talk with a lot of
9 people.

10 MS. GARCIA: Just for clarification, but there is no
11 local agency that handles discrimination complaints?

12 REVEREND WRIGHT: The city has -- what, the Human
13 Relations, the Human Relations Advisory Board. The city has a
14 Human Relations Advisory Board. They have been complaining in
15 recent years that they don't have enough -- enough authority to
16 do something about many things that come to them. And there's
17 a lot of discussion about strengthening the Human Relations
18 Advisory Board so they can take more direct action and do
19 something about some of the things.

20 CHAIRMAN BROWN: Are they a delegate agency for EEOC?
21 Can they process Federal Equal Opportunity Complaints or do
22 they not have that authority?

23 REVEREND WRIGHT: I don't think they have that kind of
24 authority, do they? I don't think they have that kind of
25 authority and that's why they are talking about doing something

1 about it.

2 There's some discussion, I'm quite sure it probably
3 will not happen, about getting a tie-in with the Federal
4 organization and giving the Human Relations Advisory Board some
5 status in terms of being a department. Now there are some city
6 officials who are not in favor of this. But one particular
7 person I know on the city commission is trying to get this to
8 happen. I don't think it's going to happen. He's been talking
9 about it but I don't think -- I don't think it's going to
10 happen because he doesn't have enough support on the commission
11 to cause this to happen.

12 CHAIRMAN BROWN: Go ahead.

13 MS. BARO: I was just going to ask you, is this
14 situation, as far as you know, only affecting the
15 African-Americans? Do you have any other minorities that are
16 going through the same thing?

17 REVEREND WRIGHT: I get more complaints from
18 African-Americans than hispanics and others so most of these
19 complaints come from African-Americans.

20 CHAIRMAN BROWN: Okay. Thank you very much.

21 REVEREND WRIGHT: Uh-huh.

22 MR. DOCTOR: I think it should be noted, Mr. Chairman,
23 for the record we should have some Hispanic-Americans coming up
24 a bit later on on the agenda that can probably respond to that
25 question.

1 MS. BARO: Do we know what the percentage in the city
2 of Gainesville of African-Americans, the breakdown in the
3 population? Do you know what the percentage is?

4 MS. LITTLER: At one time it was 19 percent, is that
5 close?

6 REVEREND WRIGHT: Something like that. The population
7 overall 85,000, something like that, the city of Gainesville.

8 MS. LITTLER: Okay. We're talking about city limits
9 rather than urban areas?

10 REVEREND WRIGHT: I've been reading 85,000, maybe 12
11 or 13 percent African-Americans. That's what I've been
12 reading. I don't know how valid that is.

13 MS. CONE: May I ask my regular question?

14 Is your ministerial alliance integrated?

15 REVEREND WRIGHT: Yes.

16 MS. CONE: That's good.

17 REVEREND WRIGHT: It's integrated from the standpoint
18 it's wide open, but we have two Caucasians who are members.
19 And there's another ministerial alliance of Caucasians. And
20 it's also integrated the same way. One or two of us are
21 members of the Caucasian group. At one time there was an
22 attempt made to have one but we discovered that their concerns
23 were not our concerns and they wouldn't think as we thought in
24 terms of our concerns and we went back and reorganized the
25 other group because they were concerned about fellowship and we

4
1 were concerned about some things that we are looking into right
2 now as an alliance.

3 CHAIRMAN. BROWN: Thank you.

4 MR. DOCTOR: Thank you, Reverend.

5 CHAIRMAN BROWN: I would like to ask Ms. Rosa B.
6 Williams next of our people who are here earlier.

7 MS. WILLIAMS: First I would like to thank you for
8 inviting me to participate. When I sent back in my response, I
9 sent it in as the chairperson of the Black on Black Crime Task
10 Force, which I'm not going to deal with that part today. But I
11 have some of the same concerns what Reverend Wright talked
12 about first, and this is a concern and this do cause racial
13 tension.

14 The majority of the young peoples, I'm talking about
15 kindergarten on up, Afro-American Black male, you can pick any
16 school around here, they're the ones what's being sent home,
17 they're the ones who are being suspended, they are the ones who
18 are being disciplined the most and is getting an attitude in
19 those young peoples' mind that school is for those White
20 teachers that just don't care about me.

21 It also is the attitude that if you come from a
22 housing authority area, which we have lots of housing authority
23 here in Gainesville, we also have lots of young peoples here in
24 Gainesville, one area in particular, those kids is in
25 kindergarten and they are supposed to be so bad and so terrible

4 1 until they are left out of all social events. And we have been
2 talking to the teachers out there, we've talked to the
3 principal, and we have a group organized from this one housing
4 authority area to go out there and see just what they can do.

5 I was out there last week speaking to those young kids
6 and we had a real fine talk, but they -- all of them they was
7 talking openly about it, you know, and these is too young to
8 have that feeling that they hate somebody or dislike somebody
9 which is their principal who is White. Now if somebody don't
10 get inside there and do something about that and change that,
11 that could get to be a bigger problem. It may not be a bigger
12 problem at this particular school, but if they drop out of
13 school and don't go to school and hit the street, then it could
14 be everybody's problem and it could cause a racial problem. So
15 I wish you would do, you know, something and just look into how
16 the schools is being run around here. And I'm not saying that
17 the young peoples is not doing something about it, but somebody
18 just need to start to addressing that area more and find out
19 why some of these younger children is being sent home.

20 Another area which I am kind of concerned about,
21 whenever a crime is committed and if it is a Black person have
22 committed that crime, most all of the Black peoples get blamed
23 for that. If they go into a store to even look for something,
24 the peoples tend to follow them around more. The peoples tend
25 to watch them more and see if they are going to shoplift

5 1 something. Even me myself I can go inside certain stores here
2 in town and they watches me like a hawk and I know how other
3 peoples feel. When we was coming up going through all this we
4 could take this more, but these young peoples cannot take
5 things like that with someone walking behind them, over their
6 shoulders, and that cause problems because they'll turn around
7 and say: Hey, man, what's the problem, you know, what are you
8 following me for? And then before you know it there's a fight
9 going on.

10 And it's another thing what cause problems in the
11 area. Most every community of Afro-Americans what you see
12 there is a pawn shop sitting there. You don't see no pawn
13 shops in no White community what you go in. But by every
14 community there is a pawn shop sitting there. And peoples --
15 is easy for peoples to go inside there and pawn whatever they
16 have. I think all those pawn shops should be run out of their
17 community and let them go on downtown where the other business
18 places is located.

19 Another thing what I have a very much concern about,
20 that is the small minority business person. When it come time
21 to apply to get a proposal in to get a bid in on something, the
22 most of the big White contractors have somebody would go and
23 grab somebody like a female, a one person Hispanic and put them
24 up there as the owner. And they would get the bid and you
25 wouldn't see those peoples any more.

5 1 I think more consideration should be given to the
2 small minority business peoples. We have a lot of small
3 business in this community what has started up. But we need
4 more support from Tallahassee or the Federal government that
5 help keep them in business. And when they have -- they always
6 have all of these meetings going on like trade fairs and
7 things, the peoples advertising what you can bid for. They
8 have all these big things in Miami, Atlanta, Georgia, or some
9 place. The majority of the business peoples around here mostly
10 is two-person business and they can't afford to just jump in a
11 car and spend three or four days on the road trying to bid on
12 something because they need to be here running their business.
13 So why come some of those peoples can't set up something and
14 come here? They have things at the University of Florida and
15 the O'Connell Center and there's place around here I'm sure
16 that they can set up the same thing what they set up in Miami
17 or Atlanta. All those leads into racial problems coming up
18 because you got peoples who is left out of everything and that
19 do cause racial tensions. They know who has the money. They
20 know who control everything. So I think there is some issues
21 you should really look at.

22 Another thing, I'm not sure what you can do anything
23 about this but I just got to bring it up. The Afro-Americans
24 do not have any ways to be flying dope and crack and stuff into
25 Alachua County. That cause racial problems, not only among

5 1 Blacks and Whites but it causes among them Blacks their
2 ownself. And I think that's one area what you should look
3 into.

4 Another area, Reverend Wright talked about this, when
5 an Afro-American person do finally get a top position or
6 halfway up there, that person in this town has to be whiter
7 than white in order to keep that position. And pretty soon
8 before that person have that position, if they don't be whiter
9 than white and dance by the tune, they will not have that
10 position long.

6 11 And some fly-by-night companies come in this town, I
12 think somebody should make them sign a contract, they come in
13 this town, they are going to do good, they are going to do this
14 and they are going to do that. They hire both a bunch of
15 Afro-Americans, get the their hopes up for jobs and those
16 peoples go out and buy stuff, you know, well, I finally got a
17 steady job, I finally have a good income coming in, and then
18 that person go out of business, well, we don't get -- we didn't
19 have the contracts that we thought we was going to get in six
20 months time. I think that person should have known when they
21 open up their business how much in contracts they was going to
22 hire before they go out and hire these peoples. And then you
23 start to losing your home, you lose your car, you lose
24 everything, that can cause racial tension.

25 So those were just some of the issues I wanted to

6
1 bring up.

2 CHAIRMAN BROWN: Thank you very much. Do we have some
3 questions?

4 MS. BROWN: You touched on a nationwide problem as
5 well as something that's going on in Florida and that's
6 discipline with minor males.

7 MS. WILLIAMS: Uh-huh.

8 MS. BROWN: Has anyone spoken at a school board
9 meeting locally to address that and what's been the response of
10 that?

11 REVEREND WRIGHT: We had the Superintendent to one of
12 our Ministerial Alliance meetings and this was brought up. And
13 the new Superintendent, Dr. Hughes, made it very clear that he
14 was going to do something about that. He felt that sending
15 children home is not the solution to the problem. They have
16 come up with a program now where you keep the children as much
17 as possible in the system and furnish personnel to deal with
18 the problem at the school. Because in many cases when you send
19 them home there's nobody there and the children wind up getting
20 into trouble and therefore he explained to us that they were
21 trying to solve that problem right in the school instead of
22 sending them home, have counselors and so forth to deal with
23 them right in the school.

24 MS. BROWN: Well, in particular what is that school
25 that you had mentioned, you had gone out to speak to them and

6 1 the principal, did the principal have you come or the --

2 MS. WILLIAMS: No, one of the teachers, one of the
3 teachers. And because they are very much concerned about this
4 area where those kids are, where those young peoples come from,
5 and I'm not going to call the area on account there's reporters
6 but they was very much concerned about -- I'll tell you
7 afterwards --

8 MS. BROWN: Okay.

9 MS. WILLIAMS: -- it is a problem. It is just really
10 is a big problem. And they are too young to have that attitude
11 in their mind already that all Whites is bad. But they have it
12 and these are kindergarten.

13 MS. BROWN: Uh-huh.

14 MS. WILLIAMS: And the upper level administration is
15 not doing anything about it so it's a handful of teachers out
16 there that's trying to work through the problem. They have
17 been even having different Afro-Americans to come out there to
18 speak to them to tell them don't worry about where they came
19 from or where they live at or who their friends is, who their
20 parents is because, you know, you can make it if you put an
21 effort towards making it. Don't let that person put you down,
22 you know, you're just as good as anybody else. And so we have
23 started a little group and club out there which we meet with
24 them but it is a problem.

25 MS. BROWN: Okay. Thank you.

6 1 MS. GARCIA: Did I understand you correctly that this
2 elementary school, the kindergarten children were excluded from
3 social events and that's part of the school's policy?

4 MS. WILLIAMS: It's not a policy, that's the policy
5 what the principal has set. But the reason why come they have
6 been excluded from it is because they had a fight on the bus
7 and some did something, but there's some Whites also that
8 fought on the bus and did the same thing but they are still
9 involved with everything, but these young ones is not.

10 MS. GARCIA: And this goes down to kindergarten?

11 MS. WILLIAMS: Uh-huh, that's what I'm talking about.

12 CHAIRMAN BROWN: Questions?

13 MS. BARO: Is this true of just of the one school?

14 MS. WILLIAMS: The one school what I know about. And
15 we've been working with that one trying to get things
16 straightened out. As of last week it was still the same way.

17 REVEREND WRIGHT: It was mentioned to the
18 Superintendent and to others that if there happened to be
19 friction between a Caucasian student and an Afro-American
20 student, although the Caucasian student might be the one to who
21 cause the trouble, the Caucasian student somehow will not be
22 punished and the Afro-American student will be punished. They
23 have called many, many cases like that that happen in the
24 school system.

25 CHAIRMAN BROWN: Has there been any complaints filed

7
1 with the Office of Civil Rights and the Department of Education
2 on unequal discipline in the school system in Gainesville?

3 MS. WILLIAMS: I don't know.

4 REVEREND WRIGHT: You know in recent years -- well,
5 years ago we -- we filed cases with the Civil Rights Commission
6 all the time, but in recent years we almost felt and discovered
7 that it was almost a waste of time. And we heard so much
8 about --

9 MR. DOCTOR: Office of the Civil Rights --

10 REVEREND WRIGHT: Yeah. It was a waste of time in
11 recent years and that the case load was so high. And years ago
12 you could just scribble something on a piece of paper and send
13 it you got some kind of response, but now you can send all kind
14 of material and you hear about the case load being so heavy, I
15 couldn't get any kind of response, so we did that. And many
16 cases on the local level, but in recent years we have not
17 resorted to this as a means of dealing with our problems.

18 MS. BROWN: I would like to suggest that you try that
19 again because there are a lot of precedential cases now in
20 Florida now on discipline for minority children and they are
21 responding again.

22 REVEREND WRIGHT: They are responding again?

23 MS. BROWN: There are a number of counties that I know
24 about personally --

25 REVEREND WRIGHT: That's good news. That's good news.

7
1 MS. BROWN: -- and you have some precedence.

2 REVEREND WRIGHT: Okay. That's good news.

3 MS. BROWN: So please follow through with that.

4 MS. WILLIAMS: I would like to thank you and keep
5 those two things in mind and also the small minority business,
6 keep those in mind.

7 CHAIRMAN BROWN: I would also like to state if you
8 would chose to send the complaints to the U.S. Commission on
9 Civil Rights, we will, at the Commission, we'll refer it on, we
10 don't handle the complaints ourselves but would be involved in
11 referring it to them. And that doesn't always but in some
12 cases it may get a little higher priority since it comes from
13 another Federal agency and they know they want to hear what has
14 happened to that complaint. So keep that --

15 MR. DOCTOR: Not only will we refer it to them but we
16 will follow up with them.

17 CHAIRMAN BROWN: Right, right. And as I say, it may
18 help to get a little further up on the level of priority in
19 being handled.

20 REVEREND WRIGHT: Glad to hear that.

21 CHAIRMAN BROWN: Thank you very much.

22 REVEREND WRIGHT: Uh-huh.

23 CHAIRMAN BROWN: I would like to now ask Mr. Bret
24 Berlin who is the president of the student government
25 association, University of Florida. Welcome.

7
1 MR. BERLIN: Thank you.

2 First of all I want to welcome you all to Gainesville.
3 Thanks for coming.

4 I think one of the biggest problems that I've seen
5 surrounding this issue is the fact when people have questions
6 regarding this issue they have come to either me, the student
7 body president, or Dr. Lombardi, and we're not adequate
8 spokesmen on this issue. This isn't something that has been
9 affecting me adversely every day and I would not consider
10 myself as an expert on this issue, although it is something
11 that I do have to deal with every day.

12 It's kind of -- well, maybe almost a coincidence that
13 this meeting falls on this particular date. Last semester
14 during the student government budgetary process you all
15 probably heard it made some pretty big news about a big protest
16 and the office take over, student government office. Well,
17 it's that time this semester. Tonight is the final budget
18 hearing for the student government budgets this year and I
19 would like to extend an invitation to all of you to come and
20 see what goes on. We're expecting a large turn out. The
21 student body as far as minorities we represented, there will be
22 police there, there will be large -- I have to make sure that
23 we don't have problems of people not coming. I have called an
24 assembly, a student government assembly meeting for this
25 evening at the same time so all representatives of student

7 1 government will be there as well and it will be an opportunity
8 2 I hope for people to meet and share their ideas in a peaceful
3 way and resolve their problems.

