

An interview with Mr. Richard Emery



Mr. Emery (1916-1988) was born in West Africa and grew up in Indianapolis. He was a teacher and administrator for the Indianapolis Public Schools before being principal of Harry E. Wood High School in 1953. In 1969 he founded the Hennepin County vocational-technical area school near Minneapolis. Here is his obituary: file:///C:/Users/13179/Downloads/clipping_37341992.pdf

Also, here are the links to the audio of the 3 parts of the interview:

<https://soundcloud.com/user-991734108/richard-e-emery-part-1>

<https://soundcloud.com/user-991734108/richard-e-emery-part-2>

<https://soundcloud.com/user-991734108/richard-e-emery-part-3>

The interview took place in Mr. Emery's home in Minneapolis in the spring of 1981.

John Harris Loflin (JL) - I was over at Wood and I said to myself, "I wonder why Manual moved?"

Richard Emery (RE) – So you came to talk to the "Old Man" huh?

JL – Yes, I thought I would come up here to Minneapolis to talk to somebody who knew what was going on. I found in my research – from an Urban Anthropology class I'm taking – and I'm taking a Race and Desegregation class, so I'm going to try to get some credit for this. But, what I found is that I had to start way back...

RE – Now listen, before I forget to tell you, Frances Huter is at Tech. She has a lot of background and also, if you distribute your paper, she'd know how to do it and notify the [Wood] Alumni Association.

JL – I'm really not...I'm after a complete history. I'm not after a public relations thing because Wood is closed. It had its day and some 25 years since its inception, so I was looking at a complete: politically, socially, economically, religiously, racially – and like the history of the schools, I found that I had to go pretty far back in the history of Indianapolis to find the roots of something that developed and bloomed in the late 40's and early 50's.

JL – I heard that you were raised on the south side and you went to Manual.

RE – Oh yes. In fact, I'm an alumni...I had an alumnus award from Manual. In fact, all three of the Emery boys went to Manual.

JL – Where did you live on the south side?

JL – When did you graduate?

RE – '34 from high school and 38 from college and degrees beyond that.

JL – What was the neighborhood like around Manual then?

RE – A slice of American apple pie! It was a medium income family group and all the facilities were available to you. It was a good area in which to live. I only remember from while I was there. I came in from University Heights. Do you understand – there were good families, low divorce rates, so it was a good background.

JL – Was it mainly, still predominately Jewish on Capitol Avenue?

RE – Are you talking about the new or old Manual?

JL – I'm talking about the old Manual when you were there.

RE – They had old German town, old Jewish town, and it was an income level about medium to lower medium. They were all self-supportive, hard working good people. I also worked at the A & P on South Meridian and got to know the Jewish population well. As I went to Manual, I also got to know many families that were good solid people.

JL – How did Manual handle the Jewish culture?

RE – Everybody the same.

JL – The Jewish people, although they had 3 synagogues around the school, they didn't have a school of their own.

RE – A synagogue across the street, one on the notch there, where was the other one?

JL – Merrill and Madison, on that little triangle.

RE – Well, they provided their own cultural and social life beyond the classroom, so I don't think the school tried to involve them.

JL – When do you feel their influence tapered off at Manual/Wood?

RE – When they moved out.

JL – When was that?

RE – I would say it was pretty close to the inception of Wood that they began to move to the north side and establish their synagogues, cultural centers and schools. A few families held onto the old synagogues.

JL – Well I found out – do you remember anything about the Klan School Board in the '20's? They came up with what seems to be a kind of trade off...I don't know yet. I know in '22, the school board thought about building Attucks and it was opened in '27 with Washington High School being opened and Shortridge being planned, \$1,200,000 was given to Shortridge to build the school at 34th and Meridian, knowing the climate of the '20's and the consciousness of the people of that time. Was this a kind of political/economic trade-off there?

RE – Oh, I think so. Without question, the Klan movement was strong in Indiana. I remember as a child, I went to a sheet hooded session out on a playground of Indiana Central College and I was just a child. But, it reached fruition around 1920. Then more and more power came into the school boards. There were Klu Kluxers – you couldn't prove it but there were. And to make a long story short, they planned the building of Crispus Attucks to put the Negro in a Negro high school in Indianapolis. I went to school at Manual and there were maybe half a dozen Negroes only. But they were good people. Yes, Attucks was built as a result of the school board's attitude.

JL – I feel that there was some kind of trade off with Shortridge. We'll move Shortridge into a neighborhood that will never have Blacks...

RE – That's quite possible, but I don't know a thing about that end of it, so I can't tell you – but it is a possibility.

JL – Well, Washington High School, I found out, back then the trustee appointed the school board.

RE – That's right.

JL – The township trustees were very powerful and so Washington High School was built one block outside center township into Wayne – figuring that a lot of people who lived on the west side didn't want to be influenced by...so they built out of Center Township to bring people in from center but not be controlled by center.

RE – That's a possibility, but I don't know either about that aspect of it.

JL – I'm trying to figure out Manual, what happened to Manual?

RE – The "old" Manual?

JL – Yes, the old Manual of 1927. Did they get anything?

RE – Well, they got some renovation, but it didn't amount to anything. Now when they decided to build the new building, it was fabricated on an idea by Spencer Meyers, who was the assistant deputy superintendent. Do you remember that name?

JL – No.

RE – He wanted to do something vocationally because he saw so many kids who needed vocational training. He knew they'd not get too much academic training and end up with nothing that was saleable. He wanted to give them a useful, saleable skill. I agreed with him. We looked over the situation and what happened was they built the new Manual. The population on the south side had become greater because of an increase in numbers and we had to do something about educating them. Then, a lot of influential graduates of Manual thought it would be nice to transfer the name of Manual, the school spirit, the background, the alumni association, etc. to the new location and call it new Manual. As a result, that left the old building open and left two city blocks – that you are well acquainted with, open to be used. Spencer Meyers and Dr. Schibler [superintendent of IPS] and [unintelligible] Harshman had economic bull sessions about the kind of school we could develop to answer the needs of the vast city of Indianapolis regarding vocational training. Now the difficulty was that Tech (now this doesn't sound more critical than it is – it is just a fact), at Tech you had the tag pre-English, pre-math and pre-vocation and all that. Then you got shop. The great difference between Wood as we set it up were two: first of all,

it was a 6 year high school. Anybody with an 8th grade diploma could get a vocational job. Second, we built classrooms into each laboratory and no “pre” anything. So you sat down and here was a mathematical problem on a carburetor, then you went to the engine and came back to the classroom and blackboard. But, they worked the two back and forth. Now that’s the only difference in the school. It was one of the early American schools that was a “comprehensive high school” where we taught everything. That is the reason *Reader’s Digest* came in and wrote about an example of a comprehensive high school. [unintelligible]

JL – According to Judge [S. Hugh] Dillin....

