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Interviewee: Hollowell, Donald

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RONALD BAYOR: Five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten.

DONALD HOLLOWELL: You're really (inaudible), huh?

BAYOR: Yeah, I'm an oral history professor at Tech, doing a study as (inaudible) indicated of race relations [with twentieth century blacks?]. Interviewing a lot of people. I just told your wife that I interviewed [L.B. Hilton?] last summer. (inaudible)

HOLLOWELL: (inaudible) You'd have had to catch him before he went off to the great beyond.

BAYOR: Well, he was not feeling well, even when I had seen him. But, he had a good memory, and...

HOLLOWELL: Oh yeah. (inaudible) He certainly was. Well, (inaudible).

BAYOR: (inaudible) all the time. (inaudible) starting off.

HOLLOWELL: That's right.

BAYOR: Let me start by looking at your role as Regional Director for the EEOC. And I was curious first about what sort of problems you faced in opening up the office to the black community.

HOLLOWELL: (laughs) Well, of course, for a moment of background, you know when I started, there weren't any (inaudible) what to do with (inaudible). And the Dallas office opened the same week as -- those were the first two offices that opened in the country, and I was on the (inaudible) civil rights struggle -- [still am part of it, really?]. So many of the problems that were indicative of the section [probably?] at that time were still very much [invoked?]. It's (inaudible) resistance to even the idea (inaudible) for our investigative (inaudible). He was locked up in the building, (inaudible) out.

BAYOR: In Atlanta?

HOLLOWELL: This was in Florida; the other was in South Carolina. I remember going down the road in North Carolina, but (inaudible) across the road. So it wasn't (inaudible).

BAYOR: How about in Atlanta itself?

HOLLOWELL: Well, in Atlanta itself, I recall there was a great amount of it (inaudible) group response (inaudible) the moving of (inaudible) progress. (inaudible) trying to [get up a group?] (inaudible).

BAYOR: (inaudible) the effort to

HOLLOWELL: That (inaudible) for progress was a group (inaudible) and it was (inaudible) and they sought to get

the business people, and to work through them, in trying to foster the idea of open [power?] you know, and (inaudible).

BAYOR: So there were problems in Atlanta getting the business people together on that?

HOLLOWELL: Oh, yes, oh yes. So there was considerable resistance (inaudible) physical or (inaudible), but [there was, I would say?], considerable resistance to the idea of equal opportunity of (inaudible).

BAYOR: I guess this sort of goes against the so-called spirit of compromise and communication that was supposed to exist in Atlanta.

HOLLOWELL: Yeah, and really, that was about all [the plans for?] progress was, you see. It was not a part of the activity of government, which, it investigates -- investigating, and that kind of thing (inaudible). And to get them to have this meeting for the EEOC (inaudible) they just could not get (inaudible) business (inaudible).

BAYOR: The white (inaudible).

HOLLOWELL: The white power structure was trying (inaudible). They weren't ready for that quite yet. But it was not long before there began to be an effort in those directions. But there wasn't much enthusiasm about it. (inaudible) the National Alliance for Business began to try to focus

(inaudible). Some of the more forward-thinking business people in the downtown area.

BAYOR: How cooperative was the city government in trying to open up job opportunities? Ivan Allen was supposed to be a [friend?]. That's what I heard from other people.

HOLLOWELL: Well, at that time we didn't have jurisdiction over government agencies, you see, and that made some difference. We didn't have jurisdiction over government agencies (inaudible) and that -- I remember early on (inaudible) I had been a member of a group that wanted to be a part of the movement to get jobs, or have jobs under [NAB?], as I recollected. See, you're talking about 20 years ago now. Anyway. But to have them exempt from Title VII. What I'm saying is that, as I recollect, NAB at that time, they were the (inaudible) a certain number of people, and had a certain (inaudible), and trying to get them started in different kinds of jobs, and trying to (inaudible) -- but they didn't want to have them to -- they themselves did not want to have to function under Title VII, particularly as it related to that program. And I remember some of the discussions I had with them (inaudible) [job?]. I didn't know enough about their program at the time to make a judgment or even to know whether this was an effort at trying to have some anomaly

in the process of their own total workings, so as to give any lip service or whether it was truly a genuine situation at that time.

BAYOR: But it was resistance nonetheless, I guess.

