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Interviewee: Alexander, Cecil

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RONALD BAYOR: -- impact of race on urban development -- not strictly racism but just race and race relations. You know, I'm thinking of (inaudible) but you were very involved in their (inaudible) so that -- let me start with this. Can you tell me the years that you were chairman of the Citizens Advisory Committee?

CECIL ALEXANDER: [I'll have to look?] back on that. Let's see, it was -- well, Hartsfield was mayor, and of course he had, what, two years of Andy, eight years of Maynard, eight years of Allen. So it had to be, say, 20 years ago, I guess. About ['64?], yeah. I can look that up if you need it. BAYOR: (inaudible) newspaper, that's OK. One of the things I was interested in [01:00] in this period -- how extensive was the process of creating buffer zones between the races? Buffer zones [of?] public housing, commercial development, highways (inaudible). They were very (inaudible) you know, [zoning laws -- when they give you a zoning?] (inaudible) [office?] (inaudible) you know (inaudible). The big drive was to get the lands to be used by the blacks to build on. That was a progressive -- the

creation of those buffers was a progressive move [rather than a less?] progressive move.

BAYOR: [What do you mean?]?

ALEXANDER: Well, in that the city -- knowing that more areas had to be found for blacks to live in, using buffers to [02:00] create areas for blacks to live in, rather than it being... [I don't know?] exactly how (inaudible) but it -- the city, under Hartsfield and under Allen [was on the side?] of getting the blacks areas to live in (inaudible)

BAYOR: [Yeah?].

ALEXANDER: And then they used these (inaudible) rather than protecting the whites, they were saying OK, whites, we're going to put this buffer here so you can't object to the blacks being on the other side it. And that's -- you know, Allen got in a lot of trouble when he put up a barrier across Peyton Road. Are you familiar with that?

BAYOR: Yeah.

ALEXANDER: And Hartsfield's comment on that was that he made mistakes but he never would have made one [03:00] [before that?]. And what Allen was doing -- and, of course, [the interpretation was this was?] (inaudible) -- but what he was doing, and I believe was a encouragement of black [rental cars?] -- was deciding -- [gain?] many acres of land on the other side of that barrier [whereas blacks

would build and those sorts of battles?] (inaudible) and unfortunately was just about to turn (inaudible). He was in trouble and he just waited around for (inaudible) [just let him off the hook?].

BAYOR: Clearly, he was trying to get to -- make the whites feel safe behind a barrier.

ALEXANDER: Yeah, right. (overlapping dialogue; inaudible)

BAYOR: -- what do you think the effect on the city was of [04:00] these barriers in terms of how the city grew and developed?

ALEXANDER: Well, what it created was sort of a river running through the city from [white in the?] north, northwest to [a part of the?] southeast --

BAYOR: [Really?]?

ALEXANDER: -- [in the parts where many blacks lived in those days?] pretty much confined to that area. Incidentally, there was a man -- I think he's still around. I haven't seen him -- [Q.B. Williams?] and he was on my original committee [and was?] -- city council, and [a realtor?], and he had (inaudible) [use?] for a lot of the [way he built like he did and, you know?] by buying up (inaudible) he's the one that [05:00] created the areas for whites [and later he bought?] (inaudible)

BAYOR: [Our interviews are people in the black community who?] (overlapping dialogue; inaudible). How about [the place in the highways?]? Is [that -- that also?] (inaudible) [built the communities?]?

ALEXANDER: To some extent, but I don't think that was -- there were so many other factors. White neighborhoods [of that name were being?] (inaudible) on the highways here, so -- but (inaudible). I think after the highways went in they probably were divided, but I don't think they were really set up with that in mind. Because I-75, I-85 (inaudible) [bottom on this side, of course it was cleared by?] (inaudible), but [06:00] it was -- [that was one of the roads, swung in the?] (inaudible). And I may be wrong, but I think at the time that that was done, the basic layout (inaudible) [right at the?] (inaudible) I couldn't sit here and tell you how close to the actual highway [it goes to, but it's?] (inaudible) [but it was done -- from the planning viewpoint?] of what to be done to (inaudible), and it was before the whites were very much [on the conscience?], (inaudible) [conscience?] -- because they lived over there somewhere. [It could be closer now?]. Another man, [07:00] [when we -- he's retired?] but his name is [Phil Hammer?].

