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Citizen's Council Radio Forums  
Acc. No. 597  
Stephanie Rolph Transcripts Addition

Audiotape ID number: 597-58 x 19

Date: 1958

Guest (s): Lewis Hollis (director of survey) and Ralph Ford (board of directors)

Title: CC Survey of Jackson, Part II

Note: Questions were paraphrased and/or shortened by the transcriber. For the exact question, please consult the audiotapes.

Guests: Morphew: Welcome...ford is a ward leader in the 19<sup>th</sup> ward...to Hollis: what progress has been made since we talked last?

Hollis: We're highly elated, Dick, over the progress that has been made. The first attempt at a ward survey is being reported today and Mr. Ford is a fine example of the young men who are highly, so dedicated to the proposition that our way of life shall be preserved.

Morphew: Tell us about the organizational steps needed to conduct a ward survey...

Hollis: Well, Ralph, why don't you tell us how you went about getting the ward organized.

Ford: Well, Mr. Hollis, the first thing that we did was to call a small meeting of the members of the Citizens' Council who resided in Ward 19. Ward 19 is a very large ward in the northeast section of Jackson.

Hollis: You had that meeting in your home, I believe.

Ford: At my home, that's correct. And at that meeting, called a small gathering of people and designated the areas which they lived in as being those which they would make the survey in.

Hollis: I believe you appointed seven lieutenants at that time.

Ford: We had seven ward, section captains, and they in turn had a list of the members of the council who lived in their area and they later on, in another meeting which we had, got their assistants in conducting the ward survey.

Hollis: Where did you hold the ward meeting?

Ford: We had it at the voting precinct on North State Street, where the people in Ward 19 vote.

Morphew: How many people attending this meeting?

Ford: We had about 35 or 40 of our members there.

Morphew: Those were all CC members before the survey?

Ford: That's correct, yes.

Morphew: What steps were taken at this meeting? The survey was explained to them and the steps to be taken from then on?

Ford: That's right, and at this meeting we divided the ward up into 7 sections, and each one of the leaders accepted one of the sections for him to actually conduct the survey in.

Morphew: For those who don't know about the survey, Mr. Hollis, let's review it...what was the purpose?

Hollis: It was for the purpose of finding out how our people stand on this matter of school integration, also getting more people registered to vote and to of course increase our membership.

Morphew: You are planning on eventually reaching every home in Jackson.

Hollis: Right.

Morphew: And this ward is the first one to be conducted on this basis but there have been other extensive area samples made...

Hollis: Block areas, yes sir.

Morphew: Go down the list of questions...Mr. Ford you have about half the calls made...

Ford: That is correct, Dick. We have half of them at this time.

Morphew: Represents about how many homes?

Ford: It represents about 400 homes.

Morphew: Let's go down the list on a percentage basis...the first?

Ford: 74% had children or grandchildren in school and 26% had none.

Morphew: So, about 3 out of 4 had children or grandchildren...second...

Ford: Of all the answers to that, we had 100% preferred racially segregated schools.

Morphew: Third?

Ford: 97% of the people contacted said that they would keep their children out until a plan was formulated.

Morphew: Fourth?

Ford: Now on that we had 98% said no and 2% said yes.

Morphew: Fifth?

Ford: We were very pleased to receive 99% of the people that we surveyed said that they would.

Morphew: Sixth?

Ford: We had 100% of the people that we asked that question to said that they would be interested in that.

Morphew: The seventh and eight questions were also unanimous...

Ford: In all 3 of those questions 100% of the returns indicated that they would.

Morphew: What type homes are in this 19<sup>th</sup> ward?

Ford: Well, we had a medium, it was a very, very large undertaking in that ward, and we had many different types of houses in the ward.

Morphew: And as Mr. Hollis said, the way the survey works, you sent a letter before you visited.

Ford: That's correct. Each person received a letter.

Morphew: And then visited the homes individually and will do so in the houses not yet visited.

Ford: That is correct, Dick.

Morphew: To the rest of the questions, the next 2...

Ford: 90% of the people that we contacted were registered voters.

Morphew: 10% who were not were asked the next question...

Ford: 80% said that they would register.

Morphew: 80% of the 10%.

Ford: That is correct.

Morphew: Next 2...

Ford: 30% were members of the Citizens' Council when we started our survey in that ward.

Morphew: And the 70% who were not were invited to join by the volunteer, how many accepted invitations to membership?

Ford: Well, it figured about 40%, but the total now membership in Ward 19 is 63%.

Morphew: So 63% of the people contacted are now members and became members at their first invitation.

Ford: That's correct.

Morphew: That figure means that you will on average have more than one member per household because the survey counts a husband and wife as two responses to the survey.

Ford: That's correct.

Morphew: In at least 13% of households both husband and wife became members and the ladies probably joined in pretty good numbers to make that percentage.

Ford: That's right.

Morphew: Biggest surprise? Any?

Ford: Well, there have been no surprises but we have, some of the things that have really paid off in this is the fact that there were times, many time, when we answered questions which non members had, they wanted to know the answers to the questions which they had heard about the Citizens' Council. We had, we contacted in this group many people who had recently moved to Jackson and to Mississippi and of course they knew, didn't know very much about it and they asked questions and we were happy to answer the questions and many of them joined when they had their questions answered.

Morphew: Do you feel that neighbors surveying their neighbors is giving a better response?

Ford: I think so, Dick. We've run across that a number of times and we felt like that was the best procedure to use.

Morphew: To Hollis...how is the general survey going? Similar responses to ward 19?

Hollis: It is not particularly surprising to us, Dick, because we thought we knew how our people feel, but there has been very little change in the percentage on say, the second and third thousand as compared to the first.

Morphew: So just about every area of Jackson is answering in about the same way?

Hollis: About the same way.

Morphew: Why does the council feel is it important to register to vote?

Hollis: Because when we elect a person to public office we depend upon them to carry out our wishes. It's very important that we vote for people who will carry out our wishes...and if we're not registered of course, we can't vote.

Morphew: And have no choice in who those people are...