RE – Yes, I know him well, he’s a segregationist judge.

JL – He stated here on this page 23 [unintelligible], “From 1949 to 1952 the high schools were maintained on the same segregation pattern with the creation of the predominately white Harry E. Wood High School on the Manual campus help perpetuate the segregation at the nearby Attucks.” Would you comment on that?

RE – That is untrue.

JL – Wood was not built as a predominately white high school?

RE – Oh no. We were an open high school to anyone in the city of Indianapolis to attend vocational classes. Of course, if you went to Shortridge for example, you didn’t come to Wood. If you took French at Arlington, you didn’t come to Wood. But if you came down from one of the vocational classes, then you came down and we transferred your credits back.

JL – How come Mr. Dillin said that?

RE – He’s wrong.

JL – I’ve talked to an ex-teacher of mine who was on your staff, a Mr. Frederick Parker, who said he was on the Executive Committee of 100 that met at the old Senate Y [YMCA on Senate Ave. and Michigan St.] and he is also a peer of yours when he worked for the schools downtown [at the IPS central office were Mr. Emery was the head of personnel and Mr. Parker worked under him.]

RE – That’s right.

JL – He said that the inception of Wood was to create an all-white vocational high school until certain people found this out and called up [the school board]. Wood, although it was incepted [conceived] as an all white school, under pressure found – became integrated slowly through the 7th and 8th grade.

RE – John, I think he’s wrong at that point. I think it was open initially so all students who came from all over the city. That is how we got the Negro ball player – remember him?

JL – Poncho, yes, Greg Northington?

RE – Yes, that’s how we got Poncho. He was originally at Attucks. So this is a difference of opinion between men, [me], Dillin, Parker...I admire Parker, he’s a tremendous man. But, I think he is wrong this time on the matter of it being an all-white school.

JL – Let’s go back to 1949...

RE – Remember, I’m trying to remember 25 years ago.

JL – The ’49 desegregation law was passed with help from powerful Black groups in the city and state and the school board was forced to desegregate.

RE – That’s right.

JL – But this didn’t happen too quickly. There was supposed to be a phased [in].

RE – By grade, by grade, by grade...

JL – Yet, I feel by looking at some of the headlines from the 1950’s – “Colored students stopped from enrolling” [in] Cicero Illinois schools

RE – Where was this now? Cicero?

JL – Yes. [Then there was] the Alabama law. A man was ousted from the National Guard for trying to enlist Blacks; a judge threw out a case on a black and white couple arrested; two restaurants refused to serve Blacks; parent from south side school board for having her child go to all black #64. How was Wood different from some of these Jim Crow/post-Jim Crow events?

RE – Well John, you had [Ted] Waters and the attitude of the board then in power...Dr. Schibler...

JL – Tell me about the attitude of the board in power then.

RE – A kid was a kid.

JL – A kid was a kid...

RE – A kid was a kid. That’s a fact. With Schibler, a kid was a kid...Dr. Meyers was pro-negro. He was white, but pro-Negro, very liberal. I was personnel director at the time, very liberal. The whole group in the internal office was for educating a kid, Black or white.

That was prior – back in the Klan days and a result thereof...over the middle ‘30’s things changed...the Depression changed things.

JL – So you are saying that the Citizens School Committee that ran the school board at that time, and the school office and school officials, were completely liberated and...?

RE – If you drew a line down the center line, John, they were in favor of the Negro, they were not against them.

JL – So you’re saying the majority?

RE – The majority were for Negroes.

JL – Wood did not really become integrated...there was an instance of School 19 [2020 Dawson St off of State St and E. Legrande Ave.] and a situation you may be aware [of] called “district assignments.”

RE – Now here’s the way that went John...all I know who was in charge of district assignments and each spring...or during the summer I guess it was. He had to balance every school in the city of

Indianapolis from the standpoint of population enrollment. Now 19 was a school down near Barrington Heights. It was the Negro School.

JL – In an all white district?

RE – Well, you know better than I do about that. But they had a very rough time. I remember going there as Personnel Director and here was a kid in the back row, by God, had to sit there with his feet under the seat and hold the seat up so it could fit him because the seat [unintelligible] went down. [Unintelligible]

But then he had to balance that population out. Now sometimes these were the old Negro schools that weren't yet desegregated fully and I don't know when the last one was. I really don't know. It was 12 years from '49 to come through the grades, you see.

JL – Well, the district assignment basically said that if the feeder school had been feeding a particular high school pursuant to this particular time, it would continue to feed it. This meant that students at school 19 in an all-white district would have to go to Manual.

RE – And did. But you can see, John, that the ruling of the school board could change that. There's no law that says that. You can have a law and then you up and change the name.

JL – You're saying that "district assignments" were not a way of circumventing the '49 desegregation law?

RE – No. In the old Klan days, there was...and how long that went on up to 1947, I don't know. Some place in there it shifted.

JL – I'm looking at the headlines from 1949: "Jim Crow Schools must go—Jim Crow School #29"; "KKK mails letter to legislature" – this was when the law came into effect...

RE – '49?

JL – Jim Crow wards were ended at General Hospital in 1949. That is definitely not the 20's. Separate schools still in Terre Haute; Star helps get rid of Columbians and KKK; Shibley backs school bill

RE – That's the Indiana Legislature involved in school board business.

JL – Twenty one Blacks sent to Manual- first of kind, April 30, 1949. This doesn't sound like the 20's to me. Even up until '53 and '52 when Blacks weren't allowed to go into restaurants. It sounds like a lot of Jim Crow circumvention of the '49 law.

RE – Probably from the stand point of customs of people in general that allows that kind of thing to go on...but I'm telling you from my knowledge of the school board from '53 on, no from '50 on, these things were not a giant part of the school board's thinking.

JL – Well they're (the IPS Board) is being sued by the U.S. government. Up to 1970 when Attucks was still 100% black, the board was trying to circumvent 1954 Brown v. Board of Education...and they're being sued for this. To my way of thinking, that influence did not end in the late '40's early '50's. In fact, let me put it this way, do you feel that Manual's move to the south side was a way of Manual avoiding circumventing the law?

RE – It had to be done to take care of the increase in population of the south side, John.