4 MR. DOCTOR: Where is this meeting taking place?

5 MR. BERLIN: It's taking place in the Reitz Union, the
6 student's union on campus in Room 282.

7 CHAIRMAN BROWN: Just many of us will have left
8 Gainesville at that time but I hope that we will be able to
9 have some representation there.

10 MR. BERLIN: I would appreciate it because, you know,
11 this is one of the things that I think that have scarred this
12 campus is the fact that we've had problems and this year we're
13 trying to work them out and this is -- tonight is it, the
14 meeting, and I think that it's important. We'll see lots of
15 things come to a head tonight and I would like to see how they
16 come out.

17 MR. DOCTOR: What time is it going to be?

18 MR. BERLIN: It will be at 7:30.

19 MS. BROWN: Why did you invite the police?

20 MR. BERLIN: Because we anticipate a large turn out we
21 just want to make sure it remains peaceful. Okay.

22 I have invited three members to speak on behalf of the
23 University of Florida, three students who are very articulate
24 and vocal and leaders within their respective communities. And
25 no particular order I would like to call them up and speak on

8 1 behalf of the University of Florida.

2 I want to thank you for allowing us a little extra
3 time to permit this as well.

4 CHAIRMAN BROWN: Thank you.

5 MR. BERLIN: Would you come up?

6 Ben is the vice president of Volunteers for
7 International Students Association on this campus. He's also a
8 very articulate speaker and leader within the Asian-American
9 community on campus.

10 MR. SIAN: Hi. I'm more of a diplomat than a speaker
11 but I'll give it a -- try my hand at this.

12 To begin with I would like to make clear that although
13 I am an Asian-American, I'm more specifically a
14 Philippino-American.

15 MR. DOCTOR: For the sake of the Reporter, could you
16 give your last name?

17 MR. SIAN: Oh, Ben Sian, S-I-A-N, Vice President of
18 Volunteers for International Students Affairs.

19 MR. BROWN: Thank you.

20 MR. SIAN: Although I am Asian-American I am also more
21 specifically a Philippino-American. And when I was asked to
22 speak on behalf of all Asian-Americans, it struck me what a
23 huge undertaking this would be because as you see the generic
24 term Asian-American is so incredibly broad that having just one
25 person speak on behalf of the opinions of the most diverse

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1 minority in the country is an injustice in itself, and that's
2 where the irony of all of this lies.

3 In order for Asians to communicate as a whole we must
4 first define what we mean when we think Asian-American. We
5 must recognize each individual piece so we can better
6 understand the mosaic, to complete the mosaic. And that
7 mosaic, ladies and gentlemen, represents the needs and wants,
8 the very heart of Asian-Americans here and elsewhere.

9 Let's first start with defining ourselves as a group.
10 Upon closer examination the term Asian-American includes those
11 who trace their heritage to places as far a part as the Indian
12 subcontinent to the Polynesian islands of the South Pacific.
13 Our homeland language is from Hindi to Korean, from Chinese to
14 Japanese, are also as varied as the cultures from which they
15 stem. Although many of us trace our familiar American
16 citizenship back only one or two generations, there are also
17 Asian-Americans among us whose families have been in the United
18 States since the 1800s. All the while and during with other
19 minorities segregation laws, illegal immigration legislation
20 and other attacks on their civil liberties. So, you see, the
21 stereotype of Asian-Americans falls apart in the face of
22 reality. Unfortunately, the diversity which makes us so proud
23 has also been divisive, mostly in a political sense. It
24 creates a barrier that many African-Americans and Hispanics do
25 not have. For example, the African-American community has a

8 1 long and impressive history filled with struggle, tragedy and
2 achievement. Understandably they use this as a unified factor
3 to further their cause. The historical perspective of
4 Asian-Americans on the other hand is not so well defined.

5 Secondly, the Hispanic defined countries are also
6 themselves diverse. But there are also inexplicably linked,
7 both linguistically and historically with this legacy of
8 Spanish dissent. Until recently Asian countries have had
9 little to unify them, either culturally or historically. In
10 some cases even there lingers some generations old resentment
11 from warfare and Imperialism between Asian nations and times
12 past. This lack of a sense of unity has been the main obstacle
13 to defining ourselves as a group. However, in light of recent
14 anti-Asian trends, such as Japan bashing, we feel we must now
15 try.

16 Well, what problems do affect all Asians, all Asians
17 as a whole? Probably the most prevalent, other than being
18 unfairly stereotyped together, is a myth of the model minority.
19 The belief in this myth is so pervasive that many Asians
20 themselves buy into it. The media constantly bombards us with
21 success stories of Asians who have made it big, who have pulled
22 themselves up by the boot straps and now live the American
23 dream. However, upon closer examination this is not
24 necessarily the case. According to a 1980 California census
25 even though Asians had a median income of \$20,790 as compared

9 1 to the \$19,552 for Whites, Asian-American households average
2 1.7 workers versus 1.8 for Whites. Translated that means Asian
3 income was only 80 cents to each dollar the White worker earns.
4 There's also regional bias inherent in these figures seeing as
5 how Asians are centralized in high pay locals such as
6 California and New York.

7 Finally, comparisons with other minorities are unfair
8 for due to the Immigration Act of 1965 most Asians who chose or
9 were able to immigrate to the United States had professional
10 technical degrees already and that which placed them at a
11 distinct economic advantage.

12 The belief in the model minority disguises real
13 problems which Asian-Americans face as a group each and every
14 day. On a local level, for example, UF Student Services holds
15 two welcome receptions for incoming freshmen -- well, incoming
16 minority students; one for African-Americans, the other for
17 Hispanics. No such comparable service exists for other
18 minorities. We read every day in our college newspaper, The
19 Alligator, of the accomplishments of African-American and
20 Hispanic student groups and their role models we see virtually
21 nothing of our own accomplishments. For example, I have right
22 here -- oh, darn it -- I have right here, this happened today,
23 a letter from the chairman of our budget committee and the BSU
24 president about how they're willing to set aside a fund for
25 Hispanic and Black History -- Hispanic Heritage and Black

9
1 History Month while completely ignoring any other minority.
2 Asians as a group are keenly aware of this fact, however, due
3 to problems stated earlier, Asians have difficulty unifying
4 themselves to address the situation. That should not, however,
5 excuse the lazy-fare attitude concerning Asian-American
6 affairs.

7 The model minority myth, notwithstanding there are
8 Asian-Americans living in poverty, Asian-Americans who have
9 trouble finishing school, and like any other minority,
10 Asian-Americans are not exempt from being judged by the way
11 they look and by what our own distinct cultures make us.

12 Finally, the myth of model minority causes resentment
13 and in some cases violence between other minorities thus
14 hendering the advance of civil rights for all.

15 In short, we must find solutions for our problems --
16 for our problems -- wait. In short if we are to find solutions
17 for our problems, Americans must first get their heads out of
18 proverbial sand and recognize that problems do exist, even for
19 Asian-Americans. So, a lack of identity, discourage the
20 stereotype and irresponsible neglect are some of the problems
21 which face Asian-Americans, not only here in Gainesville but
22 all over the United States. Solutions will not come quickly
23 nor do we expect them to, but hopefully with cooperation,
24 understanding, hard work and maybe just a little bit of luck we
25 can all make this a better place. That's my written speech.

9 1 CHAIRMAN BROWN: Thank you. Thank you very much. I'm
2 impressed. It sounded more like a speech than he did a
3 diplomat.

10 4 Just a question. I just might note that the
5 Commission itself in recent times has paid particular attention
6 to the issues of Asian-Americans and its great diversities and
7 contrast to historically and we have a number of publications
8 here now that during a brief break people are willing to take,
9 but one of them I'll put aside particularly for you to look at,
10 is the summary of the round tables on voices across America,
11 discussions of Asian civil right issues done in three major
12 cities. And as you look through that the diversity that you
13 mention comes across loud and clear as one looks at that
14 report.

15 6 Before I ask the other, do you have any figures on the
16 percentage of Asian-American students at the University and the
17 number of different Asian-American backgrounds that that
18 approximately might represent?

19 7 MR. SIAN: Only approximately. I think -- this is
20 only an approximation -- I think there are maybe three percent
21 undergraduate Asian-Americans, between two and three percent
22 among the other undergraduates, and between graduates I think
23 the proportion is higher.

24 8 CHAIRMAN BROWN: Approximately how many different
25 backgrounds? You mentioned yours was the Philippines.

10 1 MR. SIAN: Let's see. My group itself is an umbrella
2 organization that represents not only international students,
3 those directly from the countries they represent, from the
4 Carribean, from Europe, from China, et cetera. We also
5 represent organizations as well such as Chinese-American Club,
6 Korean-American Student Association, things such as that. I
7 think Korean, Chinese, Bangladesh, Philippino. I believe there
8 may be eight and they are constantly growing actually.

9 CHAIRMAN BROWN: Okay. Comments or questions from our
10 Commission?

11 MS. BROWN: Is participation on The Alligator
12 voluntary or is the editorial board appointed?

13 MR. SIAN: Oh, no, no. I have nothing to do with --

14 MS. BROWN: No, I'm asking a general question. You
15 had mentioned that there are articles in there that don't
16 portray your cultural background, is there any way that you
17 have some persons who are interested in serving and have not
18 been able to?

19 MR. SIAN: Basically, I remember a few years ago
20 during some racial tensions that they did make a promise to
21 make The Alligator, our newspaper, more diverse and in a lot of
22 ways they did do that. I can now read a lot of things about
23 African-Americans, a lot of things about Hispanics. But, for
24 example, our organization put together an international
25 festival which extended over a week. It affected -- hundreds

10 1 of people helped out with it, thousands of people participatd,
2 and I didn't see one article about it. And that was a slight
3 to everyone who participated in it, who spent hours and hours
4 working. I don't know.

5 MR. AGIN: Have you ever approached the newspaper?

6 MR. SIAN: Yes, our president of the organization has
7 spoken with the -- I don't know exactly who, and has written
8 letters and they have many times said well, we didn't know
9 about it. But they even printed a letter in the middle of
10 International Week about International Week, the editorial
11 staff did. This is just one example. I also have figures here
12 about the student government hearing about the budgets.

13 Concerning the neglect of Asian-Americans, the Black Student
14 Union and the Hispanic Student Union have both increased since
15 previous years while my organization has decreased, has been
16 actually cut by \$9,000 from 29 -- well, cut by \$4,000, from
17 29,000 to 24,000. Oops, that's 5,000, excuse my addition. And
18 I've been getting a lot of flack from the Asian students who
19 are underneath this umbrella organization. In fact many of
20 them have been saying if the only way we can get our money is
21 to form an Asian Student Union, then we'll do it. And I've
22 been -- we're going to speak at the Senate hearing tonight to
23 try to get them to understand that although we are not so
24 visible on campus, we're not as visible as Hispanics or the
25 African-Americans, we do exist and we do have needs.

11

1 MR. AGIN: Because you keep a low profile?

2 MR. SIAN: I mean the diversity has been a lot of --
3 has been an obstacle to us unifying. I mean, Korean -- for
4 example, if I go to a Korean student meeting, a few of them
5 will be speaking Korean. I wouldn't be able to understand
6 that, and the same goes for Vietnamese, et cetera, et cetera.

7 But there have been signs of us getting together. We
8 had an Asian cultural night, for example, trying to celebrate
9 all our cultures. However, this was supposed to be funded by
10 Student Government, Multi-Cultural Affairs Cabinet, the bill
11 was sent to VISA, my organization, which was also a slight.
12 Also that was not covered very well in the Alligator itself.

13 CHAIRMAN BROWN: Recently in some areas of the country
14 with the increased international trade issues with Japan there
15 have been reports of increased violence and increased -- or
16 either physical or verbal violence against Asian-Americans,
17 also in some cases perhaps people from those countries, from
18 Asian countries as well. Have you noticed an increase in that
19 kind of tension recently at the Universtiy?

20 MR. SIAN: Personally, I haven't but I don't exactly
21 look Japanese, I look more Hawaiian, according to most people.
22 But I did go to a Chinese-American Student Association Meeting
23 and they have been -- they were speaking on some of this. They
24 were -- they were just warning each other to look out for each
25 other, to watch each other's backs, and they extended that to

11 1 all the Asian clubs, to the Vietnamese, to the Koreans, to the
2 Philippinos as well.

3 CHAIRMAN BROWN: All right. Thank you very much.

4 Mr. Berlin, who else do you want?

5 MR. SIAN: I want also just to add something very
6 briefly about -- regarding Alligator coverage and all that.
7 The Alligator coverage has increased over the -- I've been a
8 student activist on this campus for the last five years --
9 which means I'm never going to graduate -- but you can tell
10 that definitely the coverage and the attention has increased
11 over the last few years, but that I don't believe is due to an
12 increase awareness of the paper or the students. The activity
13 of these clubs and of people's identification with their own
14 culture or heritage has increased tenfold. And people are
15 getting more active and more angry that they are not getting
16 the attention that they deserve and you can feel it walking
17 around campus. Yes, it's been getting more coverage but not
18 what it deserves.

19 One student in particular that I know is an Hispanic
20 student, Patricia Lee, who is now working with us in student
21 government, was working -- was a writer for the Alligator and
22 was asked to leave because of conflicts of interest, she was
23 getting too involved with her heritage club. There's a
24 conflict there. So it's really not getting the coverage that
25 it deserves and I don't want to fault the paper, I understand

11 1 that conflicts exist at times but I think the problem is more
2 with people aren't paying attention to this -- to this trend,
3 and it is a trend, and it's going to grow.

4 MR. BERLIN: Okay. The next person I want to
5 introduce, I'm sorry, is Rickey Santa Maria. He's president of
6 the Hispanic Student Association, a group in itself has some
7 divisions but has been working together and I think under his
8 leadership has become one of the most active or most improved
9 as far as international groups on campus with this year's
10 amount of activities, incredible.

11 MR. SANTA MARIA: Thank you.

12 Hello. Okay. Just for the record my name is Richard
13 Santa Maria. I'm the out-going president for this year and I'm
14 here to talk about Hispanics in general, a little bit about
15 here in Gainesville and my organization.

16 The most important thing is just like Ben said,
17 Hispanics are not one race, one culture. Like the Asians,
18 we're very varied, you know, and it's very difficult to
19 pinpoint anything with them. You know, we come in -- we're
20 black, we come from different cultures. We have, you know,
21 everything is different. Our language can even differ. You
22 have Indian languages in South America and most people don't
23 know this, so there's a lot of racism going on that has to do
24 with ignorance. I think that's the biggest reason for racism
25 is ignorance and that's something that needs to be corrected.

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1 In terms of the racism against Hispanics it ranges.
2 For people like me I don't experience that much at all. I have
3 a very good accent. I'm very white, you know. I'm pretty well
4 integrated into the culture. However, for some of my friends
5 in my organization which are maybe from Puerto Rico or they
6 have a bad accent or they are darker in skin tone, they are
7 going to receive a lot more flack than I do. Those are the
8 kinds of problems that we need to solve but they are going to
9 be very hard to solve. We don't have a unified front like the
10 blacks do. We're very, very, you know, spread out. We have
11 different cultures, different colors. The Blacks have
12 something that unifies them and that's their history. So in
13 terms of fighting, we've been having a very hard time. Like
14 has been said by Bret and by Ben, coverage in the paper hasn't
15 been that good and I do believe that the coverage that there
16 has been hasn't been so much in the papers because of their
17 goodness, it's been because of us. In terms of participation
18 HSA is an organization that is about five years old and it's
19 always been about 40 members that would average at it's
20 meetings. And only last year did our attendance start to
21 increase, and that was thanks to our new president, the
22 University President Lombardi, which I think is a great man and
23 he started promoting diversity. And it has been during this
24 period where we've increased our attendance at our meetings to
25 about 90 students a meeting. And we went from a budget -- we

12 1 used to be under VISA under International Students. Hispanics
2 are not international students, we are citizens of this
3 country. And as citizens of this country we wanted the right
4 to be able to demand a proper budget for citizens, for people
5 who are attending the school, and present Hispanic awareness
6 programs. We went from a \$3,000 budget this year to a \$23,000
7 budget and that's what I would like to see, you know, keep
8 happening.

