

August 28, 1967

William F. Buckley, Jr., Kenneth Clark, Guest
Chairman - C. Dickerman Williams

Chairman: "Firing Line" with William F. Buckley, Jr.

Mr. Buckley: Kenneth Clark is a Professor of Psychology at the City College of New York and is one of the two prominent scholars, the other one is Gunnar Myrdal, prominently quoted by Earl Warren in handing down the decision outlawing compulsorily segregated schools. Interestingly enough, the findings of Dr. Clark have recently been challenged, as interestingly also Dr. Clark has himself questioned some of the premises that attest to the desirability of integrated schools. He himself has stressed rather the necessity of high quality education and received such an education himself, first at Howard University, then at Columbia. He is a member of New York's Board of Regents. He has served on any number of commissions and committees dealing with racial, educational and urban affairs. His book, "Dark Ghetto," first published in 1965 was a best-seller and is now available in a paperback edition. It is hailed as a social -- as a psychological social masterpiece, and there are those who believe that he knows as well as any man what are the psychological and even metaphysical encumbrances of the ghetto. I would like to begin by asking Dr. Clark whether there is a generally collapsing concern among members of the Negro community for integrated schools.

Chairman: We shall hear Dr. Clark's answer to Mr. Buckley's question in just a moment.

I am C. Dickerman Williams, and I shall act as Chairman of tonight's discussion between Mr. Buckley and Dr. Clark. Our topic is, "The Ghetto." Dr. Clark, would you answer Mr. Buckley's question -- is there a collapsing concern among the Negro community for integrated schools?

Dr. Clark: I don't know that there is a collapsing concern for integrated schools as such, I think the thing about Mr. Buckley's question that he is responding to is probably the fact that there is an increasing sense of hopelessness or despair among an increasing proportion of people in the Negro community that America has the capacity to move toward a truly raceless democratic society. This increasing sense of hopelessness, frustration, despair, which I think seems to be supported by the fact of piddling, niggling segregation in the thirteen

©1967 W. F. Buckley

The copyright laws of the United States (Title 17, U.S. Code) governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted material. If a user makes a request for, or later uses a photocopy or reproduction (including handwritten copies) for purposes in excess of fair use, that user may be liable for copyright infringement. Users are advised to obtain permission from the copyright owner before any re-use of this material.

Use of this material is for private, non-commercial, and educational purposes; additional reprints and further distribution is prohibited. Copies are not for resale. All other rights reserved. For further information, contact Director, Hoover Institution Library and Archives, Stanford University, Stanford, CA 94305-6010

© Board of Trustees of the Leland Stanford Jr. University.

years or so since the Brown Decision has taken many forms -- and among them -- the most dramatic form, a sort of intensification of Black Nationalism. In my office this afternoon, there were some members of the Negro community who were trying desperately to get me to support their plea to the State Education Department for an all-Negro school system in Harlem. They found it difficult for me -- for them -- to understand that I would not back this. They said, "Well, look, we can't wait forever for integration." I said you're quite right. However, I spent too much of my life fighting segregation imposed by whites, and -- to join the quest for segregation because it's being proposed by Blacks.

Mr. Buckley: No, I am sure, Dr. Clark, that nobody suggested that you are in favor of returning to compulsory segregation, but the speech you gave that was so widely reported is one in which you said that as a matter of priority, you have become much more interested in improving the quality of Negro schools in the ghetto and outside the ghetto than in attempting to integrate. Now, is that because you witnessed an unhappy experimentation with sort of a synthetic segregation -- was all of the romancing that followed the Warren --

Mr. Warren's -- decision, did that turn out to be unrealistic?

Dr. Clark: In a sense, yes. I think that what has become increasingly clear to me is the limitation of the American people in terms of concern for human beings. I think there is now clear evidence that the vast majority of Americans are perfectly willing to sacrifice hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of children who are brown on the altar of race. I think that it is clear that de facto segregated schools in the North are as damaging and detrimental to the human spirit and human potentials as the segregated schools which we fought so valiantly against in the South. And that people who are perfectly willing to applaud us when we were fighting against segregated schools imposed by law in the South are not so anxious to work to overthrow de facto segregation schools in the North.