JL – Well, I have to admit that on 10/31/94, a committee was set up for a new location for manual.

RE – Does it say who was on that?

JL – No it did. They had a hard time getting some money and really, the committee didn't become powerful until 1948. They did stay white...Manual's move did help them stay white because the area around Wood was definitely getting more black.

RE – But school 19 was assigned to Manual wasn't it?

JL – Yes.

RE – Well that....

JL – Well that was a token integration to me.

RE – It will be you who determines that, John.

JL – Around Wood?

RE – At Wood, we had about 1/3 of the population Negro.

JL – Not at first. What happened...the 7th and 8th grade you might have had small amount and Manual had a small amount, but the south side lost between 1940 and 1940, it lost 1014 whites and gained 412 Blacks. By 1960, lost 2270 and gained 532.

JL – So you feel there was no political, economic, racial, even religious reason why Manual moved to the south side?

RE – I think the population was probably much bigger now, John.

JL – Why didn't they add to the school? To your old alma mater, Manual?

RE – [unintelligible] Manual was our size.

JL – They couldn't have added to Wood – Manual?

RE – You see, until we raised the money ourselves and bought that additional land, we didn't have the budget. We had to go down to Manual to play football.

JL – There were no anti-Jewish feelings? No anti-black feelings to help motivate the move?

RE – I don't think so. If you look at our athletic teams from 1953 on, they were black as much as they were white.

JL – Oh that was in '53. I'm talking about when Manual had a book to introduce new students to Manual. There was not one black student there.

RE – Well that could be, I don't know.

JL – Then at the time Manual opened in '53, it had a greater number but smaller percentage of Blacks than Wood. Wood had a greater percent and less number.

RE – We had 1200 to start.

JL – 1200?

Re – I think so.

JL – 7th and 8th grade when you opened?

RE – Yes, 7, 8 & 9.

JL – Oh, it was around 10% black.

RE – Let's see, 7, 8, 9...then we had a year time...and finally the senior.

JL – So Judge Dillon's idea about the school board trying to circumvent, get under, get around, postpone, take to court in any way to prevent integration is not true?

RE – Well, John, there are two segments of this problem. There are the people in general and one is the school board officially. Now there might have been some within the internal Indianapolis power structure that had anterior motives in doing these [unintelligible]. I don't know. You wouldn't know either. You can guess. But I'm telling you, from 1950 on, anyhow, which I know about the school boards was interested in educating kids by [unintelligible]. And you know there was an occasional [unintelligible] you know that.

JL – Well Indiana being the hotbed of the Klan in the '20's.

RE – I don't know how it stands now, I have no idea how it was then.

JL – Even back then there were problems over the intelligence of Blacks...

RE – Oh yes.

JL – Over any kind of integration, the theaters, restaurants, bus station, hospitals, schools...how could that end in 3 years after lasting for 30?

RE – I remember in 1950, Fred Parker and I were good close friends and I said one day, "Let's have lunch", and there was a black man and white man on the streets. And we finally ended up at the bus stations where we could eat as friends.

JL – Well how could that change so overnight...not only from say 1850 when the slaves were freed – it lasted that long with Jim Crow.

RE – Well John, I think the 1949 legislative act desegregating the schools on a yearly basis was the key area.

JL – Well district assignments was a way of circumventing the law and Wood High School was a way of circumventing them because Wood, according to numbers, still couldn't integrate that quickly and at first it was to deal with the somewhat riff-raff on the sought side who Manual didn't want....

RE – Yes, that could be. I know after Wood was established, every kid in the district, whether green, black or yellow, could attend Wood.

JL – Fortunately for Manual and people in the power structure, that was when the area around Wood: Fountain Square, etc. had all changed from a Jewish, German Catholic middle class with prominent people and some well to do folks – to a post WW11 urbanization of the movement of poor whites and poor Blacks from the south to the Fountain Square area. In a 20 year period, an exodus of 2000 whites and gaining of 1000 Blacks in the neighborhood.

RE – What happened too, was the poor white trash and the negro trash of the southern U.S. and also those who pooled their finances and buy a piece of property on the south side. I could tell when planning [unintelligible]-- I have 200-300 kids gone at a time. You'd look and they'd be gone, to farm in Kentucky. In the fall, they came back to the home they bought.

JL – You are kind of agreeing with some of the changes that were happening between 1948 and 1953. Again, Manual being the number 2 high school in the city, second to Shortridge and the oldest school building in the city with prominent graduates like Tefflinger, Skiles Test, Will Remey, Kurt Ponzer, J. Talby, Will Howard of Scripps-Howard [newspapers], Ober [Ober building??] – a lot of prominent graduates with evidently some influence on the city seeing their school. They wanted to keep Manual predominate, although vocational/manual training—a predominate middle class school like it was.

RE – Well I suspect it was quite a fuss – if I knew the details on the committee that was selecting the new site [unintelligible]. Mrs. Miller would have a healthy history and she might be able to answer some of these questions for you. I don't know.

JL – Just on a side question – do you think Manual's move to the south side and the Madison Avenue Land Scandal were connected? There was a highway literally built from the old Manual to the doorstep of the new Manual... When you move a school, you don't only move a physical building, you move a lifestyle, a tradition, you move a whole community. Do you think there is any connection between this?

RE – I'm sure building a highway [unintelligible]. I'm sure it would have occurred regardless of what was built down that way. But manual could be [unintelligible].

JL – Did Al Feeney (former Indianapolis Mayor – of Irish decent) have anything to do with Manual moving?

RE – Oh yes. What happened was, I was president of the University Height's Civic League. We desperately needed sewers. We went to Al and [unintelligible]. He arranged sewers because it served St. Roch, a catholic parish as you know. Now I think for the community, but I don't know about the highway at all.

JL – Maybe what I'm talking about is, did he promise the south side a new Manual?

RE – I don't think he did. He might have later, but he gave sewers because we did not have them on the south side.

JL – Do you feel that Eli Lilly's growth had anything to do with Manuals'?

RE – I think Eli Lilly disregarded it – didn't think they were involved in it.

JL – What about the citizen’s school committee that was predominately the political group that elected the school board? Do you remember them all?

RE – They were a byproduct of the old Klan days. The power structure kept going and kept the committee together and kept electing new members.

JL – Do you think they had any influence on Manual’s move or the creation of Wood?

RE – I’m sure they did... can’t prove it.

JL – You weren’t around the internal workings then...

RE – That’s right.

JL – What were you doing at that time?

RE – I was personnel director of the school system.