HOLLOWELL: But there was some resistance nevertheless to complete the [concession?] to the rigors of the private sector, you could say. (inaudible). I remember they had some problems getting the newspaper [for?] (inaudible) to conform to the idea of not listing advertisements by sex, or religion (inaudible). We had to really come down on that. And to get them to make peace with the idea of using the phrase, (inaudible) an equal-opportunity employer. They weren't ready for that. I remember that. The deal was, that the big boys weren't (inaudible) because they weren't ready for that yet. Not yet. And (inaudible) people are.

BAYOR: How about problems related to (inaudible) related to residential concentration in the city, the city transportation network, [because of?] the way the city was set up, racial and (inaudible) transportation that was set up. Was it difficult opening up jobs at all in relation to that?

HOLLOWELL: Well, we found in many instances that employers who had jobs [that were available?] and many employers

generally resisted the idea of the federal government trying to tell them what to do in the operation of their business as relates to (inaudible) people. The matter of employment -- I mean, I'm sorry, of transportation posed some problems [for there were?] new employers of new industries developing on the outskirts, and the like. It was not our function to get out and try to do too much in the way of opening up jobs, per se. In the normal (inaudible). But we did have a [voluntary?] program set up and a [technical assistance?] set up, which was not (inaudible) staffed in the early days because we just didn't have that many people, or have that much money to expand that kind of an operation. We did, when we would go to an employer or be trying to work out a consideration agreement, we might indicate to an employer (inaudible) that (inaudible) try to set up some kind of (inaudible) [at certain percentages?]. And they would say, "Well we can't find them." "Well, that's your problem. They're out there." And -- however, we would always try to be helpful where we could, and suggest places where they may be able to get people, and sources where they might be able to get people that might help them get (inaudible) might refer them to me, to the (inaudible) might require them to put notices in papers that were -- in black newspapers, and

other papers that were of more general distribution where blacks might see them. We used the churches. Those kinds of things. We did that all the time. We never had any real problems with the MARTA because I don't remember the problems ever coming up directly to us. There were times when the matter of how (inaudible) which made it difficult for them. The problem would surface. But we did not have staff enough to try to work out those kinds of problems. We thought it was incumbent upon us to leave those to the people who (inaudible).

BAYOR: Was MARTA ever interested in expanding the transportation network to get people to the jobs at all?

HOLLOWELL: I don't remember it coming up directly. I don't remember it coming up directly. It may be that some of the companies themselves sought to get MARTA to make some (inaudible) extensions, etc. But I don't remember the problem coming to us directly.

BAYOR: Did you ever find any situation in which there were reprisals, economic reprisals against the blacks who were involved, or active in the civil rights movement?

HOLLOWELL: We had innumerable cases in which there had been charges of parties alleging that there had been retaliation against them even for filing a charge, or for encouraging someone else to file a charge. Or talking with a group

that was sort of (inaudible). That was not an uncommon kind of situation, which was the reason for Section 704 of the Act, which made retaliation, harassment, and that kind of thing a violation of the law itself. Because that would be even a separate charge, and they have a charge based on that motion, or based on the [mode of?] transportation which was illegal for some other (inaudible) situation. But then you may also have a separate charge which deals with the matter of the retaliation.

BAYOR: Let me get onto something else. You were, I know, involved in the desegregation cases at the airport in '57 (inaudible) [separation?] case in '59. I was curious what your feelings were about the position of the city government in these cases, particularly Hartsfield's (inaudible).

HOLLOWELL: Well, in the bus case in '59, there was some cooperation with Jenkins, who was at that time the chief of police, and (inaudible) I'm [not?] sure that there (inaudible) the mayor (inaudible) working out of that situation. (inaudible) they were to get arrested and to make the case. But I think it was fair to say that there was no real resistance to that (inaudible). The situation was different in '57 (inaudible) insurance company. And (inaudible) segregated situation out there, even the

(inaudible) house, and perhaps something else. And that's how that [place arose?]. And it went through all the normal channels (inaudible). I don't know specifically what you might want (inaudible), but there was a different kind of -- well, (inaudible). There was no cooperation in the process of the handling of that case as there had been in the process of the handling of the bus case.

BAYOR: Did you get the feeling [soon?] that the white officials were going to do as little as possible (inaudible) by law?