Mr. Buckley: But suppose, suppose one of those were here to say to you -- that precisely the reason we're not so anxious to fight for them is that we ourselves have discovered what you just finished discovering -- that is to say, that if you were absolutely certain that in a particular classroom all the white children were daughters of Florence Nightingale and all the boys were your sons, you would have an ideal situation. But is it wrong -- is

it right to criticize, let's say, an American Liberal who says integration doesn't in fact have the effect that we hoped it would have. Is it right to say for that reason that they themselves have only a limited concern for the goals of racial harmony?

Dr. Clark: Well, I think the people who categorically reject large groups of human beings on the basis of such irrelevance as the color of their skin, whether they are rejecting them because they are white, or because they are black, are rather limited people, and I don't think that these are the people who should be given the right of decision as to the kinds of education we should --

Mr. Buckley: You missed my point. My point is that I'm talking now about Mr. Jones, and Mr. Jones, let us suppose, desires as ardently as you do a completely successful racially mixed society, but is now no longer picketing for integrated schools because, let us say, he observed how in fact they worked in a particular area, let's say an area in which there was friction -- decided in fact they were contra-indicated, in terms of doing something for the Negro, in terms of advancing his education -- and for the white persons in terms of eliminating his bias. Now, is Mr. Jones less concerned than he was before for the right things in virtue of having taken that position?

Dr. Clark: No, Mr. Jones is just premature because he really has no evidence that any --

Mr. Buckley: But, you yourself seem to have traveled that road.

Dr. Clark: I traveled the road not on the grounds that I have seen evidence that integrated education didn't work. I've seen evidence that we haven't tried integrated education -- that we used all sorts of devices and techniques to evade any meaningful integration --

Mr. Buckley: What would you (blurred word) meaningful --

Dr. Clark: A situation in which a public school system in a city, large city, medium city, small city, or suburb, with the exception probably of Princeton, actually reorganizes its schools so that race is no longer a relevant factor in --

Mr. Buckley: Administratively.

Dr. Clark: That's right. This has not really been tried by --

Mr. Buckley: Well, what about Massachusetts?

Dr. Clark: Massachusetts?

Mr. Buckley: Yeah.

Dr. Clark: Boston?

Mr. Buckley: Well, I guess we're both aware that Massachusetts law which is considered to be the most "progressive" in the matter of integrated schools --

Dr. Clark: Massachusetts law certainly is progressive. But the Massachusetts law, like most laws dealing with the question of race and racial democracy in the United States, seems totally irrelevant in terms of what actually happens. There is no relationship between a very strong law on racial imbalance and what is happening as far as -- what's that woman's name -- Hicks?

Mr. Buckley: Yes.

Dr. Clark: -- her control over the activities of the school board in Boston. The Boston school system is to me as rigidly, as anarchistically -- anachronistically racist as the systems in the South. Now, all I'm saying is, human beings -- the present group of children in essentially, predominantly Negro schools in the North or in the South, should not be condemned to the kind of criminally inferior education which they are now being subject to.

Mr. Buckley: Correct. But the typical modern Liberal as I understand it, even the one who no longer gets fired up by the goal of integration, might be willing to say exactly the same thing. But what I want to sort out, especially because I want to relate it to the problem of the ghetto, is -- are you taking the position that you will not, that you do not admire the politician who does not force integration, or are you now taking the position that you understand what- why he doesn't force integration and that in fact his moral attitudes are best spent affecting other kinds of programs.

Dr. Clark: No, I do not admire any politician, or school board official, or housing official who does not understand that this Nation cannot function effectively in a bi-racial -- a bi-racial pattern. I do not -- the extent of my compassion is to understand that he does not want to be voted out of office by not giving the kind of leadership, direction to, admittedly, a limited population. And I know that the American population is limited in its understanding of fundamental human and moral problems. People who aspire to public

office and people who are successful in being elected to government positions must assume the responsibility of trying to educate the public to things which are difficult for the public to understand.

Mr. Buckley: I think we all grant that, Dr. Clark, but I do think you're being just a little bit evasive because --

Dr. Clark: Well, I'll try not to be evasive.

Mr. Buckley: Look, if something in fact doesn't work, then should it be tried.

Dr. Clark: Well, this is the point!

Mr. Buckley: -- now --

Dr. Clark: I don't think we've given integrated education a chance to work. We've just not done it.