BAYOR: [Oh?] (inaudible) [him?].

ALEXANDER: I know that he was [here?] (inaudible) Atlanta [trying to make a good law?]. And I know he had some scheme of using the roads to more or less isolate an area up near West (inaudible) [Third?] and I-75. But again, I mean, to protect the whites [and give them a place to live rather than trying to run them out?]. And when the [draft?] of that got out, it really (inaudible) [they changed it?] (inaudible). But, you know. It [didn't raise hell with the whites; it raised hell with the whites?].

[08:00] (inaudible)

BAYOR: [But the blacks would -- would they go over and?] --

ALEXANDER: Yeah.

BAYOR: [Yeah?].

ALEXANDER: [Well, it was?] (inaudible) involved with racial matters. The whites [thought, you know?] (inaudible) Morehouse. The thing is, in looking at all this, you have to see the motives of the people who were involved. If you just look at it and say, this happened, it could be incredibly (inaudible) white [community and became everything important to -- just block and contain white people?] (inaudible). So what was really going on was -- and the truth of the matter was the integration of living patterns was just not going to happen at that time, and the [09:00] only approach -- the liberal approach would be --

was the [final angle that whites?] (inaudible). Even public housing was white. Public housing was white (inaudible).

BAYOR: (inaudible). That's why I don't feel that racism is really the [ultimate?] motive here. That's why [I want to take it to the?] --

ALEXANDER: Well, it [was?] the operative motive in terms of how to deal [with existing?] (inaudible). Without that, a lot of things that happened wouldn't have happened no more, if (inaudible). But it was taking the point at which race relations then existed and seeing what you could do to alleviate the serious problems [from these bad houses?]. This was as far as anybody could [10:00] hope to go with it (inaudible). I got very much entangled with race and housing in terms of relocation, and people moved from the (inaudible), which was a very volatile, very tough business to find areas where you could (inaudible). And Atlanta took that seriously and I think there were about 4,500 people that relocated into either 221 housing or public housing.

BAYOR: OK, on the relocation, was there an attitude that in order to get the blacks out of the downtown area, [which you knew was going?] to do, was there an attitude that some white neighborhoods were expendable?

ALEXANDER: [11:00] Well, there was -- yeah, I would say so. Maybe not expendable, but the poor white neighborhoods [for certain -- mostly the -- subject to?] redevelopment -- [that?] (inaudible) [about the?] relocation housing. And that -- part of that was land value, part of it was, like, the political clout.

BAYOR: Was it accepted by city government? In other words, like -- that some areas would (inaudible) transition (inaudible)?

ALEXANDER: Yes. In a way, what the [city?] effort was -- [one point, there?] (inaudible), and there was one in particular, [one we called Adamsville, and that was the?] (inaudible) and for a while there, [12:00] they were very proud of [what they were going to do here?]. I think that Atlanta has stayed in the same racial ratio it was then, which is about one-third to two-thirds (inaudible) black, but you might have -- eventually development was [high?], but I think the wealthy black population [and the -- that migration?] of whites [became noticeably fewer than the?] key to the tremendous growth of (inaudible) migration. But, I mean, I don't think there were that many people around to leave Atlanta. But as the blacks began to be the majority in the city, [13:00] and I think the black [realtors?] got involved, too, in that it was much easier

for them to go in and change the neighborhood and use scare tactics and so forth and so on, and the blacks left -- I mean, the whites left. And I get the feeling now that the whites really don't care too much that [there was?] -- I know this sounds like an old Southern myth -- but I really do think that the better-educated blacks -- and this wasn't where I (inaudible) [worked out, but I think we?] (inaudible) [stay where -- in their?] part of the cities where they're living, where they've got their friends, and where their [14:00] housing is (inaudible). A few have moved out into the north[west?]. And I was part of a movement that was trying to get them to come up there. And with very exceptions, they just [hadn't come?]. But I felt they (inaudible) huge problem was busing [as far as this housing thing?]. But you see that with all -- I mean, [that the -- I'm Jewish?], of course, and the concentration of Jews in [the city?] (inaudible).

BAYOR: And that's true of any ethnic group [in history?].