9 In terms of other things, Hispanics don't reach up to
10 the system. In other words Blacks have a good history of
11 working with the system and that's good and I'd like to see
12 Hispanics encouraged to do that more, which is what I have been
13 seeing happening at this University and I think it's, again,
14 thanks to the President. I think that needs to be encouraged
15 all over the country. People need to be encouraged to use the
16 system in their favor. Hispanics generally do not do that. I
17 don't know if it's because of their pride, their cultural
18 heritage but they generally do not reach out, and if they knew
19 how I think that would help them.

20 In terms of problems in the workforce, Hispanics tend
21 to do well out in the work force. As long as, you know, like
22 people like me, I won't have a problem getting a job, I think
23 some people will. I personally don't experience that much
24 racism but I have friends that do. They will have problems
25 when they go out to get a job with their accent, with their

12 1 culture, you know, people won't like them for whatever reasons.
2 But in general that's one thing, I come from a Cuban
3 background. Cubans -- I don't know if any of you know this --
4 tend to do better. We're -- for some reason we have an upper
5 class or a middle class bearing amongst all the other
6 Hispanics. If you look at the Puerto Ricans they are worse
7 off. But if you look at CEOs and people in high positions, you
8 won't find Hispanics competing in general with Whites. If you
9 look at the University, you won't find any deans that are
10 Hispanics. You look at faculty, you'll find maybe, I think the
11 number is about 80, but if you look at the total number of
12 faculty I think there's something like 3,000, 4,000 at the
13 University of Florida, I'm not sure the exact number. That's
14 ridiculous. If look at the amount in Congress how many
15 Hispanics we have in there, we don't have any. What I'd like
16 to see is some kind of out reach to these communities,
17 something that hasn't happened in the past, that also for
18 Asians, minorities in general, because I think the biggest
19 problem with minorities is the system has left them out and
20 they need to be encouraged to get into it. Better education,
21 better participation. Once you get people up into the top
22 positions then they can start helping themselves. But right
23 now, Blacks, Hispanics, Asians, we're are all sort of helpless
24 because when you don't have somebody up there to help you, you
25 can't help yourself, you have nobody to go to. And if the

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13 1 people in the top positions don't care about you, what are you
2 going to do?

3 So that's what I really was here to speak about today,
4 you know, better programs, more out reach and more attention.
5 And I think that's the problem with all the minorities and I
6 think that's the problem with racism, mostly ignorance and the
7 fact that these people have nobody to help them.

8 Thank you.

9 CHAIRMAN BROWN: Thank you very much. Don't go away,
10 we may have a couple of questions.

11 I would like to mentioned about nobody was in
12 Congress, there are Hispanics.

13 MR. BRAKE: My Congressman is Hispanic.

14 CHAIRMAN BROWN: Right, including one who is a
15 Cuban-American. There are -- Congressmen Ortez from Texas and
16 so forth. There is a Hispanic caucus. Just for the record,
17 you ought to look into that so you can become aware of that
18 representation.

19 Are there other comments?

20 MS. BARO: Yes.

21 CHAIRMAN BROWN: Yes?

22 MS. BARO: I needed to ask you how many countries are
23 represented in your backgrounds, that are represented in your
24 student association besides Cubans and Puerto Ricans?

25 MR. SANTA MARIA: Hispanic Student Association, in

13 1 terms of membership we have about maybe nine to ten countries,
2 Hispanic countries represented. And Hispanics in general I
3 think it's 26 countries, if you want to talk all South America.

4 MS. BARO: In your student association it's about nine
5 or ten?

6 MR. SANTA MARIA: In my student association we
7 actually represent about nine or ten. There are some that you
8 don't have that much students at all, you don't have that many
9 Paraguayians or, you know, there are very few of them, tend to
10 be far away, the cultures are different. But in terms of
11 representation in the organization, you have Mexicans,
12 Columbians, Nicaraguans, lots of Panamanians, Cubans, those
13 are the countries that are mostly represented.

14 MS. BROWN: What's the percentage of the Hispanic
15 students?

16 MR. SANTA MARIA: In my organization we have about 30
17 percent Cuban, maybe 33.

18 MS. BROWN: Well, campus-wide.

19 MR. SANTA MARIA: Campus-wise, that's difficult.
20 That's one of our biggest problems because what do you call a
21 Hispanic?

22 MS. BROWN: Uh-huh.

23 MR. SANTA MARIA: As of now if somebody that's
24 completely American put down Hispanic --

25 MS. BROWN: What does the school report --

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1 MR. SANTA MARIA: Huh?

2 MS. BROWN: What does your school report to the
3 Federal government as your status?

4 MR. SANTA MARIA: Right now they're saying there's
5 2,025 Hispanics on this campus, but that's a very vague number
6 because it's whoever signs Hispanic, whoever checks it.
7 There's no way to check somebody's background and see if he's
8 Hispanic or not. And then you have the people that are so
9 integrated and so cultured they don't put Hispanic, so it's a
10 really hard thing to measure.

11 MS. GARCIA: I have a question.

12 You indicated that Hispanics don't traditionally reach
13 out to the system and that you're seeing that change now, can
14 you attribute anything that's happening, specifically that has
15 happened that is causing that change?

16 MR. SANTA MARIA: In this campus, President Lombardi.
17 Nationwide, I wouldn't know what to give credit to, but I do
18 think that there is some kind of movement in general, you know,
19 which is good. I think, you know, society tends to heal over
20 and the society, like with Blacks, is a very big wound, but if
21 you come back 200 years from now we're all going to be better
22 off. But we still need to promote the change because it's
23 not -- it won't happen -- it doesn't happen by itself.

24 MS. BARO: Are some of the students citizens of this
25 country or are they here and they are going back home when they

13 1 graduate?

2 MR. SANTA MARIA: Most of the students in the
3 organization are actually citizens, but a lot of them are --

4 MS. BARO: So they live in the United States?

5 MR. SANTA MARIA: Yeah. A lot of them are students
6 from outside the country because what happens is that they need
7 support and they come to us because we can relate to them,
8 we're other Hispanics. But in general when I talk about
9 Hispanics in the association I'm not talking about citizens.

10 MS. BARO: Thank you.

11 MS. CONE: I'm curious to know where did you go to
12 high school?

13 MR. SANTA MARIA: I went to a private school in Miami
14 that originally came from Cuba called Belen Jesuit.

15 MS. CONE: Because I think a lot of the college basis
16 is based in high school background right now.

17 CHAIRMAN BROWN: All right. Thank you very much.

18 Who do you want to call next? You said you had four?

19 MR. BERLIN: Yes, there are four. And if I can just
20 make another brief comment.

21 CHAIRMAN BROWN: Go ahead.

22 MR. BERLIN: I'm not without guilt when it comes to
23 reaching out, and I'm learning this. I took office a month ago
24 and I had two waves of appointments to make, one which is my
25 cabinet, another with my executive directorships. We had more

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1 people apply to our cabinet this year than in the last four
2 years. And we had two Black students apply and I believe two
3 Hispanic students apply to our cabinet and therefore right now
4 we do not have a very diverse cabinet and, you know, I'm
5 partially to blame. We extended deadlines several times but I
6 did not reach out to groups and actually go out to bring people
7 within, which is something that I've done now when we're
8 appointing the executive directorships which are coming out,
9 thanks to the help of some of the people that are going to come
10 up and speak now. But this is something that we have to -- we
11 have to really go out and teach people because it's not, you
12 know, within, the, you know, as I guess a spokesman of the
13 White community, it's not something that I was ever aware of
14 that, you know, you must go out and recruit because there are
15 very intelligent, capable, qualified people who really don't
16 feel that there are even allowed to come and enter in the
17 system and work with the system.

18 Next, I would like to introduce Nikita Imani who is
19 Prime Minister of Loyal Order of 99 and a long time Black
20 activist on campus and leader in the Black community,
21 University of Florida.

22 MR. IMANI: Ladies and gentlemen, I must first begin
23 by disassociating my remarks from the University of Florida.
24 First, because I do not know if the University would
25 voluntarily claim the remarks that I'm going to deliver,

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1 second, because the scope of my comments extend beyond the
2 range of the University itself.

3 I will not engage in pitting a so-called minority
4 against another so-called minority, since I think that's part
5 of the plan to obscure the reality in 1992 that if you are not
6 White, America, the three Ks, you're engaged in an American
7 nightmare as opposed to an American dream. I'm going to say
8 some things you will neither like to hear nor wish to deal
9 with, but before my God I will speak the truth.

10 The problem of Black people on this campus and
11 worldwide has little to do with civil rights, but instead with
12 the mechanisms of White world supremacy and their encroaching
13 upon human rights. I'm a doctoral student with three degrees
14 concentrating in race and ethnic relations, but I have learned
15 nothing about myself that is either true or just. I have been
16 a victim of your justice. My family lived in your subhuman
17 experiments which you call Projects. I've been inebriated
18 under the influence of the alcohol and drugs that the labs of
19 this government have developed and hold patents for and which
20 in many cities are distributed by the law enforcement itself.
21 I have experienced your miseducation while I was placed in
22 disciplinary programs in special education where my only crime
23 was being more intelligent than my enemies. I remember eating
24 meat on certain days because my family could not afford a
25 decent meal. My health is permanently impaired by my inability

14 1 to afford health care and my placement in a human services
2 agency that could have cared less about humanity when it came
3 to Black people.

4 I believe in fundamental irrevocable social change.
5 So I want to share with you a few moments in hell right here in
6 North Central Florida, getting experienced by your so-called
7 fellow Americans just because their skin is black. And when I
8 speak for North Central Florida, it could just as well be
15 9 Harlem, it could just as well be Black-bottom Detroit, it could
10 just as well be Watts in Los Angeles, it could just as well be
11 Miami Overtown, Dixie Hills in Atlanta where I was born and
12 raised, and Washington DC.

13 Let me give you an example of what happens when you
14 deal with the justice system which I call the "just us system".
15 There are more Black males in jail in this country than any
16 other country in the world, close to ten times. In Ocala,
17 Florida, a group of Black citizens in conjunction with the
18 NAACP filed a class action suit against the city claiming that
19 they had been discriminated against in the receipt of services
20 and municipal -- other municipal prerogatives as citizens,
21 specifically as it relates to water service, electric service,
22 and so on. In retaliation for that lawsuit in which the city
23 was found neglect and told to comply, the city introduced a
24 rather outdated tax lien law and as a consequence of that tax
25 lien law they are now seizing the land of Black people

1 throughout the city in the poor areas on the grounds that the
2 tax liens have not been paid. And I might point out that this
3 lien law went unenforced until such time as the people decided
4 to make a claim before the justice system. You say something,
5 they take your house.

6 Education, before we get very very glorious about the
7 University it's time to tell the truth.

8 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Go ahead.

9 MR. IMANI: Last year a group of more than 300 Black
10 students had to engage in a direct action, seize control of a
11 student government office in order to get Black History Month
12 funded. The student government at that time said the reason it
13 would not be funded was because White people weren't interested
14 in Black History.

15 The curriculum, there is no course or other material
16 that is representative of the African experience or the
17 Afro-American experience in the undergraduate curriculum or the
18 graduate curriculum. The few courses that there are are
19 electives and not institutionally supported by the University.
20 The University was on the verge of funding and legitimating the
21 White student union, an organization that had been in
22 conjunction with the skin heads, the Ku Klux Klan, and other
23 assorted White supremacy institutions. This organization was
24 allowed to go around the University and to promulgate the idea
25 that Black students were not only intellectually inferior but

15 1 culturally inferior as well.

2 Let me talk about drugs. We don't have any planes, we
3 don't have any boats. You mean to tell me that a country that
4 holds all of the patents on the major drugs that we're
5 confronting today doesn't know where the drugs came from? You
6 mean to tell me that a country that can count the number of
7 illegal aliens entering the country, give you an exact figure,
8 cannot seem to find the millions of dollars in cocaine that
9 somehow get into this country? And yet at the same time in the
10 state of Florida they are pursuing the death penalty for drug
11 dealers, most of whom I might point out in the inner city areas
12 will be Black males. How about the death penalty for the drug
13 importers?

14 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: All right.

15 MR. IMANI: And speaking of the justice system and the
16 death penalty, according to the United States government,
17 before the U.N., the United States holds no political
18 prisoners. Anyone who has been properly adjudicated by the
19 U.S. Justice System is therefore removed from the category of
20 political prisoner. I could give you an extensive list and
21 would be more than happy to share with you the number of people
22 who are in jail today for their right to express themselves
23 politically from 1960 onward.

24 Police brutality. At my office I have a stack of
25 cases involving the Alachua County Sheriff's Office, involving

15 1 the Gainesville police, where individuals were dealt with
2 brutally. We had one case where a Black female ended up in the
3 hospital. She came into contact with the public defense system
4 and the Public Defender told her to plead nolo contendere,
5 which eliminated her ability to recoup liability.

16 6 I might point out that about 90 percent of the cases
7 that are put before these departments for review are returned
8 as unsubstantiated. In a sense we have the cops investigating
9 the cops. It's no surprise that it's unsubstantiated.

10 The sell-out syndrome. You talk about the presence of
11 Hispanics and Blacks and other minorities in places in
12 government. What can they say? What can they do? Still today
13 in 1992 you cannot stand up and be a Black man and say what you
14 want to say and expect those positions. Many of those people
15 in those positions are in a position, as someone made reference
16 to earlier, that they have to be whiter than white and prove
17 themselves that they are not going to consider the interests of
18 their community in order to be able to maintain that position.

19 Black people are more likely to be arrested, more
20 likely to be subjected to longer sentences. In the media we're
21 subjected to images of Willie Horton and lies. And I might
22 point out that some of these lies comes from the Federal
23 government. It allows them to continue. Black people do not
24 use the most drugs in this society. It's time to throw that
25 lie out the window. Black people do not commit the most

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1 violent crimes in this society. It's time to throw that lie
2 out the window.

3 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: All right.

4 MR. IMANI: Affirmative action has nothing to do with
5 quotas because quotas have been outlawed by the United States
6 Supreme Court. But the government continues to publish paper
7 after paper, and I read it because that's my area of expertise,
8 and these lies continue to be told. So I have to ask the
9 question is it constitution or is it conspiracy?

10 Let me talk about housing. Two weeks ago I was
11 standing with a Black female who had been the victim of
12 repeated violations of the tenant and landlord lease act. She
13 was in the process of contacting the county housing authority,
14 the response of the housing authority was to call her landlord.
15 The landlord severed her lease agreement. The housing
16 authority said she had no case. And today that Black woman
17 with her five kids are sitting out hoping they find somewhere
18 to stay.

19 So I'm here to tell you not what you want to hear, not
20 make flowery statements and put on a suit and get happy, I'm
21 here to tell you that the issue is not about civil rights,
22 really hasn't been, the issue's about human rights. And the
23 right of a human being to have a roof over their head, the
24 right of a human being to able to have effective law
25 enforcement without being a victim of law enforcement, the

16 1 right of a human being not to have drugs brought into their
2 community, the right of a human being to be able to get a job
3 so that he or she will not be susceptible to that kind of
4 industry because I can tell you right now I grew up on the
5 streets. I was right around the drug industry. And you know
6 why they use drugs? That just ignores a bit of nonsense. They
7 use drugs because it's the only thing. It's a choice between
8 survival or death. And any human being, including anybody in
9 this room or anybody on this panel would do the same thing.
10 After all the moral pronouncements the fact of the matter is
11 you have a choice to live or die and you're going to try to
12 live by whatever means is necessary.