JL – So you weren’t into the internal decision making?

RE – I was the [unintelligible] for the whole city and then I was personnel director and then went to Manual. I was there about 6 or 7 years.

JL – And you didn’t hear any of the talk?

RE – Well now that talk wasn’t there, it wasn’t there.

JL – Do you think the Chamber of Commerce had anything to do with it...Bill Book?

RE – Bill Book was a powerful man and [Carl] Dortch who followed him was a powerful man. If you are saying it was popular with the power structure to have a new Manual, I can’t answer your question.

JL – I feel it was in the making. The football field was down there anyway.

RE – That’s right.

JL – In 1944 it was thought about [unintelligible] but the changes after WWII, the changes of the 1949 desegregation law, the Jewish population getting ready to go and having the feelings of frustration and because it was Jewish, it was [unintelligible] there was open against the black, but it was unwritten against the Catholics and Jews in the Klan days. It was a written law in ’26 that black [unintelligible] Couldn’t live north of 30th street, but unwritten for Jews. So the south side with its catholic and Jewish make up...

RE – the Jews moved out.

JL – I feel mainly that it was an attempt to circumvent the 1949 desegregation law.

RE – The population changes on the south side had.....

JL – Well that population that built the new Manual had moved and continued to move to better??? Because they had made their money and Wood created in the vacuum for the poorer south side but as another way to segregate.

RE – Well John, you could be right, but I don't know about that. My evidence and my listening and my knowing and my being involved and my working with this thing, says that Manual had to be built to serve the population that was moving south [unintelligible].

JL – The population did move south. The population was growing. It was the start of the suburbs. It was the beginning, the inkling of a shopping center. With the middle class status of Manual, the changes going on in the neighborhood, it was just very convenient, a very convenient time for Manual.

RE – You may be right.

JL – Not only did they think about moving, but they may have thought... "we better get out of here." And they did leave. And stayed predominately white, because I know that even at Wood, when you went to the 7th and 8th grade, everybody went. Things changed around the 9th grade. I went to the 9th grade at Wood in 1958. Then a lot of students went to Manual...they didn't want to go to Wood as freshmen although they went to 7th and 8th grade there.

RE – Yes.

JL – A lot of the gifted students who went to Wood when they had this choice went to Manual and other schools. Manual was predominately a better, clean and all white [unintelligible]. Even my graduation class only had about 10% black.

RE – Have you checked the enrollment to see?

JL – I meant to bring it. It was in Judge Dillon's report and it was they both started out about 10% although Manual had a greater % and a smaller number and Wood had a greater number, yet smaller percent of Blacks. So your high schools really didn't integrate until 1951 or '52. After '52 all high schools [unintelligible].

RE – We started in '53 so we were integrated by law.

JL – Yes, you were integrated by law but still the [unintelligible]. I also feel that my background becoming politically aware through college, having a political consciousness, not necessarily republican or democrat, but power, the status quo, people making decisions and keeping things the same. The south side being industrial side of town, the working class side of town, the north side being the better off side of town. I feel Wood was kind of created for the poor whites and the poor Blacks vocational type, special ed types

RE – That doesn't support your argument because all the special ed were not from here, as you remember.

JL – Yes, but the status quo was that a lot of Wood students were going with, going to their school...and you know people are like that.

RE – Yes.

JL – I don't know. I bought my shoes here and I bought my shoes there, and my dad works here, well I go to Indiana Central, well I go to IU...

RE – What was the 3 questions you wanted to ask at the beginning?

JL – Why did Manual move?

RE – We've answered that to the best of my knowledge.

JL – I'm not sure here. I've got some more questions. Why was Wood created? Why was it closed? Let's go on maybe to...now Wood was closed, do you remember about? Well, I was told this story, ok? That Manual wanted to move, but they couldn't take their name, so they had Manual condemned. They had the old Manual condemned. Then they were allowed to take their name and put it on their new building.

RE – When I started Wood High School, I brought the word "high school" home, it couldn't stay there on the building. When plans were made to move to the new Manual, I took the name down. The committee recommended the board accept it, that's all there was to it.

JL – I also hear that the janitors were ruled by the Klan in the 50's and they let the school run down, let the paint peel, let the lights fall, that they threw chairs into the center of the so that Manual could have new equipment. When they left a lot of the clocks were missing, some of the paintings were gone, and that the Klan ruled the janitors and Wood/Manual having all white janitors.....

RE – I think that is true, but there is another aspect of it, John. They knew they were going to move for 4 or 5 years, so no efforts were made to necessarily keep the building up.

JL – So the thing about being condemned?

RE – Condemned, destroyed. And the control of the janitors – I controlled the janitors at Wood.

JL – I'm talking about in the old Manual days, before....

RE – Well, they could have, I don't know that. Now there was an old fellow who had been there for 30 or 40 years.

JL – I still feel Manual's move was product of de jure segregation because...

RE – You still didn't answer one question – what would you have done with the additional population of the south side? Now that may be part of the motive, but [unintelligible].

JL – Now the two areas bound by.....either way you have your most black/white population changes were in this area right here and that area right there.

RE – Those two.

JL – They are the ones that gained 1000 Blacks and lost 2000 people in a 20 year period and half that much in a 10 year period.

RE – Alright, I agree with that.

JL – So between 1940 and 1950, they gained about 500 Blacks and lost about 1000 whites. I feel these changes...it wasn't coincidence for Manual. They were going to move anyway and that was another reason, even more, as a reaction to the '49 law to get out of some of these changes that were happening along with the changes in the clientele that they wanted to circumvent the '49 desegregation law. I still think the black picture had changed that much, because the '49 law would not have been passed.

Although Henry Richardson and some more....well Schricker (Henry, Indiana governor 1941-1945/1949-1953) They weren't republican, they weren't for Dixie-crats, they didn't support the Dixie crats or the Schricker---you help me and I'll help you...and got the law in there. It must have been time for that, but still, even up to '52...Jim Crow wards in the hospital. I just think the atmosphere towards Blacks in Indianapolis is reflected in Manual's move and the creation of Wood High School. In what way, I don't know. I can't believe that it was that premeditative on Manual's part...they just took advantage of a good thing, that they were getting out anyway....

RE – That could be, I don't know.

JL – Let's talk about the creation of Wood. Some other people I have talked to feel it was really created in a vacuum...the building was empty – what are we going to do with it? You had all these people around there. Of course, you had a sort of self fulfilling prophecy there by the status quo.