ALEXANDER: [Yes, of course?]. And I think the blacks wanted integration as long as they were the minority. The minute they become the majority and have political control, I don't think that's [15:00] (inaudible) thinking anymore. (inaudible) and the ability to [go wherever they want and

they do have that now?]. But I don't think it's [the drive to come out and live on?] Valley Road (inaudible).

BAYOR: That's interesting.

ALEXANDER: [But most of that's my statement?]. I mean, somebody who's white (inaudible).

BAYOR: [I was really referring to?] why most of the public housing [is placed?] in the west side, and nothing on the north side [as well?].

ALEXANDER: [Yeah?].

BAYOR: Is that a pretty much set government policy at that time?

ALEXANDER: No, that was a -- when you say government policy, [you got to look at two or three others?]. You've got to look at the -- [16:00] at the mayor. I get somewhat hazy. You know, I stayed on -- I was heading up the housing committee under Ivan Allen. (inaudible) So some of what I'm saying, I realize I'm not sure [when?] it happened -- and around the urban renewal or (inaudible) (laughs) but what was the question?

BAYOR: OK. Why was local public housing put on the west side and was that a government policy?

ALEXANDER: Well, it was not a government policy in the executive branch, and it was certainly not a government policy in our committee. Our committee was always quasi-

government. And I don't know whether you know the structure of (inaudible), but the west side, it was just easier to find the land. It was easier to get [17:00] through (inaudible). One of the interesting things we ran into was where you had a community [with?] 221 houses, and wanted to put public housing in that area. And the people in the 221 houses (inaudible). They said they didn't want that trash in the public housing living [in our neighborhood?].

BAYOR: [But most of the folks probably -- coming out of the same neighborhood?] (inaudible)

ALEXANDER: Yeah, probably. The great battle on the east side was [for what was?] called the Egleston side. And the whites living in that neighborhood (inaudible) but they were quite (inaudible) [18:00]

BAYOR: [Well, at?] --

ALEXANDER: That was a real watershed, I think, (inaudible) losing that (inaudible) [and struggling to get back in?] (inaudible). I think the reason it was lost was it -- that [he was?] blindsided folks, and he didn't think he was going to run into the opposition that he did. Even so, it was a tie vote in the council and then we -- [what do they call it?] president of the council voted against the

rezoning. And everybody that voted against that rezoning was turned out of office (inaudible).

BAYOR: On that issue?

ALEXANDER: (inaudible) yeah. I guess you're aware that there were a coalition of the liberal whites [19:00] in the business community and the black --

BAYOR: Yeah (overlapping dialogue; inaudible)

ALEXANDER: Yeah.

BAYOR: (inaudible) [refunctioning coalitions?] (inaudible)

ALEXANDER: [It was. I mean?] --

BAYOR: In terms of the Egleston [fight?], was there a lot of concern over the Atlanta downtown area becoming all-black? In other words, the rejection of Egleston as a site for public housing [was related to the?] concern that the downtown area --

ALEXANDER: No, I don't think so. [Where?] the concern -- the major -- there were two or three major [incentives to get up and?] (inaudible) and number one was Dr. (inaudible) who was pastor of the Baptist church (inaudible) and was also very, very active in the (inaudible), and he was the one that rallied and got pledges from the council [20:00] members that they (inaudible) representing, to vote against it [and he just kind of?] (inaudible) church [there and fill up city hall and everything?] (inaudible) [his?]

(inaudible) [and the?] Atlanta Chamber of Commerce
(inaudible) really not much [of that?] (inaudible)
[bankruptcy?].

BAYOR: [And even before?]. (laughs)

ALEXANDER: [It was very fortunate?] (inaudible)

BAYOR: But the rejection of Egleston, was that just part of a
whole plan to move blacks away from the downtown area into
the west side or (inaudible)?

ALEXANDER: Well, I don't know exactly (inaudible) [21:00]
that was already a black area, [but? the hospital. I
actually think -- [the hospital?]. At the same time as
that was being defeated, there were 600 units on [Teale?]
Road [that made it?] -- there was a very [fine?]
(inaudible) [the committee on neighborhood renewal, and Pam
Douglas -- you two meet yet?]

BAYOR: No, [I've never had the pleasure of meeting her?].