HOLLOWELL: That was always the case. Of course it was different when it came to public accommodations that were like that, as against the ones of restaurants at that time and date were -- it was quite (inaudible). You had (inaudible) entrepreneurs who were (inaudible). And even the situation involving the Fulton County courthouse restroom, and the city hall restroom, there was resistance right down to (inaudible).

BAYOR: Resistance from the mayor's office?

HOLLOWELL: Well, the extent to which the mayor's office was involved, I don't know. I think that perhaps the mayor felt pretty much like most of the downtown (inaudible). Let me [retract that?]. The mayor didn't want to be out there by himself. So he would try to lead in such a way as

to (inaudible) do what he could without seemingly exceeding, at least ostensibly. (inaudible). But it was sort of like -- Ivan Allen said reference (inaudible) after we had (inaudible) get involved (inaudible) and certain other facilities. (inaudible) we desegregated the [parks?], etc., voluntarily pursuant to a court [order?].
(laughter)

BAYOR: (inaudible)

HOLLOWELL: Well, yeah. So they always wanted to have the court order to lean on regardless of what their personal attitude was. They didn't want to have (inaudible). They'd go out and say, "You see, we've got to do this." (inaudible) behind it or (inaudible) in front of it, (inaudible).

BAYOR: I was also curious about Ivan Allen and the civil rights protestors, sit-in groups and [stuff?]. I was curious about the reaction of the city officials to the mass arrests that took place in the early ['50s?]. Was Allen a friend of [the blacks at all?]? He tried a lot of those cases.

HOLLOWELL: Yeah, he tried all of those cases, (inaudible). You see, we had some hostility among certain of the (inaudible) especially [I?] (inaudible) and then they had to consider (inaudible), and they were afraid not to.

(inaudible) imperfection for the system. So they showed themselves to be (inaudible). There was no evidence, by and large, of any unusual (inaudible), or maybe I should say, (inaudible). There was a lot less difficulty here than in a lot of other places. I'm sure that the reason for that is [an administration?] that did not want the city to have (inaudible).

BAYOR: (inaudible) Birmingham.

HOLLOWELL: That's right. That's right. But at the same time [police?] and others were out there, they were out there to do their job, and some did it (inaudible) more (inaudible) attitude (inaudible) their jobs (inaudible) in that situation. (inaudible). So I did not suggest that their jobs imposed the (inaudible) in those kinds of situations were easy. But we did not have a lot of [budgeting?] (inaudible) at that time. (inaudible) people reacted (inaudible) reaction (inaudible) would not have been (inaudible) [but for?] the situation [of the moment?].

BAYOR: So Allen and Jenkins tried to keep a lid on --

HOLLOWELL: On a lot of (inaudible), there's no question about that. There's no question about that.

BAYOR: Do you think in terms of how the blacks students were treated by the courts was an effort made by whites to treat them badly((inaudible)? I always love to say that before

all this happened, for a black man to go before a white judge and be charged with a crime (inaudible) that trial. But this change (inaudible) was more of an effort to make the justice system more equitable, at least [in Atlanta?].

HOLLOWELL: I would go so far as to say that I think it made plenty of those [in the judicial eye?] more sensitive to the problems that affect the black [people?]. But I think that would be about as far as I could go in it. There were many cases that never (inaudible) [trial?]. There were some that didn't come up because, I'm sure because they didn't want to come (inaudible). I'm sure there were other cases that (inaudible) the court (inaudible) trial (inaudible) the court (inaudible) matter of (inaudible) timing. (inaudible). (laughs)

BAYOR: So how about I ask you this? [Let's say?] after the civil rights (inaudible) black men brought before a court on a crime, a civil rights crime, would there be any chance of them getting fair treatment as the result of (inaudible) a little more sense of (inaudible)?

HOLLOWELL: I'm sure that if I go back to (inaudible). Keep in mind that all of this activity and (inaudible) issues were [raised?] made for many, many, many jury lists (inaudible). You began to have more blacks on the jury lists and as a result, getting into the (inaudible) jury

panels, and that itself made for a considerable [difference?] time and time again as we went to some of these cases in different places where we would have to (inaudible) jury exclusion situation especially (inaudible). Yes, dear?