13 So it's time to get real. It's time to get real.
14 I've been to many panels and we sit there and discuss the same
15 thing and we talk about committees and commissions. Committees
16 and commissions will never work unless you start off with the
17 right philosophy and the right philosophy is the right of every
18 person to be treated as a human being, and that's what I had to
19 share with you.

20 CHAIRMAN BROWN: Thank you very much.

21 Do you have any questions?

22 MS. BARO: I would like to know what drive made you
23 come as far as you've come and get your good education.

24 MR. IMANI: My education was earned on the street.
25 What I'm earning now is credentials because if I say

16 1 anything -- the interesting thing is in society we say we have
2 the right of freedom of speech, but not if I say it as a
3 brother coming from the Projects, you know, that doesn't count.
4 But now I'm still a brother coming from the Projects, that's
5 where I came from, that's where I am today, I just happen to be
6 sitting here, this time I'm going to have a degree. And if
17 7 that forces people to listen to reality, yeah, I'll go through
8 it, I'll go ahead and get my Ph.D, but what I know about
9 reality in America came from the streets.

10 MS. BROWN: I find nothing offensive in anything
11 you've said and I'm concerned about the response or reaction
12 you've gotten from this community when you've tried to espouse
13 your ideas.

14 MR. IMANI: Well, shut down. Everywhere you go.
15 Right here on this campus it's kind of a running joke that
16 wherever I go there are five officers. We had a Malclom X
17 memorative rally and we were trying to teach about Malcolm X,
18 and I mean I don't think you have enough time for me to go
19 through all the different things that the University did. One
20 of the things that happened was the day of the Malcolm X rally,
21 a White female who lived in Gainesville, apparently some
22 undetonated Army shell or something was found in her yard. So
23 that's the way the justice system works. Of course we're
24 responsible, right? Black people talking about Malcom X, they
25 got to want to kill people. So, therefore, we had FBI, GPD,

17 1 UPD, about 30 officers waiting for us before the rally started.
2 When we got started with the rally, okay, they took -- first
3 they said the issue was the sound equipment, we didn't have a
4 permit for the sound equipment. I told them well, you can take
5 the sound equipment. I didn't ask for it anyways, somebody had
6 brought it up. And we sat there with the sound equipment, then
7 when they took the sound equipment they still said they were
8 going to break us up. They sent the two Black deans, and I
9 really resent that to this day, they always send a couple of
10 Uncle Toms out there, and they said talk some reason into them.
11 I got reason. I had a reason to be out there. And I had a
12 reason to stay out there. And I didn't leave. But they sent
13 the two Black deans. Now, come on brother, we want to appeal
14 to your sense of reason, you're going to have to shut this
15 down. I said there's no law anywhere that says I have to shut
16 this down. I demand my right to speak, not just because it's
17 in the Constitution, but because I'm a human being and God
18 gives me the power to say what I got to say.

19 And I'm saying that that has happened -- I remember
20 another time when I was talking to a student explaining
21 something we had just done, we had just done a public
22 demonstration, and this white male student was asking me, you
23 know, what was the significance of it. So students began to
24 congregate. And after a while there must have been a hundred
25 students kind of just standing around and we were having this

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1 talk. And I was just on the issue of what happens to a Black
2 person who speaks out when the University police rolled up.
3 They didn't go to anybody else, they came to me and cited me on
4 the grounds that I was having a demonstration without a permit.
5 And I said: Officer, I'm not having a demonstration without a
6 permit. So he went back and got another law, well, you're
7 standing within 500 feet of an entrance. Officer, I'm no where
8 near the entrance. Okay. And then when a white female spoke
9 up and said: Well, if you arrest him you're going to have to
10 arrest all of us because he's breaking the same rule that we
11 are. And that's when the officer looked around and realized
12 that he didn't want to create a martyr. But if I had been by
13 myself I would have been sitting in a jail cell for my right to
14 speak.

15 I'm here to tell you the reality. I'm telling you a
16 lot of times we sit and we get in these offices and we start
17 looking at data and numbers, but there are people dying in the
18 streets of this county for racism. So I'm here to bring you a
19 little bit of the reality.

20 MS. GARCIA: You mention police brutality in your
21 remarks, is there any mechanism for citizen involvement in the
22 review process of allegations?

23 MR. IMANI: What happens most of the time is that
24 there is collusion, and whether we like it or not, there's a
25 great deal of collusion in the justice system between both the

17 1 government officials, you know, the political government
2 officials, the Justice Department officials, the corrections
3 officials, especially in Florida, it's like a grand conspiracy.
4 The first thing they did was they severed most of the
18 5 rehabilitation programs. So they basically admitted the fact
6 that we aren't trying to get you back in society, we want to
7 put you in a holding cell and treat you like an animal. And
8 what do you get when you treat a human being like an animal?
9 An animal Is there any surprise?

10 And what happens is you end up, you get like in small
11 towns you'll have officers who get bonuses and stuff based on
12 how many arrests they make. Well, what do you do? You know,
13 you go out and find some brother. I remember one brother that
14 we had to bail out of jail for a speeding ticket and he claimed
15 he wasn't speeding. And said -- we asked the officer: What
16 evidence do you have that he was speeding? He said my eyes are
17 radar-trained. See, the thing about it -- and the interesting
18 thing, if you turn a ticket -- if you get a ticket over in
19 Florida, you turn it over, it says there's \$500, you take a
20 risk when you go into a courtroom. Now let's be honest. Let's
21 be totally honest. What color is the Judge going to be?

22 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: White.

23 MR. IMANI: What color is the jury going to be?

24 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: White.

25 MR. IMANI: Okay. Now you're sitting in there and

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1 then you've got a White police officer and it's all their word.
2 You're sitting there and you're like: I wasn't speeding, he
3 told me his eyes were radar-trained. And in any other -- if
4 justice existed, then this whole thing would be ridiculous. I
5 wouldn't even be talking with about this, but the fact is that
6 Black people go to jail. We had to bail this brother out of
7 jail on something like that. And the appeal process was to go
8 to another friend of the Judge and ask him to throw the case
9 out. So, see, the reality is we don't have a principle of
10 justice because any principle is based on humanity. I would
11 argue the law, okay, the law response to the nature of the
12 society. We've got to work on the society because if we put
13 law in a society that's inherently racist, we're going to get a
14 racist law, and that's what we're dealing with. That's why you
15 can beat down a brother if you're a police officer, because who
16 does that brother have to go to? I've had Black people crying
17 to me because they've been everywhere, they've been to the
18 courthouse, they've been to the State capitol, they've been
19 everywhere, and all they get told is we can't do nothing for
20 you. And I'm here to tell you that if -- if something is not
21 done, in terms of the treatment of people of human rights,
22 things in this country are only going to get worse.

23 There are young brothers and sisters that are not
24 going to buy a dream. A dream doesn't feed my kids. A dream
25 is not going to educate me with what I need to know to survive.

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1 A dream is not going to get the drugs out of my community. And
2 the only way we can stop dreaming is to wake up to the reality.

3 CHAIRMAN BROWN: I want to thank you very much.

4 You mentioned that you had a number of cases on police
5 documented in your office --

6 MR. IMANI: Yes.

7 CHAIRMAN BROWN: -- I would like very much if you
8 would make it available to our staff, to be able to look at
9 those and get that kind of documentation, because the issue --
10 particular the issue of police and their excessive violence
11 like the one that's been involved in this community -- this
12 committee in a number of cities throughout the State of Florida
13 as well as the Commission across the country.

14 Again, thank you very much for coming --

15 MR. IMANI: Thank you.

16 CHAIRMAN BROWN: -- for coming here this afternoon.

17 You have one more?

18 MR. BERLIN: One more.

19 CHAIRMAN BROWN: And then we'll take a brief break
20 then come back.

21 MR. BERLIN: Jabari White, who is also a Black
22 activist.

23 CHAIRMAN BROWN: Thank you. That's my son's name,
24 Jabari.

25 MR. WHITE: Is that true?

18 1 CHAIRMAN BROWN: Yes. It means brave, strong in
2 Swahili.

3 MR. WHITE: Thank you. I've been trying to prove that
4 to people for a long time.

5 My name is Jabari White. I'm just -- I'm a regular
6 student. I don't have a degree yet. I'm an electrical
7 engineering major. I would just like --

8 MR. DOCTOR: What position?

9 MR. WHITE: I'm an electrical engineering major.

10 MR. DOCTOR: I mean the organization you represent.

11 MR. WHITE: Black Student Union.

12 MR. DOCTOR: Okay.

19 13 MR. WHITE: I'd just like to give some examples of
14 some of the problems, some of the real problems at the
15 University of Florida. A lot of them were touched on, but I
16 would just like to give you a complete list of some of the
17 things that I think, and I think I speak for a lot of Black
18 students here.

19 I've internshipped with AT&T and I cut my hair over
20 the summer so I mean I'm a regular -- I'm a regular student
21 except when I'm here in classes.

22 One of the first things is that there's no
23 African-American department. There's -- I think we're four
24 percent on this campus, maybe three percent during the Spring.
25 I think the total is 1800 when we get here in the Fall, but

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1 that number doesn't even -- it's not even 1800 because some of
2 us don't find the money to get here when they say we were going
3 to be here anyway.

4 I've been here three years. I think one out of every
5 three of my close Black friends are gone now, back home,
6 working, you know, menial jobs. A lot of them are facing
7 reality and having to do some immoral things to survive.

8 The Afro-American Department, it has one teacher for
9 the class. Afro-American Studies is the one class that we do
10 have. There's one teacher. That class is filled every year.
11 There's a waiting list every semester since I've been here to
12 get into that class. I mean, if that's not an example, you
13 know, for backing up the resources, the one or two
14 African-American teachers that want to do it don't have the
15 time because they are on committees and commissions and they
16 have their other research to do in the beginning, so there's a
17 lack of -- lack of professors to even back up this program in
18 the first place. And I don't see it, I don't see any -- I've
19 been here three years and I haven't seen any change. I haven't
20 seen any commitment to Black professors. And as other people
21 were saying, who do you go to when you have a problem, you
22 know, a problem with another professor or a problem that you
23 need some -- you know, you look for someone of your own color
24 and they don't exist at the University of Florida.

25 Next, student government is not -- is not open to me

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1 and to the people that I represent. I don't feel comfortable
2 in the office. I don't think I've ever felt comfortable in the
3 office, or the office is upstairs, I think it's the third floor
4 of the Reitz Union is a place that -- it's like Georgia, it's
5 Georgia or South Carolina, small town, it's a place that people
6 who look like me don't go through or avoid like the plague
7 because you know what's going to happen. You know, you don't
8 expect any pluses at all.

9 I think that the service personnel at the University
10 of Florida, the clean up crew, is all -- or should I say the
11 majority, 90 percent Black. These are the custodians, and
12 these are the people that clean up the dorm rooms. I know
13 Alachua County has a large population of Black people but I
14 don't think that all of the cleaning people should be Black and
15 they are distinguished by a uniform. I think that Black
16 people -- the Black service people wear blue uniforms and most
17 of the Whites wear white. And I think the White -- the White
18 service people there are mainly construction. It's -- it
19 ranges, and that's something that I think definitely needs to
20 be looked into.

21 Let me say rebel flags in our -- when we walk through
22 our -- through our campus is not a good sign. Just Thursday,
23 Southern Partisan's Day, I don't know if that's an official
24 day, but I had to jump up in a tree and tear down a rebel flag
25 Thursday walking to class, to my culture diversity class. So,

19 1 you know, it's those type of hypocrisies.

2 Financial Aid. The financial aid has had a complaint
3 of one or two -- all these things can be looked into by I think
4 Dean Robinson or me or Nikita can give you follow up.

5 There's a financial aid problem. People who go in to
6 seek financial aid are told to come back next week. And then
7 when they come in next week they are told to come in next week.
8 And they are told to come in next week. And when they come in
9 next week they are told that the money would be in next week.
20 10 And when they come in next week to get the money they are told
11 the money is going to be there next week. And that's the
12 problem. That's a problem that hurts people more than you
13 think because I have to get a job then and that takes away from
14 my study time. It also puts pressure on me because I don't
15 know if I'm going to be able to pay my tuition. That's a
16 problem that I think that the majority, if not most people,
17 most Blacks on financial aid are facing. That department does
18 not have any priority or they're backed up in paperwork, that
19 the majority of Black people depend on financial aid is a big
20 part of being here. That's one of the only reasons that they
21 would be here in the first place. And the financial aid money
22 does not come through.

23 I would like to talk about my book bag policy. I
24 can't walk around Gainesville in Black neighborhoods without a
25 book bag without being harassed. I can't walk through campus

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1 without being harassed. I can't walk through the student
2 ghetto without a book bag without being harassed. But when I
3 put on a book bag or if I say, you know: Yes, sir, how are you
4 doing, sir? And I talk with -- I say my corporate American
5 accent, I can get by. But as soon as I leave that alone, as
6 soon as I don't cut my hair, or maybe not put on my book bag or
7 maybe walk around with three or four of my Black friends in a
8 group, those type of things don't -- I mean, I'm sure a lot of
9 Alachua residents can tell you a lot more, but Black students,
10 once they come off that campus, you know, they're Black, and I
11 understand we're the exception, but we're Black residents and
12 Alachua County has it bad, has it real bad.

13 Black athletes. Black athletes are, in my experience,
14 are treated as horses and animals. I sit in a class with one
15 or two Black athletes and the teachers don't -- don't respect
16 them. They don't -- they don't ask them for any input. They
17 just -- they expect them to not do anything. And that
18 perpetuates a stereotype or that perpetuates a reason for
19 thinking that they are not -- they don't want to get an
20 education. Black athletes aren't graduating at our school.
21 Now Black athletes aren't even going to the pros at our school.
22 That's really something that needs to be looked into is the
23 athletic department and the sponsoring of Black educational
24 athletic programs and making sure they graduate.

25 Also, I also think that the University of Florida

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1 makes a lot of money off of sports on football, on basketball.
2 I think a majority of those teams are Black. And that's not --
3 none of that money is going to Black History Month, you know.
4 None of that money is going to the BSU. None of that money is
5 going to a Black student center. But yet, you know, they all
6 have -- they all seem to have a pretty car, you know, on Friday
7 nights. And most of these athletes come from the same
8 neighborhood that I came from and are some of my good friends
9 so, you know, I know mom and dad. Mom and dad came from the
10 same neighborhood as I did and they don't have that money. So
11 that's something that really I think needs to be looked at is
12 if you treat someone like -- like an animal, they are going
13 to -- they are going to behave like an animal.

14 The next was the BSU. And the BSU has been
15 underfunded every year since I guess it's existed. I don't
16 think student government allows BSU to be totally independent
17 funded, I'm not sure about that, but as a result BSU has to
18 curb its ways. We can't be politically active. We can't -- we
19 can't demonstrate. And a lot of leaders are scared to be
20 zero-funded. That's a big -- that's a big issue.

21 And I heard people here talk about how, you know,
22 Blacks on this campus have it good. Let me tell you there's no
23 way, or have to have it better than any minority. We may talk
24 a good game, you know, but the bottom line is we're suffering,
25 we're suffering bad. I mean I think as a country we're 20

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1 percent of this population and when Fall rolls around -- when
2 Spring rolls around the second semester, you don't see but a
3 thousand some Black students on this campus. And that's three,
4 you know, three percent. That's not right. There's something
5 wrong there. I think there's more Black males in jail than
6 there is in -- than in college.

7 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: There is.