ALEXANDER: (inaudible). But the strategy was worked out
that [they would either come into an encounter with both
these projects?], the one on the east side and then on the
west side. And there were two people [22:00] that really
wanted to do right [with the?] (inaudible) on the council.
We voted for -- we gerrymandered, I guess, to get the west
side (inaudible), and two people on the east side voted
[for the new -- and west, and the tactics were?]

(inaudible) Pam Douglas could say, "Look, those guys did that." And then why don't (inaudible). (laughter) But [Ham?] at the last minute decided that that sort of arm-twisting tactic wouldn't work and [when he stayed in his seat?] at the council, he didn't vote [himself for it, he beat them?] and -- anyway, they (inaudible) [23:00] [and both?] -- one of the councilmen was very, very sick -- in fact, I think he died very shortly thereafter -- and he got up off a sickbed to come down [and vote and so?]. It was one of the most [vicious?] fights that I ever saw in the [three years?] (inaudible) [most brutal?] that I ever got involved in. [And I got all the votes we needed?]

(inaudible)

BAYOR: [I met him, George?] (inaudible) public housing (inaudible).

ALEXANDER: Well, (inaudible). Yeah, this guy, Louie Newton, with his church and his leadership at Georgia Baptist Hospital, [and it was the two of those things -- meeting with?] (inaudible). They had hired [24:00] as a lawyer the head of the Atlanta school board, and there was a lot of talk that he had asked to (inaudible) [a very?] (inaudible) [called us down and?] --

BAYOR: [Right, right?].

ALEXANDER: (inaudible) [public never sees?]. But he wanted to be mayor of Atlanta, and I remember having lunch with him while this was going on. "You know what you're doing? You're [ruining?] your political career (inaudible)." He said, "I'm doing it because it's right." Well, he's [dead now?]. He was never -- and I think he is?] (inaudible). Hartsfield dropped the ball -- [25:00] later on (inaudible) [he had it made?], and [it was?] -- one of Atlanta's leading [realtors, Donald Dow?], who was head of the housing authority -- he was very much involved. [He had?] (inaudible) and we had all (inaudible) newspapers. There's really a -- quite a case history.

BAYOR: I'm reading a lot of the old newspapers, and it seems to be [on the page?] almost every day during that time.

ALEXANDER: And it was. There was a guy here that was a reporter for the Atlanta newspapers. Where was he now? [26:00] (inaudible) he was at Georgia State. [He may have come back in -- up there?]. He would be a real good resource.

BAYOR: [The only one I've met?] (inaudible) [is Malcolm?] (inaudible).

ALEXANDER: (inaudible) but I don't think [he got in?] -- the way the newspapers got into this thing -- the committee was (inaudible) [set up?] -- there was seven of us. [Judy

Williamson?] was one of them and (inaudible) was another. And [Ivan?] and I went to the newspapers and said, "Do you guys want this or don't you?" (inaudible) gave them the coverage. And (inaudible) [said, you know, "You have been nitpicking"?] (inaudible) [27:00] (inaudible) [cover and let's?] see whether it's good or bad? and if it's good (inaudible). And Gene Patterson was (inaudible) [first papers?]. Remember that name?

BAYOR: Oh, yes. I know that name.

ALEXANDER: And [he told Green we had leverage to?] coordinate the two newspapers that were going to cover the hell out of this. And they did. And we got [printed with?] editorial support, and plenty of news coverage, and [they made the difference there with the other media?]. When we went in there, nobody knew [anything about?] (inaudible) everybody was against it (inaudible). By the time the next city elections came around, everybody [was?] [28:00] (inaudible) (inaudible) [what's the matter?] --

BAYOR: [Brilliant?]. (laughs)

ALEXANDER: But to get back to race, I think that that committee had another effect. It was the first committee, standing committee, that was racially integrated.

BAYOR: [Just the?] housing resources?

ALEXANDER: No, the (inaudible) and it was one third black and two thirds white, and it was, I don't know, about 90 members. I had a hell of a fight with Hartsfield [couldn't remember -- in the '70s?] (inaudible). Hartsfield wasn't for everyone, no. [29:00] And -- yeah. [One of the things we would do to slow it down was we?] he wouldn't appoint (inaudible) committee would (inaudible). That was one way (inaudible). But he came around to being for us. And the city's economic base wanted it [as much, so probably?] (inaudible) [and the -- remove the whites out of the grounds?], you know, but also (inaudible) [and that was just?] (inaudible).