F: (inaudible)

HOLLOWELL: OK. Outside of the metropolitan area, (inaudible) Atlanta (inaudible) and Albany and Macon and many of these other areas where they had (inaudible).

BAYOR: (inaudible)?

HOLLOWELL: They were really viewed in Atlanta, also the issue of (inaudible) had been raised [up here?], and they had revised their jury lists here, and they had [accepted?] jury (inaudible) a very, very [fair?] and open-minded person, [and this is Richard?], whom I knew very well, and ultimately we had Dr. [Dave?] (inaudible). He was on the jury commission, and these things were -- the inertia of them made for a gradual change in things.

BAYOR: So the civil rights process did lead to [opening?] (inaudible)?

HOLLOWELL: Oh yeah. (inaudible). That inertia had a [scattering?] effect, not just [in case?] of itself, but as things happened, and as there were [pieces?] that were favorable throughout the South and sometimes other sections

of the country. That would have an effect, and then you had judges in state courts having to conform as the federal courts would hand down [decisions and decisions?] (inaudible) ultimately (inaudible) supreme court, which would be the law of the land, and it became less and less of a position for the state courts to stand out there alone, resisting what had been clearly declared to be the law of the nation.

BAYOR: So the combination of the civil rights progress, and [the federal?] (inaudible) [intervention?].

HOLLOWELL: All of that had effect.

BAYOR: So [there was no doubt when?] a black person was going to court, a jury or judge in 1958 would be treated much differently than he would be in 1960 or (inaudible).

HOLLOWELL: I don't know how much difference, but I would say there would be certainly a sensitivity to the circumstance in a way that might inure to his benefit. I think that would be the way that I would want to express it, rather than to make (inaudible) to race and that there would be a lot of difference, because that could depend on what (inaudible) and the judge (inaudible). You know, there are just too many things that would be involved to make that kind of definitive statement.

BAYOR: I understand. Also curious, the election of Maynard Jackson in '73 -- did this mean any kind of change for (inaudible) in regard to hiring blacks? Was he [perceptive?] to (inaudible)?

HOLLOWELL: Well some had met greater resistance. But I would like to think that his insistence on his being a part of city government, had the effect of further sensitizing people, entrepreneurs, to the effect that this is the thing to be done. And another thing (inaudible) as this took place. I'd like to think that some of the entrepreneurs (inaudible) began to really believe that this is the thing to do as it relates to women, as it relates to blacks, etc. That as they began to see the expansion of the work force potential, and not only that, the [company to?] stay out of trouble.

BAYOR: That's true. (laughter)

HOLLOWELL: So I think all of these things working together had some impact.

BAYOR: So Maynard Jackson bringing the blacks into city government more than any other mayor (inaudible) joint venture programs, things like that, that all helped to --

HOLLOWELL: All of that helped. That helped set the pattern. All of that. I don't think there's any question.

BAYOR: It's also [true?] that any ability to get the unions
(inaudible).

HOLLOWELL: Yes. Keep in mind that unions were also listed
among those types of organizations that were alluded to as
a part of Title VII itself. So there was some expansion
among the unions; you had some tightening up. It worked
both ways, [as far as I'm concerned?]. One thing was,
(inaudible) very frequently we tried to work with the
[authorities?], and we'd generally always notify them where
there was -- because they wanted to be more apprised. And
as (inaudible) the local (inaudible) and they tried to
police their own [towns?]. And in many instances, they ran
into resistance even within their own towns. There were
many problems with the unions. Many problems, many cases.
At the same time there were many (inaudible) unions
(inaudible) where charges had been made, and the union
would be aligned with the EEOC in the trial of cases
against a respondent, a company respondent.

BAYOR: It really varied (inaudible).

HOLLOWELL: That's very true. Very true. Sometimes you
would get these big, big unions (inaudible) communication
workers which were [mainly working?] in situations where we
would be on the same side. (inaudible) trying to get
breakthroughs [especially?] because what we said was

(inaudible) [particularly?] them trying to resolve cases. (inaudible) agencies, and -- but of course we always did our own thing. But they were there, they knew what was going on, they (inaudible) the workers. (inaudible) being able to work with them, and wanted more knowledge and cooperation and information, [which?] could be very helpful in (inaudible). But you couldn't -- we would have to serve them -- let's say the charge was brought to us. Well, we would have to serve the union, even though the union may not be brought in because it's unnecessary (inaudible). So, depending on its attitudes sometimes it may (inaudible) court. On occasion it may get aligned by the court with the defendant. But more often than not, it was the other way around, because you just couldn't settle the case without [union input?] (inaudible).