RE – You [unintelligible] yourself a parking lot, its too expensive to run. You call [unintelligible] yourself a publishing house, but your budget [unintelligible]. You [unintelligible] businesses no body wants.

JL – They just perpetuated the status quo. I know I've taught [unintelligible]. You know I like teaching and here I am the teacher back at the old high school, but I know this, if a school has a telescope, there is more of a chance of a student becoming an astronomer. If a school has shoe repair, there is more of a chance a student will become a shoe repairman than if it didn't.

RE – That's true.

JL – North Central was created in what, '56? There was no shoe repair and the chances of them having a shoe repair person were very slim. Sometimes, the way schools are set up often perpetuates the status quo.

RE – True.

JL – Wood being around the south side, the working class side anyway...Manual dealt with that part of it...with their "manual-ness" the Manual part "Hands and Heart." Although they had intellectual things, it wasn't the Shortridge kind. Manual graduates in the past were associated with Purdue and Shortridge with IU. So there's that kind of dichotomy set up right there. I just feel the way people were thinking back then, it was obvious what to do with Wood (old Manual) in the vacuum. It was too bad that it wasn't created with a purpose in mind. Do you feel it was created with a purpose or created out of a vacuum – what will we do with the building?

RE – With a purpose?

JL – Well, surely they didn't move Manual out of the building.

RE – With a purpose to [unintelligible]?

JL – Well, surely they didn't move Manual out for that purpose.

RE – They moved Manual to meet the population demands on the south side.

JL – So then it was more or less what are we going to do with this building, rather than let's move this school out so we can have this building to set up an innovative high school.

RE – Now we had talked then in bull sessions about what kind of school we could develop that would answer the special needs of kids, and that was an opportunity to do so. [unintelligible]

JL – Special education was coming in then.

RE – That's right.

JL – Special education was the vogue.

RE – [unintelligible].

JL – What did special ed mean...slow students or fast students or both?

RE – Slow. Well special ed in the [unintelligible]. But here were many more special ed slow than gifted and we expanded into the area you are in now, over the new section. The IPS/Tech-300 Indy Prep school was located there at the new gym building.

JL – So you do not think there were any political, economic or racial reasons why Wood was created?

RE – Oh no. I don't see that I don't know what went on behind the scenes. I didn't get far into it. I was in the administration. I don't think there was too much involved. They had the opportunity to use the building and they did. Now John, remember this, you're asking me my opinion and I'm telling you what I think.

JL – I respect you Mr. Emery.

RE – I know you do and I'm trying to tell you the best I know how there was no hidden agenda here.

JL – Program for exceptional people...special ed movement...

RE – Special ed, let me talk about it. We had hundreds of kids that moved to Indianapolis who were not getting special education training in the schools. We thought that if we could concentrate it in one location, we would get better teachers, better equipment, more of it to do a better job. Along the line that you read about and through the emphasis of [IPS superintendent] Shabler for gifted children. They set up the programs at Wood for the gifted child all over the south side of the city.

JL – So you don't think Manual wanted the special ed program then? Manual didn't want [unintelligible]?

RE – I don't think so because they felt was a stigma on the school to have it, although I can't prove it.

JL – Well here again we are talking about the so called worse nature of man – man's maligning of man.

RE – That's true. But if you think of the amount of earnings, and the productive lives it produced and who would not have been productive elsewhere [unintelligible]. In its day...to understand the politics of the situation, the 50's, today I can look back on it. I know in the '50's it was the really hip thing to do.

RE – Yes it was.

JL – And no one felt that it would be this way. If you were born in a well off family, fine. If you weren't, well hope you make it.

RE – We were the finest school in this field in the US as witnessed by [unintelligible].

JL – From talking to some of the teachers there, it was a very handpicked staff, faculty was close, attempts to get close to students – a family sort of thing.

RE – Nobody was hired unless I did it personally.

JL – Hand picked staff?

RE – Hand picked staff.

JL – Was it an innovative school per se? I call it a duckbilled platypus...even in my yearbook you had shoe repair, cleaning and pressing, cooking, that along with the gifted classes, special ed classes, auto-body repair. Also, the 7th and 8th grade in with the high school. That was an innovative, happening place.

RE – That's right.

JL – My years there were great. Fortunately, I stopped getting into trouble when I went to Wood.

RE – Good.

JL – I just didn't get caught out in the streets. I was doing things, but didn't get caught. While at school 8 and 28, I just couldn't keep my mouth shut. For some reason, I went to Wood and got into it. Mr. Parker was one of my teachers, and Mr. Gaines was my homeroom teacher.

RE – Is Mr. Parker still alive – in Milwaukee?

JL – Just by chance, another fateful think happened to me. He was in Indianapolis for the NCAA playoffs and I had a chance to talk to him and then I came here to talk to you.

RE – Well, good. Anything you got from Fred Parker was straight stuff. The only thing is, his judgment where the black is concerned and the white is concerned. I don't know how true he feels, there.

JL – Well he disagreed with Judge Dillon. That was just an idea that came out first, but when the black community got wind of it and began to say, wait a minute, this is against the '49 law and that was the difference. We have to change this and make Wood somewhat integrated. Well there was more pressure against black teacher than black students. The black students around '52 had begun integrating classes, but there were still a lot of pressure on black teachers.

RE – I specified that when I took on the high school that I would like a mixed staff of teachers, period.

JL – Wood was an innovative school. I wonder though, just the way human nature is, and how they must have viewed this school because I heard that you helped a lot of doctors and lawyers through school by having time to teach at Wood.

RE – Yes I did.

JL – And a lot of people came and studied Wood and the students and maybe tried innovational schemes.

RE – I think the first year we had the Readers Digest article and there were somewhere around 8,000 visitors a year.

JL – Wow...I never thought that.

RE – We did nothing but help students.

JL – I must have been running the halls.....

RE – Yes, that's right.

JL – I thought it was a good idea I went to high school. I mean I went to junior high along with high school students. I think it helped me mature a little by just being associated with them. But Wood was pretty well integrated. I only remember...we had the usual black/white thing, but I don't remember any major problems.

RE – We had none, absolutely none. Remember when I used to call on the public address system and ask – invite the teachers out to enjoy the sun and everything? Well, that was riot control. There was one cooking then...always one cooking, but I'd always stop them. For example, theback then [unintelligible].

JL – When did you leave Wood?

RE – 1969.

JL – Yes. Well that was the Black Panthers. That was on West 30th street. At Wood, you have a lower class school and there's a lot more satisfaction than in a more well to do place where you've got it made, you've got a piece of the rock.