BAYOR: [Yeah, but, you know, I can understand that?]. But, I mean, there was some feeling of -- the only way to really improve downtown would be get the blacks, [30:00] you know, out of the area.

ALEXANDER: Well, the poor, and blacks maybe, but I -- my feeling about [this even?] now and it has been for a number of years is (inaudible) is more financial than it is racial, at least up in the higher echelons. When you get - - you know, you get down to the poor -- [follow their votes?], white and blacks (inaudible) and I see another thing that (inaudible) [black distrust and the poor black distrust every?] black or white (inaudible) that's going on

here that nobody seems to have got a handle on.

(inaudible) [31:00] [at a?] (inaudible) and I think it's going to be?] such a different city by the turn of the century [but it will?] -- well, as much of the difference it will make in the next 15 years as in the last 25.

BAYOR: Well, I think with -- [you'll?] have a situation very much like (inaudible) a number of competing groups sort of jockeying for position.

ALEXANDER: Yeah.

BAYOR: Asians, Hispanics, blacks [and it's, you know?] --

ALEXANDER: (inaudible) [few other guys got in the race?] and I don't think the black (inaudible)

BAYOR: [Not yet?].

ALEXANDER: [But -- would be anything?].

BAYOR: I was wondering whether there was any feeling that there was too much public housing (inaudible) and this would attract more blacks into the city?

ALEXANDER: Well, yeah, there was -- the problem was that it was seen [32:00] -- [I mean, it's?] that we build this housing and we're going to get a lot of people coming into Atlanta to use it. But we did some research on that at the time and as I recall -- [and God knows what?] (inaudible) -- I think it was an indication of damn little, actually, [people that came to?] Atlanta. [So while?] -- they came

in looking for jobs and then they looked for housing after that. But the jobs that they (inaudible).

BAYOR: But was there a lot of concern about the immigration ballenced with?] (inaudible) more public housing for -- more [neighborhoods would open up to them?]?

ALEXANDER: I don't -- I [never?] was concerned about [the opinions?], but I don't think the public housing particularly (inaudible). I think the [immigration of public [33:00] housing?] (inaudible) the people that occupied [would not make good neighbors?]. It's interesting in the beginning that the blacks who went into public housing were at the top of the, or near the top of [that scale?], because [it just wasn't in the right place for them to do it?]. And it was only later when the (inaudible) the black population in the housing [got as bad?] in the sociological sense [as the whites did?] --

BAYOR: [Let's -- yeah, I've read the studies of university?] (inaudible) [black?] (inaudible).

ALEXANDER: Yeah.

BAYOR: [With the same?] (inaudible) the first whites (inaudible) [working class with anything like?] --

ALEXANDER: I'm not so sure about that, because the [worker?] [34:00] (inaudible) [but this, we had a sharpening in the?] (inaudible) The thing about Atlanta slums that makes them

different from other cities is we built it for them. Most the slums in other [cities -- they will do it with the housing market, but we?] (inaudible) [between the slums and the neighboring population?] (inaudible). But the slums in Atlanta, you could spend a lot of money (inaudible) in those days (inaudible). [But that's one reason that?] (inaudible) [was the only answer for everyone?].

BAYOR: It seemed for quite a while that there was a -- sort of a standing statement of policy that you knew not to [use?] for public housing and then that was reversed, [35:00] [I think, about '66?] by Mayor Allen.

ALEXANDER: Yeah.

BAYOR: Yeah. What was the basis of the reversal?

ALEXANDER: Well, there was -- the Atlanta Housing Authority at that time was almost in (inaudible) like late in the -- [proposed that happened to?] -- the Department of Education, [now they were -- the mayor's?] (inaudible) would be better to shut it down (inaudible). But there was a lot of that feeling in the public housing [domain?] (inaudible) [where?] -- keep public housing from being built. My own feeling after years of exposure (inaudible) I think public housing [was?] (inaudible). [36:00] I think that the idea of [subsidized?] housing (inaudible) and make the market (inaudible) would be much healthier thing

(inaudible) but these concentrations (inaudible) [from, but believe that?] several generations could grow up in the same atmosphere and I just [don't?] (inaudible) [logically or don't look?] (inaudible) [and?] (inaudible)

BAYOR: [I know they work for you, it's pretty clear?], and public housing was never meant to be long-term housing. It was supposed to be short-term, get the people back on their feet, have them move on.