Mr. Buckley: Yes. And, of course, people say that about Christianity, and obviously for that reason we shouldn't abandon the goals of Christianity. But you get situations in the United States and all over the place -- take New Haven where a very Liberal and famous Mayor, Richard Lee, attempted bussing the schools, and a biographer of Mayor Lee, Professor Miller, of the Divinity School, was very much in favor of that kind of thing, finally conceded that it was a "disaster," so that the whole experiment was more or less repealed. Now, I think the fact of its repeal doesn't necessarily say something about the diminished moral energies of Mayor Lee. Rather, he says we have to go via another route.

Dr. Clark: It says something about (blurred)

Mr. Buckley: Unless you want to totalitarianize the United States, and most people do what they apparently, or a great many of them don't want to do. My understanding was precisely that you were, in effect, endorsing this transfer of energies from integration to a situation in which the educational level of everyone involved would rise to perhaps the point where the day after tomorrow people would recognize the stupidity of racial prejudice.

Dr. Clark: Mr. Buckley, let me see if I can make perfectly clear as possible what my position is. I am not retreating from the goals of integration because I think the attempts at integration have not worked. In fact I am not retreating from the goals of integration

at all. It is perfectly clear to me that this society has not attempted integration. It has not attempted to even see whether it would work or not. Given that fact, and there must be very good reason -- historical, psychological, moral reasons why this society seems capable and willing to condemn thousands and thousands of human beings to inferior education which will make them not constructive members of society, but destructive. Without regard to those reasons, I am saying that what we must now do is not to give up on the goals of integration, but to try to make the schools in the ghetto, the predominantly Negro schools, better schools, more efficient schools, schools that -- and I don't think that the predominantly Negro schools --

Chairman: Dr. Clark, I'm afraid we've got to break.

Dr. Clark: All right.

Chairman: Time's run out temporarily.

Mr. Buckley: Okay. Well, let's see now how how this relates to the ghetto. As I understand it, your rather fatigued analysis -- I consider it fatigued because you seem, there seems to be implicit in the rhetoric that you have used a sense of giving up on the American people -- I myself would defend the American people, if only because I think that they however -- however inconclusively they perform, I think there is much more agitation in the United States than there is in any other country that I know of about the desideratum of social harmony. But, assuming then that your analysis is one of: Okay, let's agree that we can't have integration right away; therefore, let us concentrate our energies on improving the school systems, hoping that education itself will be the ultimate solvent of a harmonious interracial situation. Now, is this a spirit that can be successfully communicated to the ghetto, is this a message that the ghetto will gladly receive -- or is it in fact true that the people in the ghettos were never much concerned about the problem of integration to begin with -- all they wanted were better schools, not necessarily schools in which there was an equal percentage of white and colored students?

Dr. Clark: I wouldn't say that's all they wanted. But I do think that the integration thrust came out of the awareness that the segregated schools which Negroes were required to attend were woefully inferior schools. I think we could speculate -- it would probably

be a fascinating seminar on what would be the nature of the civil rights thrust, if segregated schools were really ever equal. It might have taken an entirely different direction. But segregated schools, like segregated housing, or segregated anything were never equal, always inferior. Now, I can't answer with any high degree of confidence your question of whether people in the ghettos would have been satisfied if their schools were better. I think the Supreme Court, the Brown Decision, tried to deal with this and it said that the very fact of segregation is rejection, you know. When human beings are segregated involuntarily, as all Negro segregation in America is, historically and contemporaneously, when the Negro is segregated he isn't be^{ing} segregated because he wants to be together. He is segregated because other people consider him inferior, they consider him --

Mr. Buckley: Well, that's not necessarily true. That's true only of compulsory segregation.

Dr. Clark: Well, I think all Negroes (blurred) --

Mr. Buckley: (Blurred) usual predominantly Irish, communities are predominantly Italian, predominantly Jewish.

Dr. Clark: The predominantly Jewish neighborhoods, the predominantly Irish neighborhoods in America exist not because banks, or real estate people have blocked -- and I also know this is true of Jews, but Jews have managed to overcome that by economic power. But wherever you find ethnic residential areas in America today, other than Negro, you know that this involves choice. It does not involve choice for the Negro.

Mr. Buckley: Well not necessarily. Look, are you saying that there is no Negro who lives in a Negro neighborhood, who chooses to live in a Negro neighborhood? That's a strange thing --

Dr. Clark: Well, that's a very strange thing to say --

Mr. Buckley: (Laughing) Quite a racist thing.