8 MR. WHITE: All right. That's a fact.

9 Let's talk about the Allegator. The Allegator
10 underrepresents, it doesn't do anything. They might do a Black
11 History Month and put a spotlight of a Black inventor, and that
12 doesn't -- that's not knowledge itself, that's just telling me
13 some Black facts for me to remember. That does nothing for my
14 psychological or mental stability. That gives me no -- that
15 gives me no foundation, that's just a bunch of Black American
16 facts. That's -- that's no African -- African heritage in
17 those Allegator reports. Also they misquote a lot of Black
18 activists on our campus. I think that everyone here can, as a
19 student can think of something to the Allegator and that
20 something and saying A and T comes out in the reports. So, I
21 don't think the Aligator is -- I think it's a monopoly. And I
22 think it also represents a good portion of what people when
23 they read that they believe that.

24 And they have a way of saying things like they
25 portrayed BSU as a bunch of -- bunch of savages, who, you know,

1 if they don't get their money are going to go crazy, you know,
2 that BSU doesn't have a purpose, it doesn't belong in today's
3 society and that's -- that's too far, in my opinion, from the
4 truth. They don't see the purpose of African-Americans setting
5 up a network system for themselves. That's a mentality at the
6 University of Florida that I think has been perpetuated by
7 President Lombardi that we're all the same and we're all just
8 going to melt. And that's not going to work, you know, because
9 I'm different than everyone in here, and including the Black
10 people in here, and that has to be respected.

11 Freedom of speech is a big issue. Nikita touched on
12 mainly what I wanted to say about that. Freedom -- there's a
13 coalition right now going on on freedom of speech, but
14 University of Florida has in its trials on student affairs, the
15 Court system is not -- it's a mix between the law system and
16 the student conduct codes and it doesn't work. The trials that
17 they have for students, you have to have a preponderance of the
18 evidence that's all you have to be to be found guilty. And what
19 is a preponderance of the evidence? And no witnesses can be --
20 the credibility of the witnesses don't matter. You can't
21 cross-examine the witnesses, you can't ask them -- as a
22 defendant you can't ask the witnesses any questions. Moreover,
23 just little things like -- like I think the University of
24 Florida has made a commitment before I got here to have a
25 concert of some sort, socialized event for -- it's quoted as

1 1 the Black Concert, and that hasn't happened. There are some
2 2 Black groups that come by but those Black groups aren't picked
3 3 by the BSU. And if they are, they are picked because someone
4 4 handed them a list and said here pick between, you know, Bill
5 5 Cosby and, you know, Danny Glover, you know. Those aren't --
6 6 we're not going out like that.

7 Time. I don't have time to -- the time that I need to
8 8 study if I were to sit on all the racial boards and committees
9 9 that a person from African descent with knowledge itself, you
10 10 know, has to do. I mean I'm asked to come and do this for this
11 11 protest and this for racial equality, but I shouldn't have to
12 12 do that. I want to spend the majority of my time studying and
13 13 the rest of the time having the time of my life.

14 And that's about it.

15 CHAIRMAN BROWN: Thank you. Thank you very much.

16 Any questions?

2 17 MS. BROWN: You've mentioned several things. My
18 18 brother graduated from this institution about 11 years ago and
19 19 not much has changed, but there's one thing you didn't mention
20 20 and I'm just personally curious about it, incidents in the
21 21 library, what has been the experience of minority students in
22 22 that area? There was 15 years ago quite a bit of uproar in
23 23 that area in particular on this institution.

24 MR. WHITE: Yeah, it's funny that you say that. There
25 25 was a new rule made -- there was a new rule made because Nikita

2 1 Imani somehow is sneaking into the library taking books.
2 There's a new rule now that the employees of the library have
3 to search every floor to make sure that people aren't in the
4 library. And the security doors -- and this just happened this
5 week now -- the security doors have been moved. You have to go
6 through -- like the screening things now have been moved to the
7 other side to block another entrance. I mean just --

8 MS. BROWN: Is there more access to library services
9 now?

10 MR. WHITE: I mean, yeah, we can all go into the
11 library, that's not a problem. But when you say -- when you
12 say access, what do you mean?

13 MS. BROWN: Assistance with research, assistance with
14 dissertations, assistance that is generally given to anybody
15 else that asks.

16 MR. WHITE: That's something that you ask your upper
17 class Black students to help you do.

18 CHAIRMAN BROWN: Other questions? Okay.

19 You want to --

20 MR. BERLIN: I want to say thank you very much. I
21 know we took up a whole lot of your time but I think it's been
22 worthwhile. We shed a lot of things here.

23 And, again, I want to extend an invitation to come
24 this evening.

25 CHAIRMAN BROWN: Thank you all very much.

2 1 We're going to take a very brief break. We do have to
2 be out so we will reconvene in ten minutes on the dot.

3 MR. DOCTOR: And we have some publications up here
4 too, you may feel free to come up and take them.

5 (RECESS.)

6 CHAIRMAN BROWN: All right. Everybody, we're going to
7 get back together again. We have less than an hour to go here.

8 Our next speaker would be Ms. Ida Rawls Reynolds.

9 Okay. Let's start, even though we have a couple of
10 people still to come back in.

11 Welcome, Ms. Reynolds. You are the Equal Opportunity
12 Director with the Alachua County Board of Commissioners?

13 MS. REYNOLDS: Yes.

14 CHAIRMAN BROWN: Okay. Thank you.

15 MS. REYNOLDS: Okay. What I've done with my
16 presentation is to prepare informal, as you requested, a kind
17 of summary, a capsule of some of the incidents that have been
18 reported to our office over the last couple of years. The
19 incident -- I have selected information providing the general
20 involvement of the incident, not including the names of the
21 individuals or the businesses, or what have you, but if you
22 would like to follow up I would be glad to give you that
23 information from my office.

24 I will begin with the incident reported by a student
25 from the University of Florida, since you've had a number of

2 1 students who have come before you so that I will move beyond
2 that.

3 The student who is now a graduate, has already
4 graduated from the University of Florida and graduated in 1990.
5 But the concern of the student who helped the Alachua County
6 Commission to pull together a local race relations forum to
7 address the problem that they felt had become much larger even
8 then when they initially enrolled in the school. At the time
9 the students stated that he was informed by one of his
10 professors that the University of Florida was basically for
11 White males and advised him that he might want to consider
12 attending the Florida, FMU, Florida Mechanical University, and
13 that he would not graduate from the University of Florida.
14 After graduating or in his senior year he came to our office,
15 not that he wanted to file a complaint but he thought that
16 someone should know, and he wanted to work and help to develop
17 a local race relations forum, which we did and held for the
18 community.

3 19 The next incident that I would like to bring to your
20 attention was one that covers public accommodation. It deals
21 with a young college student from Santa Fe Community College
22 and her boyfriend who were at the Oaks Mall. While they were
23 in the mall they saw a security guard who had an -- one of the
24 beepers that they carry. The young man asked her if she
25 thought that it was real, if it really worked. She said: I

3
1 imagine so, he appears to be speaking in it. And the security
2 guard came up and wanted to know, you know, what were they
3 saying. And then told them that he could have them evicted or
4 put off of the mall premises and not allowed to return. And
5 they informed him that he only inquired about whether or not
6 what he was using was authentic because they see people with
7 them all the time. He stated that he could still have them,
8 for no reason because he was the security guard, he could
9 have -- they had problems with people like them all the time
10 and he could have them put off the premises. So a verbal
11 altercation pursued. Some young White -- a young White couple
12 walking with them came up and said: Well, they really didn't
13 do anything, they merely asked what was that that you had and
14 if it was real. He said: I am the security guard and I can
15 have you put off. He persisted along that vane. So the young
16 man said: This is just racist, you know, you just don't want
17 us here. And simply because I'm a black male and I pointed and
18 I asked that question, that's why this is happening to me.

19 He then proceeded to call the other security guard and
20 asked him to escort them from the premises. The security guard
21 came. Once again they explained the situation. The witnesses
22 there who were both Black and non-Black also explained the
23 situation. He said it is my authority to put you out of the
24 mall and have you not return here again.

25 The supervisor left and instructed the guards to have

3 1 them bodily removed from the mall -- this happened this year --
2 had them bodily removed from the mall. They explained again:
3 We didn't do anything. They said: Yes, but if you don't
4 leave, even though nothing happened, he can call the police and
5 it will be even more embarrassing.

6 That young couple left the mall, the security guards
7 with them. All of them apologized. They no longer shop at the
8 mall.

9 The next incident happened this year also. I received
10 a call from a 9th grader whose parents wanted him to call and
11 let me know what happened in his classroom because he felt that
12 it was discriminatory. So the way the student presented it to
13 me, he said if you were a teacher and you were teaching a
14 classroom of students and one of the students who is a class
15 clown acts out all the time began to act out, what would you
16 say to that student who happened to be Black? Would you ask
17 him: Is that the way a 9th grader acts? Or would you ask him:
18 Is that the way Black people act during Black History Month?
19 And I was just taken back. I said: Of course I would ask him
20 is that the way a 9th grader behaves. He said: Well, that's
21 not what our teacher did. He said our teacher asked the
22 student: Is that the way a Black person acts? Are you
23 demonstrating for us how a Black person acts? And this happens
24 to be Black History Month. And so he felt that he didn't want
25 anyone to take any action but he wanted someone to know that he

3 1 felt that this was demonstrative of the kind of behavior that
2 sometimes take place in the classroom. So I thought that was
3 interesting for you to know.

4 The next incident happened with the young lady who
5 owns a business here. And she had applied to one of our local
6 banks, and I have discussed this situation with the
7 investigator for the banking institution, but she had applied
8 for a loan to build a home. At the time she applied for the
9 loan the loan was -- the house was to be located in the
10 northeast (sic) area of town, which happened to be the
11 predominantly Black -- White area. After applying and getting
12 their approval of the loan she found that because of a change
13 in the way the land is zoned and the size property you could
14 build a home on, she could no longer use the property that
15 she'd purchased several years ago to build her home. She
16 decided to build in the northeast area, which is predominantly
17 a Black neighborhood, and to also use Black construction
18 general -- as general managers.

19 The bank, after having approved the loan, then
20 rescinded their approval because of the location and the
21 individuals that she would have constructing her loan.

22 They finally did concede, after the investigator was
23 called in, to provide the loan but only with the construction
24 person that they would approve.

25 The next incident I will relate to you came from a

4 1 young man approximately 24 years old, several incidents with
2 the city police department. This young man drives a red
3 Bronco, works for one of the -- for Anheuser-Busch, it's called
4 Meadow Container, happens to be one of the highest paid
5 employers -- highest paying employers in the area. He was
6 stopped several times, one time with his brother and his cousin
7 in the car and asked to get out and the police searched the
8 car. And he asked him why, you know, why are you doing this?
9 Why are you doing this? He was embarrassed because his younger
10 brother and his younger cousin who was visiting the area was
11 with him. The second time he was stopped they asked him the
12 same thing. The third time he was stopped he was with his wife
13 coming home from a movie and this time they not only stopped
14 him but they had him spread eagle on the van and also turn some
15 big spotlight on him. It was very embarrassing. And he
16 demanded that they either arrest him or let him know what was
17 wrong.

18 He then went to the police department and reported the
19 incident. They informed him at that time that the reason why
20 he was stopped was because he met the profile for a drug
21 dealer. He was a young Black male under the age of 25 in a
22 late -- that type of vehicle, traveling toward the northeast
23 side of town. I contacted Chief Clifton, he said that that
24 should not be going on at his station and that he knew of
25 nothing official that would condone that and he would look into

4 1 the matter, but the way he stopped this from happening to this
2 young man was to take his tag number so that the next time he
3 would not be stopped.

4 The next incident happened at a service station. I
5 was on my way to make a presentation to a group of prison
6 officials on equal opportunity law. Stopped with my daughter
7 to get fuel from the service station, pulled up behind a -- I
8 don't know the age, a black male who was driving a fairly late
9 model car who had been waiting for a while and at the same time
10 another -- two other customers came up. The way the service
11 station is set up it appears to be a self-service but actually
12 the attendant does come and provide the service. The attendant
13 ignored the black male that was standing there and went to the
14 other non-Black and started to provide the service. So the
15 male said: Wait, I was here. What's going on? I've been
16 sitting here a few minutes? What's going on? And it happened
17 to be a female attendant and she ignored him, didn't say
18 anything. So the young man became very, very loud and then the
19 manager became involved and it was about to be a very, very
20 violent situation. The young man went toward his trunk. I had
21 my young daughter in the car and we left.

22 The next incident deals with three middle school Black
23 boys who were walking home from school. They were walking from
24 the area over in northeast Gainesville that -- it's from Howard
25 Bishop Middle School. While they were walking home a car

4 1 carrying several white older males, older than the middle
2 school student, began to chase them and called them by racial
3 slurs. This incident was reported to their parents. And they
4 were told that because they had no suspect or didn't know who
5 it was there was nothing they could do about it.

6 And because I was not here, there's -- the other
7 incidents here deal with incidents that were reported to us
8 from the University of Florida that may have already been dealt
9 with so I will not go into those.

5 10 The other areas, the only other area that I've had --
11 I've had a call from a representative for a young woman who in
12 this it did not fall under the racial tension but I thought it
13 could be a motivating factor if not dealt with and it has been
14 presented to the Commission in their this year's budget, but
15 with the growing numbers of other groups in the area there is
16 a, within government, one of the barriers in addition to that
17 of opening up places for disabled citizens in this area is the
18 barrier of language for groups, non-English speaking groups.
19 The Florida Commission who was here earlier and has to leave, I
20 will also need to leave and I thank you for allowing me to come
21 up, but I'm the President of the Florida Association of
22 Community Relations Professionals and they have asked that if
23 you would please contact them, they would also like to
24 participate in your committee.

25 Also, when the Florida Commission left, and I think

5 1 they may have already given you some information, asking if you
2 would please contact them, but they also wanted you to know
3 that they have executive directors of the Hispanic Commission
4 for the State of Florida, the Native American Indian Affair and
5 they are all located in the Governor's office and you may want
6 to write and see if they would like to share any of the
7 information that they have. So I wanted to pass that on.

8 ♦ ♦ ♦ The other area within the public schools that we would
9 probably -- I've gotten information concerning the ability to
10 participate in extra curricular activities. It seems that in
11 the integrated school setting many of the minority students
12 have very little opportunity to participate in extra curricular
13 activities. The one that was brought to our attention and we
14 went in and sat in on the selection because young girls came to
15 us and said that they were unable to be selected as
16 cheerleaders on the teams that cheered for the sports team. So
17 we went and the one that we attended they did select one
18 individual. But that is very rare and it's usually one
19 individual.

20 I think I want to mention this on housing, in that the
21 representative that came to us was a non-minority and the
22 concern was that he served as a representative in the school
23 system. Each school has an individual that worked with new
24 residents who come into the area to live and they work with the
25 real estate companies and trying to help them and direct them

5

1 to housing and what have you, and one of the questions asked is
2 what's the school system like? What's the school that's near
3 the housing like? And what he found was that individuals when
4 it came to the school that he represented, which happened to be
5 Lincoln Middle School, it's a predominantly Black school
6 located in a predominantly Black neighborhood, that individuals
7 were telling him that they were being directed away from the
8 housing that's predominantly White that's adjacent to or behind
9 that school because if they moved into that particular housing
10 then their children would need to attend school in a
11 predominantly White neighborhood. We took that information and
12 forwarded it to the justice department because we could find no
13 complainant, he just wanted to present the information that he
14 had gotten through his knowledge as being the school
15 representative and being non-Whites he was being told that that
16 is what was happening.

17 Okay. That's a kind of a summary of the cases that I
18 pulled out of my office and the inquiries that have come
19 through my office that I wanted to kind of bring to your
20 attention.

21 CHAIRMAN BROWN: Okay. Thank you very much. Just a
22 quick comment on your suggestions that you made for follow-up
23 contacts, Fed** agencies. We will be holding a major public
24 hearing, put that in quotes because it is not an official
25 Commission hearing, in Tallahassee in the Fall and it's at that

5 1 time that we intend to be contacting from a statewide basis
2 those representatives of the State, State offices, so they
3 are --

4 MS. REYNOLDS: I will pass that on to them.

5 CHAIRMAN BROWN: So if you are talking to them you can
6 let them know they will be hearing from us, as we are scheduled
7 to meet in Tallahassee.