ALEXANDER: Right.

BAYOR: Yeah. What were the attitudes [surrounding the?] public housing? I got the impression (inaudible) [why?]? Was it also -- was it poor and black, that was the two issues?

ALEXANDER: Yeah, yeah. [That's right?].

BAYOR: How did they stop it from being built? [They called?] -- [37:00]

ALEXANDER: Well, they were -- through their own housing authorities. We never tried to get outside the city limits with it. (inaudible) [wasting time, that -- we talked and?] (inaudible) [you know?]?

BAYOR: [Yeah?] (inaudible). Was that part of what turned Atlanta into a majority black city (inaudible)? I mean, the fact that [and just in place of?] (inaudible)?

ALEXANDER: Well, [I think that's what?] (inaudible)
political power (inaudible). The blacks got to know at the
time of Hartsfield, without them, I mean, any sort of a
[38:00] moderate mayor of Atlanta [would have to have
done?] for them [what?] (inaudible) [you know, he wouldn't
be arrested?]. But there was also -- [and they only let?]
(inaudible) moderate mayor (inaudible) too much scrutiny
[and so?] (inaudible).

BAYOR: But any sense of what public housing (inaudible)
[would just be a?] (inaudible)?

ALEXANDER: Oh yeah. Well, (inaudible)

BAYOR: [Yeah, but I'm about to talk to him?] (laughs) [It's
a?] --

ALEXANDER: Well, there was a man there that I think has --
had a good view of the region and that was [Barrett?].

BAYOR: [Who was?]?

ALEXANDER: [We threw him a going away party?] (inaudible).
And I always felt he was much (inaudible) [interested in
[39:00] what?] (inaudible) he really knew (inaudible)
Chicago (inaudible).

BAYOR: [Well, but?] they refused to even give us a chance to
vote on the matter.

ALEXANDER: Yeah.

BAYOR: (inaudible) [but taking?] 1965 [to just vote?] and projecting it, it represents [the population here now, and it keeps?] -- it's such a change in just the last 10 years (inaudible).

ALEXANDER: Well, my guess [is this new track?] works as well as I hope it will, that's going to be a (inaudible).

BAYOR: I hope so.

ALEXANDER: (inaudible) coming in.

BAYOR: I'd like to see MARTA (inaudible).

ALEXANDER: Hmm?

BAYOR: I'd like to see MARTA (inaudible).

ALEXANDER: Why, hell, all you got to do is try to drive around out there?

BAYOR: Well, [I know?], I have to face 75 coming in every morning and I'd love to get on (inaudible) train and just relax (inaudible). How much contact have you had with (inaudible) [leaving?] (inaudible)

ALEXANDER: I have a great deal, [40:00] and this committee -
- being a standing committee, we got [in to -- or when --
well, I'd like just to be able to?] (inaudible)

(break in audio)

BAYOR: Yeah, [let's go back -- would it be a better vote to?] -- to win the black vote [on these areas -- committee?] -- to win them over to what would be (inaudible)?

ALEXANDER: It really wasn't necessary. They were all very much for it. And I think the reason they were very much for it was because we'd really taken seriously the relocation. And I can't remember any opposition [to the?] blacks. It was the white members of council were the biggest [41:00] stumbling blocks [to?] --

BAYOR: [Was running?] --

ALEXANDER: -- [Not all whites?].

BAYOR: Was there any feeling among the blacks that any effort to disperse blacks around the city would weaken their political power (inaudible)?

ALEXANDER: I don't know that I ran into that, because at that point, [they?] must have gotten [a ratio?], but the -- remember, the council are elected at large. I think [they were all at large?].

BAYOR: (inaudible)

ALEXANDER: (inaudible) that was brought about in the earlier days [when the whites in -- the reason was?] the white voting (inaudible). So it really didn't mean a heck of a lot in those days where you lived, when you were running [to -- in front of a whole electorate it was?] (inaudible)

BAYOR: [Yeah, but [42:00] you were limiting black?]