Dr. Clark: Well, I think that there are Negroes who live in Negro neighborhoods who have convinced themselves, some of them, that they are living there because they want to. I think this reflects the same dynamics as our Black Power -- Black Nationalist people now

who are trying to make a virtue out of a predicament which they cannot change. Aesop's fable of sour grapes -- the fox who could not reach the grapes said, obviously they're sour. This is my interpretation of an important dynamic of the Black Power people. They're trying to make a virtue out of racial segregation and racial isolation --

Mr. Buckley: But you are suggesting that Negroes are different from other peoples if, on the one hand you say Italians live together happily, and Jews live together happily, but Negroes live together unhappily -- why should that be the case?

Dr. Clark: Because Italians who do not want to live with Italians are free not --

Mr. Buckley: That's the decision --

Dr. Clark: This is very important --

Mr. Buckley: Yuh. If there weren't any pressures that caused those centripetalizations, then centripetalizations would occur anyway, but benignly.

Dr. Clark: That's right, but individuals would have choice, and the freedom of choice to me is an important fact that differentiates the Negro who lives in Harlem from the Jew who lives on the Lower East Side or on the Grand Concourse.

Mr. Buckley: Uh-hmm.

Chairman: They're being forced to do what under other circumstances, they might want to do, is that --

Dr. Clark: Yes, but you don't know ^{whether} ~~what~~ you might want to do it until you have the freedom not to. And this is extremely important.

Mr. Buckley: Yes, I think that's correct. All right, now, if -- if there is simultaneously the dissent that Negroes are only welcome in certain parts of the city and certain parts of the country, is it impossible to go from there on over to what I understand it to be something that's relatively new in the air, and it goes hand in hand with this retreat from the notion of integration, and that is the cultivation of racial pride, might it be ^{that} like the Jews in Venice 500 years ago, the Negroes will start saying we're glad to live together, we'll show you what we can do in the ghetto, and the time will come when you will very much desire us to ~~move~~ out because we will be such desirable members of the civic communion. Is that what you most hope for at this point?

Dr. Clark: That's the rationale of the Black Nationalists. They argue --

Mr. Buckley: No, because they -- they don't hope ultimately for reconciliation, the Black Nationalists.

Dr. Clark: Well, ^{they do and} sometimes they don't -- one of the interesting things about the Black Nationalists there are different degrees of them, and they change their position from time to time. They say, let us make the most of racial segregation, in fact let us, ourselves be the chief arguers for racial separation, let's build our own economy, let's build our own institutions, and do it with such efficiency and effectiveness that the white man will then -- some of them say this, some of them say, well, the hell with the white man, let's forget him or let's be hostile, and this is the basis of our pride. I think this is pathetic romanticism. I think it flies into the face of history. And, most important, I think it's not possible; it's not realistic. I just don't think that given the complexity of our society and our economy, that Negroes will be able to or be permitted to build a truly effective independent, racially-isolated economy.

Mr. Buckley: Why? -- I see, isolated, not autarchic. Why not -- let me put it this way, is there any pre-ordained reason why let's say, Harlem oughtn't to become more prosperous, why there shouldn't be a good sense there of community purpose.

Dr. Clark: No, there's no pre-ordained reason why Harlem should not become more prosperous, why the schools in Harlem should not be better than they are, why the houses in Harlem should not be made fit for human habitation, but there is a very realistic reason: power -- that the people in Harlem do not have at present, nor do I believe in the foreseeable future, the power in themselves to bring about the positive changes.

Mr. Buckley: Do you mean what kind of power?

Dr. Clark: The political power, the economic power, and above all the psychological power to do so.

Mr. Buckley: O, well, I think the last is the most interesting and the one I think you are consistently the most interesting. But it seems to me that they have an enormous amount of political power.

Dr. Clark: They have the appearance of political power without what seems to me to be the fact of political power. If you look at Harlem in terms of its political structure, there are two major political figures that have existed in Harlem for the past ten or fifteen years or so.: One, Adam Clayton Powell, who believed and a number of people agree that he had a tremendous amount of political power. Well you saw the flimsiness of Powell's power by what happened to him in Congress.

Mr. Buckley: I think it would have happened to someone else ten years earlier. I think he showed that he did have a lot of power.

Dr. Clark: It certainly didn't happen to Dodd.