8 MS. REYNOLDS: Okay.

9 CHAIRMAN BROWN: Let me ask you one short question
10 before I open it up to the Committee, and that is have you seen
11 any increase in these kinds of incidents in the recent --
12 recently in the recent past?

6 13 MS. REYNOLDS: I would definitely say that I have
14 personally through our office seen increases within the last
15 three, three years or more, that they have increased. They
16 were not -- I'm sure they have not gone away but they were not
17 so prevalent as they are now.

18 CHAIRMAN BROWN: Thank you.

19 Do we have questions?

20 MS. LITTLER: Yes, I do have a question for
21 clarification.

22 When you spoke about the incident at the mall --

23 MS. REYNOLDS: Uh-huh.

24 MS. LITTLER: -- you talked about the security guard.
25 And there's a sheriff's substation there --

6
1 MS. REYNOLDS: Yes.

2 MS. LITTLER: -- I guess, so I assume then that this
3 was a county deputy sheriff as opposed to a security guard that
4 the mall hired?

5 MS. REYNOLDS: The information that was filed with us
6 was that it was mall security. I do not know whether they are
7 deputy sheriffs or hired by the mall. I don't have that
8 specific information.

9 MS. LITTLER: Okay.

10 MS. BROWN: You mentioned these cases that you've had
11 in your office, can you just give me a brief idea of what your
12 process is? Someone files a complaint and then what happens
13 after that?

14 MS. REYNOLDS: Basically what happens with the cases
15 that we've received here, they call because they don't know
16 anywhere else to call. And nine times out of ten the problem
17 is getting them to file. So what we do, we write them up as
18 incidents but we call and try to negotiate. The couple at the
19 mall absolutely refused to deal with the mall at all and did
20 not want to go through any process at all. But basically we
21 try and negotiate or if they will file a public accommodation,
22 we'll investigate ourselves or we'll refer it to the Florida
23 Commission on Human Relations in the incidence of public
24 accommodation.

25 MS. BROWN: So you have investigators that would go

6
1 out --

2 MS. REYNOLDS: Yes.

3 MS. BROWN: -- investigate a formal complaint --

4 MS. REYNOLDS: Yes.

5 MS. BROWN: -- and determine what's going on?

6 MS. REYNOLDS: Yes. Right. Most times we're able to
7 clear it up at the conciliation process.

8 MS. BROWN: On any area; employment, public
9 accommodations, everything?

10 MS. REYNOLDS: Yes. Those are the areas covered.

11 MS. BROWN: In the county?

12 MS. REYNOLDS: Yes, uh-huh.

13 MR. KNIGHT: The size of your staff -- may I ask what
14 size is your staff?

15 MS. REYNOLDS: It's a small staff of four. There's
16 also a city human relations office with the staff of I think
17 five.

18 MR. KNIGHT: Okay.

19 MS. BARO: I've received comments made to me when I
20 tell them go to the Equal Opportunity, that it takes too long,
21 the process takes too long. Is that true in your case or --

22 MS. REYNOLDS: I think that probably, particularly in
23 employment, the cases are sometimes at least six months. So,
24 yes, it is. It all depends on whether or not you're able to
25 conciliate or whether you go through an actual process of

6 1 investigation and how readily available the information is.
2 So, I think all of the offices do take much longer than the
3 individual who's looking for employment. You know, you want to
4 try and get it resolved immediately. But I found the
5 employment ones usually we're able to resolve through
6 conciliation. The ones that are very difficult are the housing
7 where an individual needs a place to stay. And the ones that
8 deal with the incidents with the police department, those
9 referrals are made to those agencies, and I don't know how long
10 they take.

11 CHAIRMAN BROWN: You are a delegate agency for EEOC?

12 MS. REYNOLDS: No, we're not. We're on our local
13 ordinance and the cases for EEOC are referred to the Florida
14 Commission on Human Relations.

15 CHAIRMAN BROWN: What about HUD? Do you delegate
16 agencies for HUD?

17 MS. REYNOLDS: On housing, not employment.

18 CHAIRMAN BROWN: You are on housing?

19 MS. REYNOLDS: Right, right.

20 CHAIRMAN BROWN: Thank you.

21 I'd like to call next Mr. Don Grooms.

22 MR. GROOMS: Thank you, sir.

23 CHAIRMAN BROWN: Native American Representative,
24 University of Florida.

25 MR. GROOMS: As one of the two Native American

6 1 spokesmen in Gainesville I'm in somewhat demand. The other one
2 is a radical-aimed confrontationist, probably out protesting
3 the Columbus exhibit.

4 As I understand -- it said 1:30 and that's when I
5 arrived and missed the opening introductions, may I know who
6 I'm talking to?

7 CHAIRMAN BROWN: Sure. We are the Florida Advisory
8 Committee --

9 MR. GROOMS: I mean the names, I like to deal
10 personally.

11 CHAIRMAN BROWN: Okay. Want to go through it? Okay
12 if we just start around, start with Linda.

13 MS. GARCIA: I'm Linda Garcia from Tampa.

14 MS. BROWN: I'm Harriett Brown from Orlando.

15 MS. LITTLER: June Littler, Gainesville.

16 MR. KNIGHT: Bob Knight, the Nevada Regional Office.

17 CHAIRMAN BROWN: Brad Brown, Miami.

18 MR. DOCTOR: Bobby Doctor, Atlanta.

19 MS. CONE: Virgie Cone, Jasper.

20 MS. BARO: Alicia Baro.

21 MR. BRAKE: Bob Brake, Coral Gables.

22 MR. AGIN: Sol Agin, Ft. Myers.

23 MR. GROOMS: Wonderful.

24 As I understand it -- do you want to know are there
25 racial tensions in the Gainesville area? Depends on who you

7
1 talk to. Since I got your letter I've talked to a lot of
2 people. I've talked to students and they say yes, there's a
3 lot of racial tension. Talk to towns people, they say yes,
4 there's racial tension. You talk to people in the ghetto, they
5 say yes, there's racial tensions. I talked to minority faculty
6 and they say no, there's no racial tension.

7 Twenty-five years ago President Lyndon Johnson hired
8 me to go around the south and investigate organizations that
9 had contracts with Federal government, ostensibly to make sure
10 they honored all areas of their contract, including
11 anti-discrimination clauses. But as he explained it to me
12 personally, what I want you to do, there's been a wave of
13 racial violence in the late '60s, he said I want to know about
14 it before it explodes into the newspapers. That was my basic
15 job. So I believe what you're looking for here is are racial
16 tendencies at such a level that there's a potential for racial
17 violence? I would say no. But you look back historically at
18 the Gainesville area, the Florida area, a lot of racial
19 violence in the state beginning with the continuing Seminole
20 wars, and they're not over yet. In the reconstruction days
21 Black man Josiah Walls was elected to the Congress. On the
22 re-election process, however, he was re-elected but the
23 dominant White majority recounted the votes and he lost. J.J.
24 Findlay. And then we had the bandit era of the late 1800s. A
25 lot of Black train robbers and bank robbers, our own local

7
1 Jessie James. Had a lot of racial violence there. And we had
2 the John Wesley Hardin era, he ran a saloon here in
3 Gainesville, organized a bunch of lynch mobs. And then early
4 1900s the KKK, a lot of racial violence there. I arrived here
5 in the 1960s, the radical generation, where we had a lot of
6 racial violence, protests. Early 1970s tanks rumbled through
7 the streets of Gainesville, dumping mustard gas on all the
8 people. In the 1980s we had a lot of racial violence here in
9 town, I mean gang racial violence. In the '90s it's been
10 fairly subdued but we did have the birth of BAM, the Black
11 American Movement that took over student government offices,
12 but it was not explosive. So I think we're getting more able
13 to take care of it.

14 In the present you heard today a lot of war stories
15 about White racism. Professor Joe Fagan is preparing a book
16 about White racism and documented thousands of incidents of
17 White racism, so there's no question that it exists. Working
18 with the Affirmative Action Counsel at the University we have
19 heard a lot of those stories. We've also dealt with the
20 problem called men of color. In the old days the men did the
21 work and brought home the money. But the jobs that those men
22 were involved in are -- I mean in the age of technology they
23 are no longer necessary so the women can run the computers and
24 the typewriters and do the clerical work and get the jobs and
25 they bring home the money and therefore the men are practically

7 1 worthless. And when you are worthless, have no pride, no
2 ambition, no hope, then you will resort to violence. So you do
3 have that problem.

4 , , , I've talked to people who attempt to rent an
5 apartment, if you're white you can rent it, if you're a person
6 of color you have problems in that area. I've talked to some
7 students who live in the dormitories and they say it is not
8 uncommon to hear groups of White people sitting around there
9 talking about how we can get rid of the Spics and Gooks and
10 Blacks, so that's a continuing problem. But what is the
11 answer? Lyndon Johnson explained it to me back then and Chief
12 James Billie of the Seminoles explained it to me a few months
13 ago, until you understand the White man's religion and
14 motivation you're going to have this problem. What is the
15 White man's religion? Money. Chief James Billie explained it,
16 if you've got the money you can organize your own army, police
17 force, your own university, your own religion, if you've got
18 the money. And listening to these stories here today, money is
19 the major problem. Anybody can make money, it depends on what
20 you're willing to do to make it.

8 21 They've indicated problems with the police and that's
22 because you don't understand the role of the police. The
23 people with the money hire the police to enforce their laws and
24 that is what they are doing. Now the University has finally
25 admitted that the melting pot theory does not work. We are a

8 1 collection of cultural groups. Not everybody wants to be
2 White. Not everybody wants to be a part of the mass. We are
3 who we are. I am -- when Lyndon Johnson hired me he said
4 you're three-fourths Irish and one-fourth Cherokee so you're
5 dark enough to go into any Black area and you're White enough
6 to go into any White area and you can go into any Indian
7 reservation in American, that's near perfect. But I don't want
8 to give up who I am. But, money being -- now I don't know if
9 you're aware of it or not but the Seminole tribe of Florida in
10 the 1850s, 150 of them escaped into the everglades and the
11 swamps. By 1930 they were up to about 300. When the
12 reservations were established in the 1950's they were up to
13 around 700 or 800. In 1992 the Seminole tribe of Florida
14 consists of 1600 people. But they got leadership. Chief James
15 Billie went to the churches and the synagogues and said you're
16 making money, why don't you help out my people who are
17 starving? They said no, the government's supposed to take care
18 of you. So said you play bingo, make a lot of money off of
19 that. So he called in his lawyers and said tell me about this
20 bingo. He said well, you can play three nights a week with a
21 jackpot of up to \$250. He said does that apply on Indian
22 reservation? The lawyers said no. He borrowed a million
23 dollars, set up a 5,000 seat bingo palace where they play seven
24 nights a week for jackpots up to half a million dollars. Last
25 year he cleared for the Seminole tribe of Florida over \$16

8 1 million. The Seminole tribe of Florida is now the second
2 wealthiest tribe in America, the Navajos are the first because
3 they got all the uranium, and copper and minerals. Leadership
4 and money. James Billie is making the Seminole Tribe of
5 Florida financially independent. Now if we could do that for
6 the other minorities.

7 I looked at Michael Jackson and Magic Jordan (sic), if
8 those people with their millions and millions of dollars
9 thought less about their own personal fortunes and more about
10 the fortunes of their people, we wouldn't have any problems
11 whatsoever. If you got money you're happy and you're not
12 worried about racial violence. You don't resort to crack.
13 That was Lyndon Johnson's idea. Spread the money around among
14 the poor people and then they won't be unhappy and then there
15 won't be racial violence. But the University has come up with
16 this multi-cultural diversity, as a -- we are a collection of
17 minorities. We are a collection of different cultures and
18 rather than lose any of it, get it all together. But we are
19 beginning to see a decline in that. I do not think the
20 American Federal government will collapse as quickly as the
21 Soviet Union but the White racism will eventually disappear
22 and we will accept each other the way we are. But the major
23 question here is do we have the potential for an explosive
24 situation? It can be until we educate the police and the
25 dominant culture that we are all -- Cherokee believe that we

9 1 are all in this together. Nobody gets ahead unless we all get
2 ahead. So your first obligation is to your family and to your
3 clan and your band, your tribe, your nation and then the entire
4 world. So the main thing is that we all help one another
5 rather than -- or try to make us all one people.

6 I saw an editor ^{editorial} to the Gainesville Sun last week, it
7 said why don't those minorities quit squabbling and leave us
8 alone? This is our country, White people. They are the
9 dominant culture, they've got the money, they've got the
10 police, they've got the structure, they've got the courts, and
11 they are enforcing White man's laws. It will probably continue
12 to be that way.

13 Filing the complaints, really you are filing a
14 complaint against the people who are doing the ugly and of
15 course they are not going to even look at it. That's my --
16 just from looking over the whole area, yes, there's a lot of
17 tension. There are lots of tensions. Racial is merely one
18 fragment of it. We got crazy people wandering around killing
19 students. Gainesville is a major crime area ranked in the top
20 ten for its size. There is a potential for violence here.
21 This is not Liberty City, this is not Watts. There's always
22 the potential. Hearing the anger in some of the voices here
23 today against white racism there is that potential. Those are
24 my comments.

25 CHAIRMAN BROWN: Thank you very much.

9 1 MR. GROOMS: I have spoken.

2 CHAIRMAN BROWN: Any questions?

3 MS. BROWN: I'm very curious. You mentioned you
4 talked to four groups and three of those groups told you that
5 there was racial tension in Gainesville and one group, minority
6 faculty members, said that there was not and you concluded that
7 there is, now how did you reach that conclusion?

8 MR. GROOMS: I think they are talking more of a
9 classroom situation because I know I teach at the University of
10 Florida also and there's no racial tension among my students in
11 the classroom --

12 MS. BROWN: In your class?

13 MR. GROOMS: In that complex.

14 MS. BROWN: Okay.

15 MR. GROOMS: I'm in telecommunications.

16 MS. BROWN: Uh-huh.

17 MR. GROOMS: But I have seen over in other areas and
18 socially there's a lot of racial tension.

19 MS. BROWN: But don't you except that those other
20 groups that you talked to were also speaking from their
21 experience about the tensions that they experience?

22 MR. GROOMS: I could -- I could -- I mean I was in
23 Oklahoma last summer and saw a sign outside a bar that said no
24 dogs or Indians allowed inside. I mean I could give you a lot
25 of White racism. When I go to Cherokee, North Carolina, I was

9 1 there last week and in the grocery stores, the people are
2 following me around saying how soon are you people leaving? Of
3 course we can document White racism, there's no question that
4 it's there.

5 MS. BROWN: Oh, I'm not challenging the fact that
6 racism doesn't exist, I'm just curious as to the way you got to
7 your conclusion after four groups and over half of those groups
8 said that there was some tension but you're saying you don't
9 see it at any point of potential violence.

10 MR. GROOMS: I really do not. Even when the
11 Black-American movement -- I've forgotten what it's called --
12 when they took over the student government offices, there
13 really was no real violence, I mean not the real violence that
14 we've known here in the past.

15 MS. BARO: I'm curious, are there any Native Americans
16 studying at the University.

17 MR. GROOMS: A few. When I last checked the registrar
18 there were something like 40. And people have asked me why are
19 there not more Native Americans at the University. I say:
20 Hell, you wiped out all the grandparents. There's 1600
21 Seminoles in the tribe and an additional 400 who decided that
22 the Seminole tribe, which is not really a tribe it's a
23 collection of the near extinct tribes that are left, 400
24 Miccosukee said that the Seminole tribe of Florida had gotten
25 too White for them so they set up their own Miccosukee

9 1 reservation on the Tamiami Trail. And they are still hostile,
2 2 there are still no peace treaty between the Seminoles and the
3 3 American government.

4 4 MS. BROWN: What's Chief Billie doing with the \$16
5 5 million?