(inaudible)

ALEXANDER: Yeah, it didn't matter if it's black, Latinos, [males?], you vote [down in the?] (inaudible). I've always regretted we went to the ward system, because I think [racial pride?] (inaudible) [that you?] get people who are voting on what their neighbors [always are saying to them?] rather than what might be good for the whole city.

BAYOR: [Right, it's like?] (inaudible)

ALEXANDER: Yeah.

BAYOR: -- [this system?]. What (inaudible) [were involved with this?] (inaudible) [to deal with, racial transition?] (inaudible)

ALEXANDER: Well, there was a man [particularly?] (inaudible) [he was an old man?]. He was -- he [went with it?], he was in the government (inaudible).

BAYOR: [Which is?] --

ALEXANDER: And then he went on up to Washington with it, [43:00] even though he was (inaudible) [and?] (inaudible). He was one of the [sexiest?] men I ever met in my entire life. [And he would try outside the?] committee and the city [put up?] the money, but the city wouldn't put him on the payroll (inaudible) and he was on our payroll and the money (inaudible) and he [brought up?] (inaudible) and -- [but I don't?] (inaudible) [he's an?] (inaudible) [farms?], (inaudible) [farms?]. (inaudible). I did it a few times

myself and that's why I know what [44:00] a really tough situation [that was?].

BAYOR: [Oh, sure?].

ALEXANDER: I was invited (inaudible) and I suppose when I got through, a woman came up and said, "Who in the hell asked you to [come down?]? Why the hell are you here?" [And?] I said [what are you?] (inaudible), and she backed off fairly quick. I don't know that we changed [very deeply?], but [during the course of?] (inaudible) and so the black neighborhood and the white neighborhood (inaudible) [one other?]. And one of the things you just do with these neighborhoods, these new neighborhoods, is to go in there and help them set up [centers [45:00] that -- and then you got the white?] (inaudible) and help them (inaudible). So all of this that we were doing was -- there was very little to the black [objective?]. I think the day when you got [ward?] (inaudible) [which is talking about?] (inaudible).

BAYOR: Was the goal here to stabilize those neighborhoods or to keep them all white (inaudible)? You know, what were you aiming for (inaudible)?

ALEXANDER: Well, basically we were aiming for decent places for people to live.

BAYOR: Integrated neighborhoods?

ALEXANDER: No, wherever we could find them (inaudible)

[46:00] [and give them?] (inaudible)

BAYOR: So you were looking for a smooth transition, really, from white to black.

ALEXANDER: Yeah, [that's right?]. [All the?] white neighborhood -- [not just?] (inaudible) [coming in next to him, that was -- schools?] (inaudible). And, as I said, there was also the feeling among the better-off blacks (inaudible) [they were no longer?] (inaudible).

BAYOR: (inaudible) that's why I'm getting the feeling that -- [well, some?] neighborhoods [were in a sense?] expendable because if you're going to relocate blacks from the [central?] city area out to the west side (inaudible) --

ALEXANDER: That's true.

BAYOR: -- then you're going to have to at some point say that some black neighborhoods (inaudible) and that's why I had the feeling that, [47:00] [you know, that it might be clean?] -- politically more acceptable to let some of the poorer white neighborhoods go -- sort of go into a black area, OK, [than to go to?] public housing [in that city area?].

ALEXANDER: Well, that's true. The other factor involved in that was [land?] (inaudible) and, of course, these 221 units?], you had to get FHA approval, too, and they were

another factor. And I'm sure race has played a part [in what they were doing?].

BAYOR: I'm going to take a look at some of the federal records [some time?]. Just [one of the final points that?] I don't want to keep you too long. Are there any other records of the citizens advisory committee and the housing resources committee?

ALEXANDER: I may have [some old files?]. There's a guy who -- there was a man named Malcolm Jones --

BAYOR: (inaudible) [48:00]

ALEXANDER: He was a retired Army colonel and he was at City Hall and he was -- my staff -- I had called on him [and his secretary?] and then [I had a director, and there must have -- I remember?] (inaudible) and I had a secretary. And I had a little office [that?] (inaudible) one thing we did do was [move?] from doing any work in those areas while I had the job. And we already had the Egleston public housing, (inaudible) [and they were a little of a sacrifice, but want to?] -- in my own viewpoint I found it [boring and exciting?] [49:00] [society?], so --

BAYOR: Well, I think you did a lot for the city, certainly.