Mr. Buckley: Well, it's like saying Napoleon was a good general, but look what happened to him at Waterloo.

Dr. Clark: Well, I think one of the major things about Mr. Powell is that he really believed he had power that transcended race in America, and he found out that he didn't. I think --

Chairman: Perhaps he found out that- thought he had too much power, Dr. Clark.

Dr. Clark: Well, I don't know that you can talk about too much power -- either you have it or you don't. Well, he didn't.

Mr. Buckley: He didn't have the power to defy the incremental court (blurred by next)

Dr. Clark: He did not have the power to defy, to defy the basic racism of America.

Mr. Buckley: O, come on. Now you disappoint me.

Dr. Clark: He certainly did not.

Mr. Buckley: You're saying that the persecution of Adam Powell is racist?

Dr. Clark: I think that there is no -- certainly no doubt in my mind that what happened to Powell -- and by the way I'm no champion of Powell, as you know --

Mr. Buckley: Yeah, I know, yeah.

Dr. Clark: -- we've been fighting long before it was fashionable. I was fighting Powell when some of our great Liberals - Senators saying they found no fault with Powell --

Mr. Buckley: Yeah.

Dr. Clark: -- and when the White House was silent. Given that, however, I still believe

that the manner, the way in which the Congress of the United States, the House, dealt with the Powell matter was not unlike a Parliamentary type of lynching where passions, emotions clearly swept aside any rational, intelligent approach to this problem.

Mr. Buckley: He was invited -- he and his seventeen lawyers-to present their case at such -- in as much leisure as they chose; instead they simply went there and read a bunch of insults to Congress and told Congress what the Constitution, as they understood it, allowed them to do.

Dr. Clark: I know that --

Mr. Buckley: If Adam Powell was not defended it was because his case was pretty much indefensible, and I rejoice to say that a lot of people didn't defend it -- not to do so at your knees. So, excuse me but I simply refuse --

Dr. Clark: But I think the contrast between the treatment of the Senate of Dodd and the treatment of the Senate -- of the House -- of Powell --

Mr. Buckley: The contrast between what they did is much more remarkable.

Chairman: How would you distinguish between the treatment of Senator Dodd and that of Congressman Powell?

Mr. Buckley: It seemed to be obvious and blatant that the one was in continuous contempt of practically every court in the land, certainly every court in New York, that he refused to present his record, he refused to cooperate with the committee, that it was clear that he had forged a number of documents so as to intentionally steal money from the taxpayers of the United States; whereas in the case of Senator Dodd he cooperated in every single way, he defied no court, he made everything obvious and there was a perfectly defensible construction of his affairs that allowed people to believe that he simply was at the mercy of a very stupid and mischievous bookkeeper which is what I ^{happen to} think happened. Does that make me anti-Negro? (Laughing) (Laughter).

Dr. Clark: No.

Chairman: To what extent do you disagree with that analysis?

Dr. Clark: I disagree with that analysis -- by the way, I want to tell you the extent to which I agree. Certainly, I think there is no question that Dodd was to me insufferably

humble in the face of clear perfidy. He crawled. And I must confess maybe it's the 12. extent to which I share with Mr. Powell the affliction of cultural deprivation which America imposes upon all of its Negroes --

Mr. Buckley: You mean because he's Irish-Catholic?

Dr. Clark: No.

Mr. Buckley: Is that what you mean -- you share it in that sense?

Dr. Clark: No, I share with Powell (blurred) that if you're caught with your hands in the till, it doesn't make you more moral to crawl and beg mercy and forgiveness. I think the--

Mr. Buckley: What if you're innocent?

Dr. Clark: Well-- I guess he's done something? (Last two words?) (Laughter)

Mr. Buckley: Talk about Parliamentary lynching!

Dr. Clark: Now -- you know --

Chairman: Generally people who are innocent who go to court and try to defend themselves and those who are guilty will run away, isn't it, Dr. Clark?

Dr. Clark: You know, I must confess that there probably is a cultural gap here. Your assumption of Mr. Dodd's innocence and Mr. Powell's guilt --

Chairman: (Blurred)

Dr. Clark: I don't necessarily share. I admit that his colleagues -- not even Mr. Dodd's colleagues share the assumption of his innocence, as witness the pat on the wrist that they gave him for being a bad boy. The question of Powell I think is still ~~that~~ left for the courts to adjudicate. I don't think that the basic issue of the rights of a Congressman to certain kinds of immunity in terms of a civil case has yet been clearly settled by the court. But, maybe we've talked too much about Mr. Powell.