6 6 MR. GROOMS: Each Seminole gets a dividend monthly and
7 7 if they are below the age of majority it's put in trust for
8 8 them. He has also established education programs. And any
9 9 child that would complete high school and go to college the
10 10 tribe will totally support them, room, board, transportation,
11 11 books, spending money. They want for nothing because he's
12 12 established his multi-million dollar businesses and he wants
13 13 Seminoles trained to operate them. And up to now there's only
14 14 seven or eight college educated ones but now -- now the tribal
15 15 attorney is a Seminole. Latina Oceola is getting a business
16 16 degree so she can operate some of those things. His idea is
17 17 you maintain your heritage, but always before it was thought
18 18 that we must remain separate from the dominant majority. But,
19 19 we get our food the same place you do. And you can't walk into
20 20 a grocery store with a bow and arrow and shoot a loaf of bread.
21 21 That's so frowned upon. But money --

22 22 MS. BARO: That's the answer.

23 23 MR. GROOMS: -- and we go take over the Diplomat Hotel
24 24 in downtown Miami with Seminole money and they are glad to have
25 25 us there, treat us nice. You got the money, you got it.

10

1 CHAIRMAN BROWN: Okay. Thank you very much.

2 MR. GROOMS: Yes, sir.

3 CHAIRMAN BROWN: I would like to have our last person
4 on our program and that's Mr. Ivan Ruiz.

5 MR. RUIZ: Thank you very kindly. Good afternoon.

6 I wanted to preface my comments by saying that I
7 happened to have come here because I guess I have good contacts
8 in the community. Some people from the Bahai faith knowing of
9 my interest in race and gender training called me and said they
10 had seen an advertisement in the paper and they thought that I
11 might want to come and air my views, otherwise I wouldn't have
12 known about this gathering. And I also wanted to say that
13 Minerva Casanas, she was here a few minutes -- oh, here she is.
14 Minerva Casanas happens to be the University -- I believe it's
15 the only staff person we have in the Student Services Office,
16 is that correct, of Hispanic background, and I called her this
17 afternoon and she said I had not known about this. So, please,
18 next time you have these things, find a way of looking after us
19 or at least contacting us. I mean we're around, you know.
20 Some of us look like Arabs but we're Puerto Rican, okay.
21 Minerva is also Puerto Rican by the way.

22 I understand that the Florida Advisory Council to the
23 U.S. Civil Rights Commission is here to gather information on
24 the matter of racial and ethnic issues in this area. To this
25 effect I am offering the following testimony of some of my

10 1 experiences for the treatment of Hispanic people in the city of
2 Gainesville and Alachua County.

3 My observations are tempered by my personal background
4 and training. I am Puerto Rican. I immigrated to the mainland
5 United States at the age of seven and I lived most of my life
6 in the Midwest, Chicago and Champaign, University of Illinois.
7 I'm a doctoral candidate in education at the University of
8 Illinois where I was also a fellow in the Institutional Racism
9 Program. I have been in Gainesville during most of the past
10 two years, while my wife pursues graduate studies at the
11 University of Florida.

12 I identify myself as a Latino or as the U.S. Census
13 Bureau has termed us, an Hispanic. I support the position that
14 Latinos or Hispanics are members of a, quote unquote, "minority
15 group regardless of the percentage of that group in a particular
16 locality. Without minority status, Hispanics will not enjoy
17 the benefits of equal rights legislation directed to all
18 minority groups including African-Americans, Asians, American
19 Indians and women. In Gainesville as well as Alachua County
20 there's a need to acknowledge Hispanics fully and consistently
21 as a minority group. There is also a need to provide
22 governmental services in the Spanish language as mandated by
23 Federal legislation, and to promote better understanding of the
24 meaning and significance of the status of Hispanics in society
25 today. I will illustrate these needs with several vignettes

10 1 from both the University of Florida and the city of
11 2 Gainesville.

3 Before last summer the University of Florida did not
4 have anyone of Hispanic heritage to represent the concerns of
5 Hispanic students. Due largely to the insistence of Hispanic
6 students, a part-time position was made available in the
7 Student Services Office to attend to the needs of those
8 students. According to the person who holds that position she
9 is performing a full-time job at half-time pay. The
10 responsibilities of the position require that it be full time.
11 The University administration was made aware of the need for a
12 full-time position several months prior to anyone being hired.
13 I was one of those individuals who went around shopping from
14 office to office, hoping they would make this a full-time
15 position. I in vied for that position myself.

16 III Also at the insistence of Hispanic students the
17 administration made available a position for an Hispanic staff
18 person to represent the interests of Hispanics in the
19 Admissions Office. To the surprise of Hispanics on campus the
20 candidate chosen for that position was of Brazilian heritage, a
21 recent immigrant without personal experience with issues
22 affecting people of color in the United States. In a front, a
23 total front. In fact, Brazilians are not considered Hispanics,
24 having a distinctly different cultural heritage from the rest
25 of Central and South America. They are Latins, they are not

11 1 Hispanics. A delegation of concerned Hispanic professors
2 visited the Director of Admissions questioning the actions of
3 that office in passing over a very qualified and knowledgeable
4 Hispanic applicant for the candidate that was subsequently
5 hired. "I'm sorry", quote unquote was the response given by
6 the Admissions Director, adding that they did not know any
7 better. Yet, neither Hispanic students nor staff were included
8 in the selection process. Quite interesting. Why someone in
9 the Center for Latin American Studies of the University was not
10 consulted in this matter goes beyond logic. There were people
11 there, including the President himself who is a
12 Spanish-Americanist who could have provided the answer to that
13 conundrum, I guess if you want to call it that.

14 Another example, P.K. Yonge, the University of Florida
15 Laboratory School is another example where the University falls
16 short in addressing the needs of the Hispanic population.
17 Admission policies to that school are designed to create a
18 student body that represents a cross-section of the community
19 based on a stratified formula. The factors included are
20 income, race and gender. Race is dichotomized into black or
21 white students. Hispanic students are classified as White.
22 Now I still don't know how they deal with people such as
23 Black-Hispanics. My dad. It just defies logic even then.
24 I've asked about this and they just told me that's the way
25 we've done it. No provision is made for the inclusion of

11 1 Hispanic students as the minorities that they are. The formula
2 used for the selection of students into P.K. Yonge precludes
3 the equitable representation of Hispanics, short changing this
4 minority group of one of the best school options in Alachua
5 County. This is true.

6 At a Gainesville Driver's License Examination Station
7 in September, 1990 -- I seem to record these things in my mind
8 and I seem to say it was September, 1990, and sometimes they
9 stick and I went back to my notes and it was then -- I observed
10 several Spanish speaking persons experiencing difficulty in
11 taking the written portion of the driver's examination because
12 of their limited English ability. Later, I heard one in the
13 group state that he had been driving over 20 years and that in
14 spite of that, he would simply not be able to drive in Florida
15 because he could not pass the examination in English. Both the
16 written portion of the driver's examination and the Florida
17 driver's handbook are available in Spanish. These facts were
18 not made available to the persons I have cited above by the
19 attending clerk nor were any signs posted to this effect in the
20 facility. A Spanish copy of the driver's handbook was made
21 available to me only after I requested it and the Spanish
22 handbook was hidden from public view. Namely it was in here
23 and she gave it to me at that time.

12 24 In the Fall of 1991 a case was referred to me of a
25 Puerto Rican woman with limited English ability who had bought

12 1 a house in Gainesville the previous year and was startled to
2 have received a tax bill on her property amounting to several
3 times the earlier assessment, I'm not sure if it was two times,
4 three times, I know it was at least double the tax. She had
5 failed to file for the yearly homestead exemption because she
6 had not understood the notice about this sent by the Alachua
7 County Property Appraiser. Her inquiries about this matter
8 were met with unprofessional behavior on behalf of some clerks
9 in the Property Appraiser's Office who showed little concern
10 for her problem and whom mocked her Spanish accent. One of
11 these clerks advised the woman not to bother filing an appeal.
12 You have to pay to file an appeal also.

13 On behalf of this woman I contacted the Equal
14 Opportunity Office of Alachua County. In late September, 1991,
15 the woman and I met with the director of that agency, I believe
16 it was September 23, 10:00 o'clock, 9:30, something like that.
17 We were told that according to the provisions of Title VII of
18 the Civil Rights Act, local governments were to provide
19 services in the languages spoken by resident groups once the
20 percentage of those populations reached a two percent mark in a
21 given locality. The 1990 Census reports 6,779 Hispanics in
22 Alachua County or 3.7 percent of the population. Gainesville
23 was reported as having 3,730 Hispanics, four percent of the
24 city population. About half of the Hispanics in Alachua County
25 live in Gainesville. A decade earlier, in 1980, Hispanics made

12 1 up 3.2 percent of the county and 3.9 percent of the population
2 of Gainesville. Please take note of the fact that all of the
3 above percentages since 1980 are above the two percent mark.

4 In spite of their numbers, the geographic dispersal of
5 Hispanics in Alachua County and in the city of Gainesville
6 makes them less visible than the local African-American
7 population, plus since we're so variegated in terms of color
8 it's hard, you know, to say someone walking down the street
9 that's a Hispanic unless you wear colorful clothes. I don't
10 know, maybe blue suits. It's really hard.

11 We were also told that the property Appraiser's
12 Office -- Property Assessor's Office and other appropriate
13 agencies would be contacted to initiate an appeal on behalf of
14 the affected party and that measures would be taken to ensure
15 that a notice in Spanish would be included in the next mailing
16 to this effect by the Property Assessor's Office. I was
17 advised by the director that I should get in contact with her
18 at the end of October, 1991, so that we could work on an agenda
19 serving the needs of Hispanic population of Alachua County. In
20 early November I initiated a series of calls to the director of
21 the County Equal Opportunity Office. The director was either
22 not available or would not return my calls. In early January,
23 1992, I sent a letter urging the director of my need to speak
24 to her. I have yet to receive a reply. The last call I made
25 to that office was on April 20th, yesterday at around 10:20 in

12 1 the morning. As of late this morning, 12:05, actually it was
2 afternoon, my call had not been returned to the director -- by
3 the director.

4 A few weeks ago I spoke to the woman cited earlier and
5 she indicated she had received a notice about the Homestead
6 Exemption from the Property Assessor's Office. Once again, the
7 notice was in English. Upon calling Ed Crapo, head of the
8 Property Assessor's Office, on April 20th, yesterday afternoon,
9 he said he had never been contacted by the County Equal
10 Opportunity Office regarding this problem. I find it difficult
11 to understand why my calls to an official government agency and
12 a subsequent letter would go unanswered.

13 The Hispanic community in Alachua County is alive and
14 definitely growing. What is most puzzling is how local
15 governments and institutions do not treat Hispanics as
16 minorities. Minority-majority relations are seen in
17 dichotomous terms of black and white. This simplistic
18 categorization cannot continue if Alachua County and the
19 surrounding communities are to embrace cultural pluralism.
20 From the standpoint of civil rights, the Hispanic community is
21 receiving a disservice by not being taken into account as a
22 protective minority for matters such as employment, housing,
23 school selection, and programs and financial aid. I found
24 out -- I missed putting in here that at the law school there
25 are like nine or ten fellowships for people, minority people,

13 1 and none of those are available to Hispanics because they can't
2 compete, for whatever reason, it's that clear.

3 It is also clear that the interests of Hispanics are
4 not being looked after either at the municipal or county
5 levels. Not only is this state of affairs intolerable, but it
6 also breeds interethnic rivalry which eventually results in
7 behaviors such as prejudice and separation instead of
8 acceptance and togetherness.

9 Thank you. I'm here for questions.

10 CHAIRMAN BROWN: Thank you very much.

11 MR. RUIZ: You're welcome.

12 CHAIRMAN BROWN: We appreciate the effort that you
13 went to writing your statement out.

14 MR. RUIZ: 4:00 o'clock in the morning, a boy with
15 fever. Thank you very much.

16 CHAIRMAN BROWN: Do we have any --

17 MS. BROWN: You mention that you have been here two
18 years?

19 MR. RUIZ: Yes, ma'am, uh-huh.

20 MS. BROWN: Could you compare Florida to Illinois?

21 MR. RUIZ: I don't think you want me to do that.

22 MS. BROWN: I lived in Illinois. I have some
23 knowledge of that.

24 MR. RUIZ: Okay. My wife said don't you go compare
25 the North with the South because it's scary sometimes.

13

1 MS. BROWN: It's just another place. It's just
2 another place.

3 MR. RUIZ: It's just another place but I have found
4 it's been -- it's like coming back 20 years in many ways.

5 MS. BROWN: From Champaign?

6 MR. RUIZ: From Champaign even, from Champaign, I mean
7 really. I mean Chicago, of course, but from Champaign even. I
8 found -- I mean at least in Champaign at the University there
9 was recognition that Hispanics were a minority as a separate
10 entity. And I have not seen that here, for whatever reasons.
11 And the new president, of course, you know, is making an effort
12 to ensure that Hispanics will be included with other, you know,
13 mainstreaming Hispanics in the regular programs. But it's
14 surely slow in coming because I feel that it's like the captain
15 giving the orders and the soldiers are just standing there with
16 their arms clasped and saying: Gee, I don't know if I want to
17 do it. And that's exactly the feeling that I've gotten when
18 I've talked to administrators. They are very recusant about
19 carrying through the policies that the president, President
20 Lombardi wants to set forth.

21 MS. BROWN: Do you see some movement?

22 MR. RUIZ: Yes, yes. I'm told just after I got
23 here -- is it possible for Minerva to say a few things? I mean
24 she didn't know about this and I think it's important. Minerva
25 is dealing at the University every day and she has more facts

13

1 than I do.

2 But my interests, I mean I just wanted to say that
3 there's something going on here when if you go to an office
4 that is supposedly there to help all minorities, and I'm one of
5 those people, I'm about as persistent as you can possibly make
6 them, because I have been to the gut of the monster when it
7 comes to racism. I know what racism is. You know, I know what
8 it was to be told Spic, Sand Nigger, you know, you name it. It
9 depends on the situation. If I'm with Iranians or it happens
10 to be a time when they want to attack Iranians, Ivan gets a
11 bottle, you know, thrown. If I'm at a demonstration, you know,
12 if it's with Black people, he's got to be another one of the
13 Niggers there. And then again if I'm with my Arab friends,
14 it's the Sand Nigger again. So, you know, I know what this is
15 all about. But it really -- it really hurts because believe me
16 I did not take joy in documenting a situation such as what I
17 did at the Office of Equal Opportunity here in the county. I
18 really thought about it. I even told my wife this morning I
19 wish I could rewrite this so this would not be here. It really
20 hurts to see that a place where I expected to come and have
21 sympathy, empathy and interaction, nothing done, nothing done.

22 So my friends --

23 CHAIRMAN BROWN: I think we can take a few minutes.

24 MR. RUIZ: Thank you very much. Good afternoon to you
25 all.

13
14

1 CHAIRMAN BROWN: If you would like to come forward.

2 MS. CASANAS-SIMON: I wasn't planning to speak. Ivan
3 was insistent that I share my experiences. I, too, am new to
4 Gainesville.

5 CHAIRMAN BROWN: Would you please give your name so we
6 can get it on the record.

7 MS. CASANAS-SIMON: Minerva Casanas-Simon, and the
8 Simon comes from my Jewish-American husband.

9 MR. RUIZ: Oh, money, money.

10 MS. CASANAS-SIMON: Wishful thinking.

11 I have been new in Gainesville. I have lived here for
12 two years. I am not a transient member of a community as I own
13 a home and my husband works for Shands Hospital. My children,
14 I have a girl eleven and a boy nine who go to school here. I
15 have had a multitude of experiences. I speak to you as a
16 member of a community, I suppose also as a member not
17 representing the University because I was not asked to speak
18 here on behalf of the University of Florida, although I'm a
19 worker for the University of Florida, as Ivan indicated. I am
20 that half-time position.

