

SRC 29 Summary
Will Campbell
21 pages- Open
July 1, 2003

Will Campbell begins by describing Nashville, Tennessee in the 1950s. He explains that there was still an underlying racist movement in the city. He talks about the Fugitive movement and Donald Davidson, a Vanderbilt professor, and how they were heads of racist movements (page 1). Campbell goes on to talk about how insurance ran Nashville. He explains how country music did not actually start in Nashville, but in Norris, Tennessee, and the insurance companies saw that and brought the music to Nashville. He describes Nashville as a very different place than where he grew up (pages 1-2).

Campbell talks about how he became involved with the Tennessee Council on Human Relations. He describes a group of women from the United Church Women who would go to court and testify about sit-ins and mob scenes during the 1960s. Campbell talks about the violence between blacks and whites and how the women would keep the peace (pages 2-4). Campbell discusses who Baxton Bryant was and the part he played in the revolutionary-type movement with the Tennessee Council (page 5). He goes on to compare the Tennessee Council with the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee and says the Tennessee Council was not as militant (page 6).

Campbell discusses how the American Society of Women for the Prevention of Lynching played a large part in lowering the amount of lynching that happened (pages 6-7). He explains how the acceptance of blacks would evolve, then regress, then evolve again throughout time (page 7). Campbell describes how his involvement in racist movements often kept him from home (pages 7-8).

Campbell talks about being involved in the Tennessee Council on Human Relations and in the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (page 9). He describes the effect that a young woman, Diane Nash, had on the desegregation of Nashville with her comment to the mayor (pages 9-10). Campbell explains how the bombings of homes and schools contributed to the desegregation of Nashville (pages 10-11).

Campbell discusses Jim Lawson, an activist who worked for the Vanderbilt Divinity School, and how he was expelled from the school because of his leadership in the sit-ins (pages 11-12). He talks about Frank Clement and about how close he came to abolishing the death penalty (page 13). He also talks about the current senator, Bill Frist and about his wish to have a constitutional amendment to keep marriage as a heterosexual institution (page 13).

Campbell explains his interpretation of the difference between moderates and racists (page 15). He talks about how irritated he gets when he opens the paper and sees

long articles on insignificant topics (page 15). He talks about how the federal and state bank examiners would come and inspect banks after large sit-ins to make sure the money for bail hadn't come out of the banks (page 16). Campbell discusses the high level of unity there was between the young kids and the older people (pages 16-17). He then discusses how the African Americans were assumed to have to either be better than the whites or less than the whites; they couldn't be equal (page 17).

Campbell discusses meetings in east Nashville where the blacks would meet (page 18). He talks about the first black man elected to state office in Mississippi, Robert George Clark (pages 18-19). Campbell describes the book he wrote concerning Robert Clark (page 19). Campbell finishes the interview by talking about how blacks and whites are still separated in a lot of ways today, but not as much as they were in the 1960s and 1970s (page 20).