RE – But on the other hand, in a school like Wood, you had somebody to talk to, someone to listen to you, where you could solve your problems face to face [unintelligible]. If you didn't like it that's tough, good bye.

JL – Well in a way, I shouldn't be so critical...

RE – Well, that's alright.

JL – Of Wood, when it started because people thought they were [unintelligible]. They still want one...as I am now while being around black people I've become more and more familiar, have black friends, lots of things have changed. But back then, there must have been a lot of fear and ignorance involved in this integration thing.

RE – I would think so, I would think so.

JL – I know I

RE – The think that worries me about Indianapolis today is the percentage of Blacks in the schools. What is it now, 50%?

JL – Oh, black students?

RE – Yes, black students. They are not educating them. One of these days, they are going to have major friction, wait and see, and these guys have not skills to sell. You're going to end up with riots in the streets of Indianapolis, mark my word on it.

JL – Well, the white flight to the suburbs and the creation of such as Baptist Temple High School, are you aware of that?

RE – No.

JL – On south East Street, a very big high school.

RE – Yes. Did other people build [unintelligible] buildings to have the school in?

JL - I don't know. I think it was right there. You had the 60's, the bussing came in the 70's and made sure that those people who didn't want to integrate began to leave IPS and it began to lose all of its students.

RE – Yes, they lost a lot.

JL – That's one reason they planned on closing Wood. They wanted to close 15 grade schools and one high school.

RE – Hmmm

JL – To make up for the demands of teacher wage and fiscal??

RE – that's too bad.

JL – Wood was [unintelligible]...

JL – So I still should have perhaps been more understanding.

RE – No John. Your problems are based on observation and what you find natural has led to the type of questions you ask now.

JL – Oh yes.

RE – I think there is an element of truth in a lot of them, but I'm telling you from the stand point of Manual and the changing population, Wood was Spencer Meyer, the deputy superintendent idea of serving kids [unintelligible]of Indianapolis . There might be other reasons for the motivations of the school board.

JL – What do you think might be some other reason they closed Wood.

RE – To the matter of the highway structures thru Indianapolis and that is why people left. As the new highway system of 70 and 65 and so forth and all those cross streets, there's no one left for a high school. So the main thing was a mechanical reason to close it down, period. Now I don't see a reason to close down the adult high school. Where are they going to move it?

JL – They are supposed to move it to Tech.

RE – Do they have the room at Tech?

JL – That may be one of the reasons why they are moving it there – they have too much room at Tech. They have a lot of buildings there.

RE – That’s logical then.

JL – And besides the need to close down 15 grade schools and one high school....

RE – But the feeder schools in the Wood district are few and far between now. Number 12 is gone, is 8 still in existence?

JL – Just barely. Tis going to go.

RE – They closed 39 this year I know.

JL – Number 8 is going to go.

RE – And 35 down...no, that’s Manual. There will probably be a bunch of those going.

JL – It was said that the lack of enrollment caused its downfall.

RE – I would believe that. And the reason for the lack of enrollment is in the construction of the major highway through there. They bought thousands of homes.

JL – I have a fact that says that between 1967 and 1977, Attucks lost more students than Wood, but Attucks wasn’t closed down.

RE – What is the present enrollment at Attucks? That’s a question you ought to ask, John. If that is the case?

JL – No, I have those facts, but I don’t have them with me, sir.

RE – Well.

JL – But those are facts. Attucks lost more students in that 10 year period than Wood, though Wood was behind them, maybe 2nd or 3rd. But what I was trying to say is: Do you feel that Wood’s lack of an economic power base, lack of tradition, lack of prominent graduates and no powerful PTA as compared to other schools – in other words, Wood was kind ofthere had to be a top and a bottom, and Wood was on the bottom, so if it closed, who cared?

RE – They would have closed Wood regardless of the strength of all those positions.

JL – Do you think they can just go and close a high school in Indianapolis?

RE – Yes, I think so, because it is a sign of the times. The economic values...a loss of enrollment. I deal with it every day.

JL – They’re going to close Shortridge, a prominent school with Kurt Vonnegut and Mayor Lugar as graduates?

RE – They’ll eventually close it. You talked about Bob Schultz – he was up there.

JL – So you don't feel that Wood not being around a long time, it's low status.....

RE – Prominent graduates, financial background, money. They would have still closed Wood. There were no students to serve. And if Attucks lost more students than Wood, but they still had students left to be served. That is why I think it is still open.

JL – Well, I'm sure they wouldn't close Attucks. It is too prominent, too much tradition of Indianapolis, all the prominent graduates.

RE – When the chips are down, prominent graduates mean nothing. They amount to nothing to the powers that be. What has to be done has to be done.

JL – I heard a story about the Arlington high school chairs, that you took a chair from AHS and went to the school board and said, "Wood wants the same type of auditorium chair"....

RE – Yes, that is exactly what I said.

JL- So you yourself had to fight as Wood did in its closing

RE – Because they had to have somebody to fight for them.

JL – But they did have anybody to fight for them.

RE – Organization John, you know in organizations the guy that doesn't squeal doesn't get anything. He gets just the routine bread and beans, but if he squeals, maybe he'll get some meat with it. Now, they didn't want to deal with me – I was a strong individual. I love kids; I was Big Daddy to them. I wanted to protect them and I did, but that was probably a phenomenon of the time and a place in history. I couldn't do that now.

JL – Yes. But in a way, Wood always had that reputation of having to work for what it got and schools like Washington say we've been around for a long time Mr. Emery – you have to work to where we are.

RE – That's right. I remember going down to the budget, my budget hearing. I said, "Excuse me gentlemen, just a minute," and I turned around and opened my briefcase and put on a butcher's apron and said, "OK, let's get cutting."

JL – Wow!

RE – They didn't touch my budget. That year they didn't, but it took that type of determination to fight them.

JL – To fight for a class, a type of student body, evidently, throughout Indianapolis' history had fought for and stood up for and said, "We want opportunity – equal opportunity. We want the best equipment, we want some of the best teachers, and we want some of the best of this and that."

RE – That's right.

JL – I'm saying that the same thing plagued Wood, maybe small, maybe it was matter of ... "Wow, I'm sorry the highway has cut out you people, and it is going to close." If feel somewhat that Wood's tradition, what it was, didn't help it out. It had to fight all along.

RE – Yes, I expect that is right.

JL – You don't have [famous Indiana artist Elmer] Taflinger and the head of AFNB [American Fletcher National Bank].