Chairman; We were discussing actually powerful Negro politicians and first you started with Powell and then you were going to propose someone else.

Dr. Clark: The next one is J. Raymond Jones, who to me , I think --

Chairman: Sorry, sorry, Dr. Clark, I'm afraid we must break again for a commercial.

Mr. Buckley: Dr. Clark, I think we've touched on a very interesting point accidentally. That someone as scholarly and detached as you, and moreover somebody who over the years has been emotionally and intellectually against the excesses of Adam Clayton Powell,

should leap to this lynching metaphor, suggests to me that ultimately the problem of the ghetto is -- is psychological, and it may in fact be that the lionization of Powell by the Harlem community should have tipped us off a long time ago to the probability of more or less mutinous assaults by certain people in the ghetto against the "system." The fact, that is to say, that Adam Clayton Powell could probably succeed in being reelected, even if he lynched 27 people in Times Square during broad daylight --

Dr. Clark: You're going a little far.

Mr. Buckley: Yeah, it's kind of far, yeah. Because I think he had gone a little far. It does suggest to me that there is a spirit of resistance which is probably psychologically based. Now, if that's true, then don't we -- aren't we ultimately -- don't we ultimately have to appeal not to the Federal Government, or to Liberal ameliorism, but rather to psychological explanations for how to take care of this particular situation. This being your major field of specialty, I should think you would be especially illuminating on that.

Dr. Clark: Well, I agree with part of what you say. But I do think that the phenomenon of Adam Clayton Powell was an extremely important symptom of the nature of the ghetto because certainly Adam was a hero, and you notice I use the term, "was," --

Mr. Buckley: Uh-hmm.

Dr. Clark: a hero in the ghetto precisely because he was such a clear and articulate defier of white America's pretenses, hypocrisy, or virtues, even, Adam --

Mr. Buckley: An ideal, yeah.

Dr. Clark: An ideal. Adam articulated for a powerless people of the ghetto the kind of defiance which they so desperately wanted to assert themselves, -- that Adam was a form of riot in a way for people of the ghetto. In fact, with Adam now powerless, if he is, the chances of more overt forms of defiance on the part of the mass seem to be increased. Adam was Harlem's bread (?) brotherhood for bread and circuses. He was Harlem's Elizabeth Taylor. (Laughter). He was Harlem's way of getting vicarious satisfaction out of thumbing your nose with impunity at the white establishment. Taking Adam away now means that Harlem will have to find other ways of doing this because the basis for doing it remains.

Mr. Buckley: And it might get worse.

Dr. Clark: O, I don't think there is any question -

Mr. Buckley: You mean like the Irish Catholics going from Mayor Curley to Mr. Kennedy.
(Laughter)

Dr. Clark: You said that. (Laughter) I happen to believe that Mr. Kennedy was a significant improvement over Mayor Curley.

Mr. Buckley: But at least part of the analogy does stand, doesn't it. Mayor Curley both defied the law and was a folk hero, and he was sort of intentionally iconoclastic, impious, anti-Protestant in a sort of concealed but not quite concealed sort of a way --

Dr. Clark: (Blurred) buoyancy (?)

Mr. Buckley: Yeah, right, right. And you can think of Powell as his counterpart. Now, what is it that happened in Boston that cants to civilize it, if that's the right word, that isn't likely to happen in Harlem, and why?

Dr. Clark: O, other things happened in Harlem -- in Boston -- is that the Irish Catholics in Boston and elsewhere actually grasped and maintained and used political power and didn't share it, by the way, and I presume that this is one of the things that America makes possible for people who have white skin.

Mr. Buckley: Didn't they always permit one Protestant Senator?

Dr. Clark: Did they? (Laughing) You know, the Irish Catholics once they attained power in the cities --

Mr. Buckley: Held on to it, yah.

Dr. Clark: -- held on to it, and exploited it until they became respectable.

Mr. Buckley: What caused that?

Dr. Clark: What made it possible for them to become respectable?

Mr. Buckley: Yes sir.

Dr. Clark: Holding power long enough.

Mr. Buckley: Is that it?