ALEXANDER: [Well, also, they?] -- I'll tell you, sometimes I wonder -- it didn't quite turn out the way I had hoped,

[and part of?] (inaudible) I guess I was expecting blacks to act differently than whites.

BAYOR: [Well, it?] -- would it be possible to see some of [the work that?] (inaudible) [on it?]?

ALEXANDER: Yeah, but I was also thinking if you could get a hold of [Malcolm Jones?], he may have kept [things?] too.

BAYOR: Is he still living in (inaudible)?

ALEXANDER: Yeah, he lives on (inaudible). He's an older man now. There's another - there's a book, and I'll see if I can find it. I got really upset at the author of it, because he told me he wasn't going to name names in it, and he did. And I don't care anymore, but I [did then?] [50:00] -- and he [recounts?] the whole Egleston fight (inaudible).

BAYOR: [That's the one by Stone, I think, that's?] --

ALEXANDER: [In the north side only?].

BAYOR: [Yeah?].

ALEXANDER: (inaudible)

BAYOR: [Oh yeah?].

ALEXANDER: The green book.

BAYOR: -This one? [*Economic Growth?*] (inaudible)?

ALEXANDER: [Yeah?].

BAYOR: [Just didn't buy it?].

ALEXANDER: I don't think so.

BAYOR: Because that -- he doesn't name that many names, actually, but he goes over that whole Egleston controversy [and apparently?] (inaudible).

ALEXANDER: I don't remember (inaudible) [that's when he goes over?] (inaudible).

BAYOR: [But he speaks about?] the committee, and he speaks -- he says with chairman of the [51:00] [reciprocal?] advisory committee (inaudible).

ALEXANDER: (inaudible) [no?], I felt that, you know, he named me, he named everybody.

BAYOR: [Yeah?] (inaudible)

ALEXANDER: [You know, thought that -- the city council?] --

BAYOR: (inaudible) [is that Jennings' book on community?] (inaudible)?

ALEXANDER: [Maybe I?] (inaudible) where he puts everybody into [attributes?] (inaudible) influential (inaudible).

BAYOR: Yeah.

ALEXANDER: -- [and that's why?] (inaudible)

BAYOR: [You ought to take a look at this book sometime, about the?] --

ALEXANDER: [No?].

BAYOR: (inaudible)

ALEXANDER: [Yeah?].

BAYOR: OK, and could I actually -- could I contact you, or --
you after the New Year and --

ALEXANDER: Sure.

BAYOR: OK, are the records kept at your office [52:00]
(inaudible)

ALEXANDER: [OK?].

BAYOR: OK, let me get in touch with you again, then, after
the New Year. I'll come down and spend a day or two [with
you at the office?]. (pause)

ALEXANDER: (inaudible) Hartsfield's objection. We had a
meeting and the committee went in, [just asked if we would
ponder this and?] -- trying to find a place where we could
have lunch with black and white [folks?], you know, it was
a real struggle. [And it?] (inaudible), and we met up
there, and we were busy telling [53:00] Hartsfield if he
didn't want the program, if he wasn't going to back it, that
we weren't going to? (inaudible) a lot of stuff. So he had
really gotten very curious [how the?] (inaudible) so I
discovered that it was his birthday, and I arranged for a
cake would be brought in (inaudible) happy birthday
(inaudible) and here comes this cake, and it took all the
steam out him. And I've often thought that cake saved the
(inaudible). (laughter) (inaudible) [the meetings after
that?] -- truly remarkable [guy?] (inaudible).

BAYOR: Yeah, I've been reading a lot about him (inaudible)

ALEXANDER: [Yeah, anyway?] --

BAYOR: [Think he was?] [54:00] quite a leader, [actually?].

ALEXANDER: He had -- his watchword was "Always do good to your friends; never do good to your enemies. You can make enemies of your friends, and you'll never make friends with your enemies." But (inaudible) right down that line.

BAYOR: [OK, great?].

ALEXANDER: He would make new friends and he'd make new enemies. But he would -- [and what?] -- and they had to be one or the other before he knew how he'd treat them. His other great remark was when Roy Rogers brought his horse up the steps of City Hall [into his office?]. Hartsfield looks at the horse and he says, "Well, that's the first time a whole horse has represented this office. (laughter)

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