RE – I tell you an interesting story about Taflinger. He left four portraits that he painted at Manual and Manual stuck them up in the attic and water got on them and ruined all 4 of them. That is how they treated great people.

JL – Well, look at Mr. Fenzel, AFNB, big man. Compare that to Wood. Just now, I feel, after 25 years does a high school have a chance to go through a generation and get some powerful people (graduates). You tried for superintendent, even the teachers, some of them. Mr. Mosby went downtown.

RE – Consider this, John. If I had built all of the graduates of Wood to be self supportive, decent, taxpaying citizens or a few prominent graduates...the hell with prominent graduates. I'll take this block over here, which I put thousands into this city and so you know I'm doing a good job. In 15 -20 years from now, 5 years from now, presently, there are a lot of them that are good people.

JL – I think so too. I think Wood really surprised a lot of people and it kind of motivated me. I don't know, even in college it motivated me to rise above where I was born.

RE – Yes, and you could because of Wood.

JL – Yes, I have to say that, but that was the factor that let me go out into the world. I was never encouraged to go to college. Just by chance, my football coach, Mr. Fox....

RE – Yes I remember him, Gary Fox.

JL – He was trying to get a hold of a friend of mine, Ray Norton, who was more of an academic wonder than I was.

RE – What is Ray doing now?

JL – He is working at Chrysler, the foundry and has a white collar/executive position.

RE – Say hello to him. Anybody you see that's my friend, give them my love and affection.

JL – Okay...Then Mr. Fox asked me if I wanted to go to school because I really wasn't thinking about it. I really had no initial reason why I'd want to go to college.

RE – But you are glad you did.

JL – Oh Yes. It gave me more freedom. I had to fight to keep my background in college and I did.

RE – Now what were your three questions?

JL – Why did Manual move?

RE – That was population. Why was Wood created? – by Spencer Meyers, Dr. [Herman] Shibley [IPS superintendent (1950-1959)] and myself to educate kids...and what's your 3rd question?

JL – Why did it close?

RE – There wasn't enough people there for it to stay open.

JL – Well I just...I distrust the school board. I know it started in '22. I know the schools are a very political tool, because they are the educators of society.

RE – Yes, you bet.

JL – That everyone goes through. After the family, the schools help form personality as well as characteristics.

RE – True.

JL – I can't see the school board and the status quo and Indianapolis changing overnight (in the 50's). I just think.....

RE – Well John, there's one factor you're overlooking. The Citizens Committee did run the school board.

JL – Even after the 50's?

RE – Yes, Now what is the group that came in later?

JL – That was your Citizens for Quality Schools?

RE – Yes, they came in and now there are alternatives for the citizenry. I think the board is better than it used to be.

JL – And for the 1980's?

RE – Yes.

JL – I'm glad in a way. I think Wood should still be around – I'm sorry they closed it.

RE – I am too.

JL – Do you feel that you leaving had anything to do with its eventual demise? You tried for superintendent and evidently didn't get the job and said, "Well....."

RE – They pay me \$50,000 a year. They gave me a car. They gave me insurance. They gave me retirement benefits and pay my medical bills. Why should I teach or be superintendent in Indianapolis with 33 or 34 or \$35,000. John you know you would make the same decision.

JL – Yes. What I was saying is that I feel when your personality left the school – and for your own personal reasons – that's your own business – be the school and its color left. Mr. Jet stayed in his office a little bit longer.

RE – Now Jet would not go touring. He was afraid to go. He stayed in his office.

JL – And you were the type of person that you knew the people in the neighborhood. I talked to Mrs. Gauss on the corner. I talked to Mr. Max Shapiro.

RE – Oh yes, I remember her. Max, he's my buddy.

JL – You just went out there and dealt with them.

RE – My first experience with Max = one night he called and he was doing Jewish and Hebrew and English, German and everything else. He was really upset. He put down a new sidewalk in front of his place and the kids messed it up. I said, “Fine, I’ll be out and take care of it.” I called Glen Miller and we got tolls out of the shops, went down and got on our hands and knees in our business clothes in the rain and we straightened it out. They were little kids prints about 4 or 5 to 10 years old at the most. Then we went in and had a cup of coffee with him. We told him to call on us anytime he wanted to. He said, “Can I be your professor of [unintelligible]?” I said, “You certainly can. You can be our expert anytime you want to be, friend”. He found out what kind of men these guys were and that they really meant what they said.

JL – Standing up for that “type” of clientele that was a product of urbanization. It is really urbanization. I’m not saying cities weren’t big in the 30’s and 40’s, but after WWII was when organization really happened. You had the beginnings of the megalopolis. Even Indianapolis was growing and growing and then downtown fell with the Keith’s and the Lowes [movie theaters] and everything left. People moved out. It’s kind of building back up. It’s coming back too.

RE – You might be interested to know that the thing that has held Minneapolis together, and we never had this phenomenon, had these trussles, between blocks. These crossover bridges you’ve seen as you came through town. And this has kept the town alive. You can go downtown and park your car and dress like this and walk through the buildings.

JL – I saw that. Well you know Indianapolis is provincial...

RE – It is a provincial city and still is.

JL – Yes. It does not like to experiment and likes to wait and see what happens and then it will try something. I’m not saying it is not innovative, but it is just slow. Do you think Wood, when it closed, still had a reputation for being a place where black and white got along? They were all poor anyway; why fight each other? We come for the same environment. Do you think that had anything to do with it – which people didn’t like to see the quality type of integration going on there.

RE – I know John that the one time for 30 days, there were 33 negro/white disturbances in the high schools in the whole country. We never had the first one. Now whether Indianapolis knew that or not, I don’t know. We didn’t have any discussion about it. A Negro is a Negro, so what? Willie Smith, for example, was a coach at Broad Ripple. He killed a man on the corner by Shapiro’s. I appeared at his trial. As far as I’m concerned, Willie Smith conducted himself at Wood. I would have him as a son of my own. He won the state championship. I had no idea years ago. I just stood up for him because it was the right thing to do. And whether the city knew that or not, I don’t know. I’m sure those at the trial did.

JL – Did the IPS system just kind of ignore Wood until maybe you said something?

RE – Yes, they let me run the place.

JL – So was there a pretty good black/white relationship there?