Dr. Clark: I would think so. I would think that any group -- and, by the way, one of the things, if you don't want a group to have power, don't let it --

Mr. Buckley: Go on TV. (Laughter)

15.

Dr. Clark: No, no, (Laughing) I think that we have used Negroes on TV as a substitute for real power. For example, any time that Stokeley Carmichael or Rap Brown want to be on TV they can be, but you use Negroes one way in society -- you give them pseudo-power. For example, I feel that I should never get on another television program because I think that one of the devices that America is now using for dealing with the real problems of race is having a number of Negroes who are projected on the media, particularly television, as spokesmen. The more they talk, the less white society has to do.

Mr. Buckley: Well, I don't think you're casting universal rules because I've turned down Rap Brown for this program.

Dr. Clark: You're one of the few.

Mr. Buckley: Yeah, yeah.

Dr. Clark: -- people who have that degree of sensitivity.

Mr. Buckley: Yeah -- and last year, LeRoi Jones. But it seems to me that if you are confident of your analysis, you ought to want to project it as frequently as you can, shouldn't you?

Dr. Clark: Well, how about --

Mr. Buckley: Not that you're otherwise busy -- God knows you're an extremely industrious --

Dr. Clark: Well, how long do you analyze problems -- people have been talking about problems of the ghetto from I think the first of these types of riots of 1935. E. Franklin Frazer made a terrific analysis of the riots.

Mr. Buckley: Yeah. But isn't it possible that the sin of our time is a sin that -- well to use a fancy phrase of Eric Vogel, has us all trying to immanentize the eschaton. In other words, attempting at -- instantly -- to create a world in which God is in fact a part of the structure, the rhetoric of Freedom Now -- when we know from all history that no group has ever won freedom of the kind that we idealize now -- it's a process that takes decades and generations. Isn't this a part of the difficulty, and may it not be that even many of the ^{extremely} responsible Negro leaders did their disservice by contributing their voice to that kind of rhetoric. Is it possible that George Washington Carver will be rediscovered by the Negro Community as really perhaps having more to say than

Martin Luther King?

16.

Dr. Clark: I hope not. I think that --

Mr. Buckley: He made men happy and progressive.

Dr. Clark: Yes, but he was from another age.

Mr. Buckley: That's the age that maybe we ought to --

Dr. Clark: Return to?

Mr. Buckley: Return to.

Dr. Clark: I don't think we can, nor do I think --

Mr. Buckley: Do you think we should (blurred), if we can't.

Dr. Clark: No, I think that the problem of -- you raised the question of Negro leaders offering or promising things which they could not deliver, such as Freedom Now. My own reading of this is that this is not the basic problem. I think that the basic problem is that moderate, respectable Negro leaders suggested that freedom could be attained by the oppressors granting it, you see. For example, not so long ago "Time" magazine had a cover story on Whitney Young. And on the front page there was this headline which said, "You Must Give Us Some Victories." This, to me, is a fascinating thing that.

Mr. Buckley: Don't you think they were wrested from an unwilling community, meaning psychologically --

Dr. Clark: No, the notion that freedom or --

Chairman: Gentlemen, I'm sorry we've got to break again.

Dr. Clark: O, my goodness.

Dr. Clark: (After station break). The thing that really bothers me about moderate, respectable, rational and intelligent Negro leaders is that they genuinely believe that it is possible for the Negro in America, particularly the folk Negro, to receive justice and equality through --

Mr. Buckley: Dispensations.

Dr. Clark: Through dispensation -- that White America will suddenly be converted to a moral and ethical sense which it has blocked for 300 years, and because the Negro behaves respectably, he would then be given the benefits of democracy. Well, if this happens it will be the first time in human history that an oppressed group was ever free of its

oppression by the oppressor before the oppressors were morally converted.

Mr. Buckley: What do you call the Emancipation Proclamation -- an act of war rather than an act of altruism, yeah.

Dr. Clark: Well, Mr. Lincoln made that perfectly clear. He said he was not interested in altruism, he was interested in military logistics.

Mr. Buckley: But isn't it also true that the Abolitionists were very much interested in that which was correct, and Abraham Lincoln was (blurred by next remarks)

Dr. Clark: The Abolitionists were (blurred) fatigued after the Emancipation.

Mr. Buckley: Well, some of them were hung but others had enormous interest, didn't they.