(break in recording)

BAYOR: Was there any real sense of a spirit of cooperation or moderation (inaudible)? I know it wasn't Birmingham, but was there sort of a feeling that (inaudible) somewhat moderation (inaudible) race relations?

HOLLOWELL: I think that the (inaudible) the [city of greater?] moderation is what you have in a lot of other cities (inaudible) by any number of things. One is the regional center, and that brings in people from many areas

of the country. It also brings in I would say, more than the ordinary (inaudible) than any other approach (inaudible).

BAYOR: I guess I was curious whether the leadership here, the white leadership, was any more enlightened (inaudible).

HOLLOWELL: I was going to get to that. One of the reasons is that the black leadership was more enlightened than what you would find in most places.

BAYOR: (inaudible)

HOLLOWELL: And that's a product of the colleges and businesses and the like. And even though socialization was extraordinarily -- extraordinarily limited, it would have been on a (inaudible) -- it's not that broad even now -- prior to (inaudible)light. The fact remains that the influence of the university setting can't really be [measured?], but it definitely has an influence because it permeates the, almost every structure that you can think of. And of course in the last 15, 20 years, there's been a great [deal of?] political participation. And then, (inaudible) the leadership situation. Those kinds of things have their effect. There were always a few blacks that felt that you, or the whites, who were sort of big news, so to speak, had educated (inaudible), but no one wanted to be exposed. Whites didn't want to be exposed to

whites, and blacks didn't really want to be exposed to blacks, [or frequently?]. Because of the onus that can fall upon you, and your loss of whatever leadership (inaudible) or otherwise that you present. But that was always some (inaudible).

But I remember, say, in '56 (inaudible) [and I didn't come here?], and [I came in?] the last part of '51. And the residents here going before that, but I didn't come until '51. (inaudible). But things were very, very -- oh, I remember. We had the Great Books program, and (inaudible) and the (inaudible) [we?] met in the university's church and we met (inaudible), the director of the Red Cross, we met in his (inaudible) way out [there?] ultimately when the new [Jewish community center?] came in (inaudible) the next year (inaudible).

BAYOR: So the moderation really was tempered a lot (inaudible). I guess --

HOLLOWELL: (inaudible) [university here?].

BAYOR: And the only thing unique here was that some whites wanted to meet with some blacks some place, which you didn't find in a lot of other cities.

HOLLOWELL: (inaudible) true.

BAYOR: Did Martin Luther King Jr. ever sense this at all?

HOLLOWELL: No.

BAYOR: [He felt?] Atlanta was similar to some of the cities in terms of racism (inaudible) more moderate (inaudible)?

HOLLOWELL: Personally, I don't know that [there were discussions?] in that manner. I think, yes, I think that our attitude (inaudible) especially in sixty...well, they came in sixty...(inaudible) probably in the summertime (inaudible) '61. The feeling was that we could expect the same kind of resistance that was (inaudible) other places in the South (inaudible) all of the (inaudible). At the same time, I think that there was always the feeling that there would probably not be the kind of blatant cruelty that one might have in Alabama and Mississippi (inaudible) that kind of (inaudible). Matter of fact, that blacks would probably not stand [it?], and that the whites would (inaudible) that some [reason?] to understand that they would not (inaudible). I guess they would rise up (inaudible) in a physical way (inaudible). That's what they really did not want.

BAYOR: So they wanted (inaudible).

HOLLOWELL: That's right.

BAYOR: (inaudible) Hartsfield and Allen were kind of somewhat on black [roads?] (inaudible).

HOLLOWELL: That's correct. (inaudible) back in those days,
the black was [the same?] (inaudible).

BAYOR: Atlanta was really unique in [some ways?].

HOLLOWELL: That's true.

BAYOR: I mean, and Harvey Jenkins wasn't Bull Connor.

HOLLOWELL: Ooh, by no stretch of the imagination.

BAYOR: Well, that's [about all?] I wanted to ask. It's all
very interesting.

HOLLOWELL: It is very interesting. It was an interesting
period.

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