RE – Yes, and if we had any trouble, I’d call a black in and I’d call a white in and I’d say, “Look nigger, I want you to know this, you’re going to tell me this guy called you a nigger of of your name? I know he

didn't so let's don't lie in the first place. Now white boy, honky, you know what the story is. You don't want me to get a hold of you. Now I want you two boys to serve as brothers or you'll deal with Big Daddy. Take your choice...95% of the time, John, they said, "OK, Big Daddy" and shook hands. They were all my sons and daughters, see. I saw no differences. That is why I said to you, very modestly, when they pulled out of that school, it was like pulling my thumb out of the water. There's a whole lot you can't replace.

JL – There were petitions to close Wood in '77 and in '78 and I guess, low and behold, I got a job teaching there next year after it closed. I'd substituted over there a few times. But last year I started walking the halls and I thought: why did Manual leave – they are still using this place. Why did they want to leave? Knowing history and being a history teacher – social studies and being somewhat politically aware, I just started thinking, and most everyone I talked to agreed, more or less, about the politics of the '50's and 40's, post WWII.

JL – Why do you feel that Wood never had a powerful PTA? Was it that they parents weren't educated?

RE – In those days, the principal ran the school. I wanted a PTA that was beneficial on the part of my plan for the school and that is what I wanted, period. In other words, it's like the joke where the gal says, "My God, doc, you mean I'm pregnant", "Yes you are and you are 40 years old". She says, "I can't be pregnant." The doc says, "There are many that old who have children and have done very well and you will do all right." "Oh no", she said, "I can't stand that PTA again."

JL – Laughter

RE – Now the point is, if you had a PTA that was interested in serving the kids, great! But if you had a PTA that was PTA in nature, wasn't worth a damn. So there was good and bad. If I could have the kind of PTA I wanted, I would have it for the benefit of the students. I had a PTA, but it wasn't strong so I let it go. That is a heck of an answer, but it is true.

JL – So what we have here is a school that was created somewhat in a vacuum and also in an era of vocations/special education...an era when the cities north were changing. A school wanted to help and be a vocational school for a certain type of student...that wanted to be an innovative school for Indianapolis. The men in the system wanted to come up with something innovative and in fact...was so. It went through a period where it reached its peak. It's principal let new people take over and the city was changing even more. All the city's schools were losing enrollment and then it closed...it faded out...

RE – But, remember the reason it closed was there was no one left to serve, unless they were brought into Indianapolis and they were gone with the exit to the suburbs....so they closed it.

JL – You still have some influence by the fact that there was never a high school closed in Indianapolis, but there is now. Since 18, I forget when it started, 1870's, now 1853, because Wood was created on the 100th anniversary of the schools.....

RE – But, John, there was never a WWII population growth like we had before.

JL – No, not even....not that too. Your big population boom, organization, but I'm saying if for whatever reason, if there was power, if Wood could have been kept open...no, it was to for it go go I

guess. They could have bussed people around. You know if it were the most prominent school in the city?

RE – I talked to the department of Health, Education and Welfare at Chicago. They would give Indianapolis \$3 million, this has been 10 years ago [unintelligible]. If Indianapolis would have established a vocational superintendent, see?

JL – They don't have one?

RE – No. They would have built a new school for them or made Wood the center for all the city of Indianapolis, which was the true answer. They're not that progressive, they're provincial, as you say.

JL – I lived there my whole life. My education has helped me see some things objectively. I'm a Hoosier bred person. Like I said, I went to #75, 28, 8, Wood, Purdue and IU. They educated me pretty well. A few people fought Wood's closing, though I didn't even do it myself.

RE – Did you attend the Alumni function last May?

JL – No, I had to leave town. My sister, Linda [Loflin], did.

RE – I met her there. We had nearly 500 there and that was good. Here was Poncho,where'd he go? He chose not the state tournament – he wanted to meet Big Daddy, see? Many people like that. But as you say, their desire to keep the school open made no difference. You and I have to say one thing though, that the graduates of that school made their mark and made it well. Many have been especially good solid citizens. I've taken many students to Manual and walked into Stahl's office and said, "I'd like you to meet this boy. This is John Smith that you threw out of Manual, and said he would be no damn good. Well sir, he's graduated and has a job." They knew if they came to Wood, they had a second chance. I didn't ask for a contract, you just demonstrate to me that you want to make it.

JL – Yes, that was Wood, that is what it was all about...inner city.

RE – That's right.

JL – It gave me a more or less, "Yes, I went to Wood..."It just boosted me, I'll show them.

RE – Yes sir, you did and have.

JL – Laughter. I don't know what to say. But I had a little trouble with the schools when I first started teaching, but I kept wanting to teach and I finally, back in '77...I still can't get a contract.....

RE – They don't give a temporary contract?

JL – No, I had well...my first job was at school 45. I lasted one week. They said I didn't have any discipline in my classroom. I should have started as a high school teacher, but I didn't. I went into VISTA after college and went out to the east coast and then I came back.

RE – That's where you got your liberalism, out of VISTA then?

JL – No, part is my education professors.

RE – Oh, but you've been sharpened up like you weren't over at Wood, I'm sure.

JL – Oh, by far. I came back in October. I think it was '68 and it was mid-term. I couldn't get a high school job, so Jesse Babbs talked me into taking school 45, a fifth grade class. I shouldn't have done it. I lasted one week.

RE – Who was principal then?

JL – Clay. So that was.....

RE – You might be interested to know that the Negro, my Spanish, my Indians, and my Irish, they all have sued me under civil rights...being deprived of their abilities to teach and so forth. The court in Milwaukee and here ...threw them out. Said all he wants is a fair shake like everybody else. That's good John. And that is the main trouble with the country is if we could say to each other – to hell with what you are, it's what you do that counts.

JL – That's a worthy goal for a country like ours.

RE – Yes, that's right.

JL – I have that goal myself.

RE – And John, it will be a long time coming. Look at the Hawaiian Islands. Look how long it took to get equality there, probably 30 years. So take your time here.

JL – It's not a premeditated thing on people's part. It is so much man's malignment of man...it's just life on earth that's happening everywhere. So it's happening a little less.

RE – Yes, Remember this son, it is always better than it used to be, 10, 20 or 30 years ago.

JL – It has progressed. I mean there are headlines here in the '20's: Black man save white man...Black man's blood saves white man. So that's the way people thought back then and that was a big headline. I agree. There were not that many political reasons why Wood closed.

RE – I think, too, John, you need to say this to yourself: that the broad base of the old school board (Citizens School Committee) has eroded and it has now widened out to its popular width. I think we have a lot of alternatives to choose between in Indianapolis. You have your informed citizen/public that knows what goes on at the school board meetings – of course, there are private meetings I'm sure. But they can't make any public move without coming to the public with it and that's good....that's good.

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