Dr. Clark: (Blurred by next remarks)

Chairman: Let me ask you a couple of questions, Dr. Clark, if I may. There have been major riots in various cities of the country this summer as you of course know. There haven't been any in Harlem -- any major riot -- there was a relatively small riot of Puerto Ricans in East Harlem. Now some people have attributed that to the fact that Mayor Lindsay, I understand, has gone up to Harlem and walked through the streets there, making friends with people. Is that a fact -- is that why there hasn't been a riot in Harlem this summer?

Dr. Clark: That I would not say -- that Mayor Lindsay's open friendship, handshaking excursions in Harlem --

Chairman: Isn't it a fact that he makes them?

Dr. Clark: Yes, I think he does make them or he makes them long enough to have photographers around. I think that those of us who have looked at riots since 1935, and I have been trying to study all over riots since 1935, find that there seems to be some sort of time-cycle in riots. For example, in Harlem you had a riot in 1935, and you didn't have one until 1943. You did^{not} have Mayor Lindsay walking around in Harlem between 1935 and 1943. You didn't have one between 1943 and 1964. Nothing really happened in these intervals except things got worse. Now, I am postulating the theory that it takes time for frustrations to buildup in any particular locality. Now what --

Chairman: A period of incubation.

Dr. Clark: Yeah. A period -- it's a sort of a -- yeah -- replenishment of frustration energy.

Mr. Buckley: You've got to rebuild the houses you're going to burn down -- (Laughter)

Dr. Clark: Now, Watts, by the way, seemed as if it were going to be an exception because Watts had an abortive attempt at a riot the following year. But it really didn't get off the ground, and I think there's a certain amount of emotional exhaustion --

Mr. Buckley: Second act problems?

Dr. Clark: Second act problems. In Neurophysiology they have an analogy of a refractory period -- that period the nerve cell requires to rebuild its energy before it is able to discharge again. I think you have a similar problem.

Chairman: Mr. Buckley, do you accept Dr. Clark's use of the word, "oppression," do you think the white race is oppressing the Negro race, and is there anything that you propose to do about it?

Mr. Buckley: Yes, I do but not -- not --

Chairman: Could you say it in a word or two?

Mr. Buckley: Not now in the sense that Dr. Clark -- I can't say anything in a word or two (Laughter)

Chairman: We haven't much time left.

Mr. Buckley: I most definitely believe that there is a spirit of oppression -- most emphatically. At the same time I do feel there is a more conscious effort by more people to help the Negroes than there was to help any other minority group that finally did succeed in escaping from the ghetto. It isn't sufficient, I don't doubt. But what one has to constantly weigh in mind that there are limits to the extent of people's concern for other people. This is a fact of human nature. And when one is asked to go beyond those limits to the point, for instance, of forsaking one's own children's education, or being made to think that you're doing that, then you are going beyond the limits which you are likely to succeed. And this I think is the great lesson of

the collapse of Liberal optimism of the past few years.

19.

Chairman: Dr. Clark, you have spoken of the struggle for integration as being a hopeless one and as being really the reason that the Negroes are taking to Black Nationalism, and so on -- now it is a fact, isn't it, that there are a great many integrated schools and have been for many years in the North? I myself went to a racially integrated school. What have your researches shown on how integration has worked in fact in those schools where it existed?

Dr. Clark: The irony is that since the Brown Decision, in the North, there has been an increasing number of racially segregated schools. This --

Mr. Buckley: De facto.

Dr. Clark: Yes.

Chairman: Well, er --

Dr. Clark: I went to an integrated school in New York and Harlem --

Chairman: I don't think -- perhaps I introduced my question wrongly, but my real question is this, what do your researches show as to how integration has worked in fact in those places where it has existed?

Dr. Clark: The most comprehensive study is the recent study by the Civil Rights Commission -- Racial Isolation in the Schools. This study shows without question that where integration is a fact, rather than a token, verbal evasion it actually has worked to the benefit of white and Negro children. That no white child has suffered academically as a result of integration, and generally Negro children benefit significantly from integration. This is the most comprehensive study that we have.

Chairman: I'm sorry, gentlemen, we must stop again.

(After station break) - Ladies and Gentlemen, we're out of time and unfortunately we must now close our discussion of the problems of the ghetto. Thank you, Dr. Clark.
Thank you, Mr. Buckley.

* * * *