21 MR. DOCTOR: What capacity?

22 MS. CASANAS-SIMON: I have different titles. My
23 official title is Coordinator of Students Affairs, my popular
24 title is Hispanic Student Advisor.

25 MR. DOCTOR: Okay.

14

1 MS. CASANAS-SIMON: When Ivan says she have indicated
2 to me that she does a full-time job but half-time pay, I say,
3 Ivan, you're going to create trouble for me if you say that.
4 The squeaky wheel sometimes get put out. And that's a reality
5 that we live on.

6 So, I, you know, I remember a little while ago I was
7 earlier here and Nikita Imani speaking about being the Uncle
8 Tom on student services when he spoke about two of my
9 colleagues, and I said, well, Nikita, there's an Uncle Tom
10 sitting here among you, you know. And just the reality is that
11 on a personal basis I have experienced a number of -- I, by the
12 way, too have lived in Illinois seven years. I went to school
13 in Champaign for my junior year so I know the midwest somewhat.
14 I have lived in Manhattan, New York, for five years, in the
15 state of Maine and more recently in the state of Michigan. So
16 I have a good flavor of the U.S mainland promised land.

17 I have worked with many communities. I have worked
18 with the Black community, with the Anglo community, with the
19 variety of Hispanic communities, more recently before coming
20 here to Gainesville I worked as an executive director of an
21 agency in Flint, Michigan. But nonetheless, my experience
22 personally in Gainesville, for example, I -- when Ivan talks
23 about P.K. Yonge, I'm a member of the professional staff of
24 this University, so does my husband, yet I am not able to
25 provide for my children the education that I would like because

14 1 the realities, whether they like it or not, those of us who
2 have had experience with Alachua County School Board are not
3 too pleased what, quote unquote, quality of education is here
4 as compared to other places I have been.

5 Whether it could be called racism or by other names, I
6 do not know. I just -- I am aware that I was forced after a
7 year to put my son in private school because the school was not
8 attending to the needs inspite of numerous meetings from the
9 principal, the counselor, everybody. It was all always my
10 child's problem, not a situation where I could work with the
11 school system. So I have had that difficulty.

12 P.K. Yonge, I went to them and the response I got from
13 the administration over there was -- and I wish I had known the
14 name of the person rather than quoting administration, and
15 sometimes a person doesn't represent the system -- but the
16 response I received was this is the rules, if you want to
17 change them you go change the legislation in Tallahassee. And
18 this was a year ago. Because as a Hispanic my children are
19 half Hispanic, by birth not by choice, and I am an Hispanic and
20 I have lived in a world of being a minority. I came to this
21 country when I was a teen. I have lived here over 18 years of
22 my life. I asked what this country ask of me. I educated
23 myself. I put myself through working through a factory. I
24 asked what this country say, learn my language. I learned the
25 language. I asked what this country say, it said try to be

14 1 successful, I have tried. But I find myself over and over and
2 yours truly including this position now that unless affirmative
3 action is there I don't get a chance, I don't get an
15 4 opportunity to compete. I am a vivid example and you can look
5 at my work history of affirmative action employment. And to be
6 frank with you, sometimes I resent it because I think I am a
7 capable person and that I can compete with community. I always
8 tell my students because I call them -- they are like my little
9 children, I say I am of the belief that I don't like to knock
10 another culture down to enhance the beauty and the uniqueness
11 of my culture. But sometimes it's very hard to practice what
12 one preaches when you see so much going at you.

13 As a member of this community lately I have been
14 seeing the attitude of limited resources, that's the great word
15 going around. This University has lost over \$50 million, and
16 because of that there is always the excuse that well, we don't
17 have the money. If you stick around long enough and you
18 observe there is monies available where it depends on the
19 priorities. There's always that case. And on the basis of we
20 don't have the money, communities that could be complementing
21 and corroborating and cooperating with each other as the Black
22 community and the Hispanic community. I put it in a
23 competitive mode; i.e., I heard the young students speak
24 earlier about student government and what it means. Well, what
25 happens is that the Hispanic Student Association, you heard

15

1 Ricky Santa Maria who is the president speak earlier, like the
2 Black students have to compete with for monies, is not
3 something that they consider it as two units. My position, my
4 superior is a Black man, a wonderful person, but I'm put in a
5 position of almost competing with him. When he -- when I was
6 not there it was too much for him to do. With me there it is
7 still a lot to do. Hispanics happen to be the number one
8 minority at the University of Florida, yet P.K. Yonge which is
9 a part of the system would not consider minority, yet law
10 school will not considered minority, the very reason why Ivan
11 said we don't have scholarships for Hispanics because there's
12 not money set aside on a need basis.

13 I work with students on a daily basis and the number
14 one thing they come to me is as the gentleman mentioned
15 earlier, money, resources. We don't have scholarships.
16 Financial Aid give us the run around. There was a young man
17 earlier talking about come back next week and come back next
18 week. I hear the story one too many times and I find myself
19 almost in, quote unquote, Uncle Tom position of justifying the
20 system, a system that ask of me to be a loyal worker, to be a
21 supporter, to be a PR person, and sometimes I have a hard time
22 being because to whom am I loyal? Am I loyal to my community?
23 Am I loyal to the person who's feeding me? It's too much to
24 ask and want to be neutral. [FSU friend]

25 I have, you know, I have met Dr. Lombardi. I know the

15 1 Provo Sorrenson, Miss Jackie Hibbles (phonetic), the person, the
2 director of vice president of Affirmative Action. We have no
3 one in Affirmative Action who represents Hispanic interests. I
4 trust in her that she looks out for us. But from our culture
5 there's no one there to say this is the Hispanic need. I would
6 like to think that one does not need to belong to an ethnic or
7 racial group to be empathetic to the group, but I also am not
8 blind to the reality that coming from that group and coming
9 from that experience is one does have the upper hand.

10 It's very difficult for my husband who is
11 Jewish-American to understand what racism is. When I tell him,
12 you know, I was there yesterday with you and they treated me
13 different than today. Because he has never experienced it,
14 because he has never been exposed to it. So it is very
15 difficult to say. I sit here as a woman and being
16 discriminated on that. And Gainesville is not unique but it is
17 not also the exception to the rule. Gainesville, I beg to
18 disagree with the gentleman when he says there's no tensions, I
19 think that it's -- we'll blind ourself if we say we're not
20 tension, we are, to the fact that last year we had 300 Black
21 students in sitting. Reality stands that the Hispanic students
22 have had tremendous difficulties among themselves because what
23 it creates is divide and concur. Let them share -- fight among
24 resources even between some subgroupings or between ethnic
25 cultures or whatever, and fight and then the community of

15

16

16

1 Alachua doesn't have to worry, as long as we're channeling the
2 energy towards each other. I think that's a sad state of
3 affairs for all of us. And, for example, with a Black
4 community have always say, you know, give me your hand and
5 we'll both walk in the same path. We're not walking -- your
6 discrimination is based on the color of your skin, my
7 discrimination is based on many things. Some of us, as Ricky
8 mentioned earlier, has never been discriminated because we're
9 very light skin, we come from upper middle class, we don't have
10 an accent. So, life's pretty good. But some of us don't come
11 from that background. Some of us have dark skin and our hair
12 is black and maybe a little too curly for the average taste,
13 and maybe the skin a little too olive, and maybe the accent a
14 little too heavy. And coming from Puerto Rico, we always, you
15 know, you hear Puerto Ricans, here they go to complain again.
16 You made us U.S. citizens in 1917 but you don't want to give us
17 our rights. And all we ask is a chance to participate in the
18 culture. I'd rather see my community, and yours truly
19 included, doing something that you can be proud of me than
20 begging you for welfare checks, but that's not a choice and
21 Gainesville is not unique to that. It's really sad to see
22 people going around with English proficiency difficulties.
23 It's really sad to see people going around being discriminated
24 basically because their skin doesn't happen to look the right
25 way for some individual or to experience that, to be followed

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1 in the store, that's a classic one with me. I walk into the
2 store with my children and nine times out of ten I guarantee
3 you some guard is following me. Oftentimes I have walked out
4 because I decide they don't deserve my money, I work for it and
5 they no going to get it, even if it deprives me of maybe a
6 choice.

7 . . . So I speak to you, you know, from experience of the
8 University. This University has a long way to go. Dr.
9 Lombardi has been a breath of fresh air. But as Ivan
10 indicated, he's only one among many and it's taking a while.
11 Things are changing but perhaps a little bit too slow before
12 things get worse. The excuse is that monies is not available
13 is a legitimate, is a good excuse, but it's just not good
14 enough, we have to do something collectively to change it. I
15 hate to see us competing with the Black community for resources
16 that we all both need so much.

17 And as a member of this community, to be frank with
18 you, I'm a bit disappointed, disappointed because when I came
19 here to visit and the real estate agent took me around, that
20 was not the picture I received. The picture I received was
21 very different. And now that I've lived here for two years I
22 realize how exclusively to certain neighborhoods I was guided
23 to. My husband happened to be a physician and because he was a
24 physician and he's White we were taken to some of the best
25 neighborhoods around here. I chose not to live in those

16 1 neighborhoods because I wanted my children to learn too that
2 they are half Hispanic and that's a reality that they are going
3 to have to live with. And I didn't want them to learn about a
4 world that is not all there. And I don't wish discrimination
5 on anyone, but by denying it I don't think we solve the
6 problem.

7 So I thank you for your time.

8 CHAIRMAN BROWN: Thank you very much.

9 Do you have any questions or comments?

10 MS. LITTLER: A lot of food for thought here today.

11 CHAIRMAN BROWN: All right. Thank you.

12 MS. CASANAS-SIMON: And If I might say myself, the
13 students who are here, with the exception of Mr. Ricky Santa
14 Maria, we invited ourselves. It show you, and I point that out
15 as you leave because there's approximately, whether this town
16 likes it or not, 10,000 Hispanics and it's middle class
17 Hispanics. It's not a community of, you know, lower social
18 economic status Hispanics. But we too have needs, perhaps a
19 different kind of needs. And perhaps -- we don't have an
20 Hispanic administrator at this University. Our highest ranking
21 administrator is a chairman of the department, not even at a
22 dean area, and so who speaks for our needs?

23 CHAIRMAN BROWN: Okay. Before we adjourn do we have
24 any comments, members?

25 MS. LITTLER: Well, it's very evident that

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1 discrimination does exist.

2 MS. HART: May I say something? I kind of sat quiet
3 all through this and I too invited myself.

4 MR. DOCTOR: Could you identify yourself?

5 MS. HART: I will identify myself. I'm Jacquelyn Hart
6 and I'm an assistant vice president at the University of
7 Florida. And I too invited myself. Had it not been for Don
8 Grooms calling last week to ask me and inquire of this I
9 wouldn't have known either. So I want you to be very pleased
10 that there are no secrets. Okay?

11 I too learned, Minerva, and I'm very happy that I did.
12 I'm very appreciative of the work of the Commission. I am
13 hoping, though, that all of the good testimony we received
14 today will be considered in perspective. For an instance,
15 there have been programs in affirmative action at the
16 University of Florida since 1978. Those programs grew out of
17 the revised plan for equalizing educational opportunity in
18 higher education commonly called the desegregation plan.
19 Florida was one of ten southern states requested and required
20 to remove the vestiges of segregation. And out of that came
21 many many programs that we now have in place. I'm real
22 grateful to the leadership that we have now in finding monies
23 and I want to make an announcement about the increase in
24 scholarships in minority programs for terms 92/93. But in
25 removing those vestiges of segregation which we have not done,

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1 we were talking a Black/White plan. The difficulty in getting
2 an accurate count of the Hispanic population at the University
3 of Florida is multi-faceted. One, it was not popular, and I
4 think the two, four, five people from the University will bear
5 me out, to claim Hispanic origin, now for whatever reason I
6 don't know that, but the University is fortunate over the last
7 year, two, three, where persons who have been in employment
8 over the years are coming forth changing their racial
9 designation. The census didn't help us any last year because
10 they listed the Hispanic population as a culture and not as a
11 race. And there are a lot of difficulty in collecting that
12 information. There are a number of people that we still may
13 not know as we say who make up the administration and who
14 doesn't because we still are suffering from the history where
15 folks self-selected. One of our most outspoken Hispanic
16 faculty changed his designation a few months ago. So we are
17 making an effort to count better, encourage our students and
18 faculty and staff to help us do that. It is a self-selection
19 process.

20 As each of the persons who testified said that there
21 are efforts to include all populations in our minority count,
22 and as a result of that probably during these times of
23 constrained budget monies are being sought, have been found,
24 and there are minority fellowships that are offered. You, I
25 suppose, need to talk with the woman you call Brazilian -- one

17 1 of you, because there are fellowships being offered through the
2 Admissions Office. There are minority fellowships being
3 offered through the graduate school and maybe you need to talk
4 to someone about that.

5 And there are efforts going forth. I would like,
6 though, I heard June's name called and I was going to ask her
7 for a card before she left so I can provide a scope, not to
8 counter anything that has been said. I think all of the
9 information given today was important, but I would like to give
10 some backdrops on the University because we do have zillions of
11 programs in the minority program.

12 And I thank you.

13 CHAIRMAN BROWN: Thank you.

14 MS. AGRAIT: May I make a comment about what she just
15 mentioned?

16 My name is Sara Agrait, I'm a graduate student at the
17 University of Florida. I interned as a graduate student the
18 Spring semester and I was advised by my advisor to apply to
19 that minority fellowship that you just mentioned. Their answer
20 was you cannot apply during the Spring semester, you have to
21 wait until the Fall. And if you are a student during the
22 Spring semester then you're not considered a new student then
23 you are not eligible for that type of minority fellowship
24 which --

25 MS. HART: That's true but that happens throughout the

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1 University for anyone. The entering point in is Fall.

2 MS. AGRAIT: What I want to say is maybe the
3 fellowships, but what is the good to have a fellowship is not
4 going to be available to the person that need it and what is it
5 going to be good if he just have a limited amount and you don't
6 address the needs of all the students that really needs that
7 type of a scholarship. I am in the University thanks to my
8 father who has been helping me to be there. And I think that
9 other students like me who are in the same type of position
10 that I am probably didn't have that type of help and they might
11 have to wait to enter the University rather than Spring
12 semester in the Fall. So it might not be a problem of
13 discrimination, but it might be a problem of how many resources
14 are available for minorities.

15 MS. HART: You are absolutely right. The entering
16 point is Fall and it's every one in every area, whether it is
17 law, the graduate school, or entering first time college
18 student. The scholarships are let for Fall, that's the
19 official entering point and there are none for Spring, unless
20 someone defaults and you're in the pool and it happens to --

21 MS. AGRAIT: I understand --

22 CHAIRMAN BROWN: Okay. I think we're going to end
23 out. I think there's some useful dialogue that you two may
24 need to get in on that may be helpful to people in the
25 community but I think it's -- the Commission we do understand

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1 both the fact that we deal with a bureaucracy and their limited
2 resources, and there are needs that are not being met under the
3 way situations are at this point in time.

4 We thank you. And I thank you all for coming.

5 (PROCEEDINGS CONCLUDED AT 4:25 P.M.)

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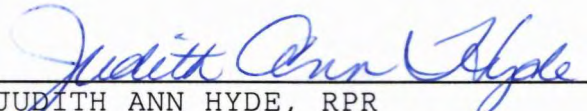
STATE OF FLORIDA)

COUNTY OF ALACHUA)

I, JUDITH ANN HYDE, Registered Professional Reporter
in and for the Eighth Judicial Circuit of the State of Florida,

DO HEREBY CERTIFY that the foregoing proceedings were
had at the time and place set forth in the caption thereof;
that I was authorized to and did stenographically report the
said proceedings, and that the foregoing pages, numbered 1
through 116, inclusive, is a true and correct transcription of
my said stenographic report.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF I have hereunto affixed my official
signature this 18th day of May, 1992, at Gainesville, Alachua
County, Florida.



JUDITH ANN HYDE, RPR
Eighth Judicial Circuit
State of Florida