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WIS 7112-7118

Introduction

This set of seven unidentified news outtake files, WIS 7112-7118, concern the organization of a student strike in May 1970 at the University of South Carolina (USC), as well as other civil rights activities in the same month. Using various research methods, we produced ample evidence to identify a significant amount of people, the date, and locations featured in these films. The group divided the clips, and in doing our own research, many of the information we came across led to evidence for the other clips. After some relevant historical background for the news footage, information about each individual clip follows.

The tragedy at Kent State University (KSU) in Ohio was a major catalyst for some of the events captured in the clips. The strong antiwar sentiment already in place on many college campuses because of Vietnam exploded as Nixon invaded Cambodia a week before the shooting at KSU on May 4, 1970. The National Guard, called in to control the student uprising at KSU, lost control of the situation and opened fire on the crowd of protesting students, killing four and injuring nine. This tragedy unleashed a chain of protests across college campuses in the days to come; universities like Berkeley, Madison, Syracuse and many others forced their respective governors to call in National Guard units to control protesters on their campuses (Associated Press, "Nation's students" 3). USC was one such institution, and most of the footage researched

by this group concerns student-organized strikes and the National Guard's response to them in early May 1970.

The group was able to exactly identify the dates, locations, names of individuals, and historical context for the majority of the filmed events. The footage includes high-ranking local political, military, and law enforcement personalities, as well as local activists, civil rights proponents, and student protesters. Both the establishment and anti-establishment sides of the civil rights and antiwar movements of the 1960s and 1970s are captured, resulting in a microcosm of that tumultuous time in American history presented through news outtakes. The what, where, when, and why of each clip, and each segment within those clips, are presented below.

WIS 7112

Adjutant Major General Francis Douglas Pinckney, commander of South Carolina's National Guard, also known as General Frank Pinckney, born in Mt. Pleasant, SC on March 11, 1900 and died in Columbia, SC on June 9, 1974 is the man speaking in WIS 7112. He is almost immediately identifiable by his name tag reading "Pinckney" and by the nameplate on his desk, glimpsed during the last shot, reading "Maj. Gen. F.D. Pinckney." The footage is identified to be an outtake of WIS's coverage of a news conference held by the general at his office in Columbia's National Guard Headquarters on Thursday, May 7, 1970; the conference was called by the general himself in order to defend the National Guard in the face of increasingly negative public sentiment directed at them because of their involvement in the KSU shootings (Associated Press, "Pinckney Criticizes" 32). The news conference was widely reported by local and national newspapers, many of them quoting verbatim Pinckney's words from WIS 7112, but also

transcribing a more complete version of the General's statement presented during the conference (Lanier 10-A).

In his defense of the National Guard in WIS 7112, Pinckney mentions their intervention in four separate, then-recent, events. In Charleston, he is referring to the Medical College Hospital strike of 1969; on April 25, 1969, Governor Robert McNair called in 500 National Guardsmen to control the strike initiated by a group of predominantly female African-American hospital workers seeking equal pay and treatment (P. Grose 251). In Denmark, he is referring to the Barnwell units of the South Carolina National Guard being called upon by the president of Voorhees College in February 1969 to respond to a demonstration of 500 students demanding more black faculty in the predominantly black college ("Barnwell Complex" 1). In Columbia, he refers to the calling of guardsmen by Governor Robert McNair to quell student strikes and protests at USC in May 1970; these student strikes are the subject of WIS 7114-7117 and are covered more extensively in those sections of the report. In Mullins, the general is likely referring to the March 1970 National Guard intervention in Lamar, SC to protect Lamar High School students from white protesters who were violently protesting the school's recent desegregation (P. Grose xviii).

General Pinckney was a prominent figure in South Carolina's military in the latter half the 20th century. As the state's Adjutant General and National Guard commander from 1958 to 1970, he was in charge of almost 10,000 Guardsmen of the 51st Infantry Division, and prior to that, he had served with the National Guard since WWII ("S.C. Guardsmen" 6). In light of his long military service for the National Guard, his calling of this news conference to defend the institution is in character.

WIS 7113

The information that was gathered for news clip WIS 7113 can be broken down into location, date, who is speaking, and content of the clip. Originally, I had presumed that the clip was recorded at Benedict College, due to the golden “B” for Benedict College in the background, and the mention of Benedict College in one of the speeches. But, after coming across the article “Convocation Set at Benedict” confirms that the event took place at the Sheraton Columbia Inn on May 7, 1970. Other pieces of evidence also support this date. One, in “Catalog of Copyright Entries Third Series” on Google Books, supports May 7, 1970 as the date of the event. The entry reads as follows:

“BENEDICT COLLEGE, COLUMBIA, S.C. Directions in Negro higher education, 1970; observations presented at the Benedict College convocation on The second century of Negro higher education, held in Columbia, South Carolina, May 7, 1970. 27 p. Appl. author: Benjamin F. Payton, editor. © Benedict College : 2Oct"O; A251038”.

Our second piece of evidence comes from Governor Robert McNair’s archival papers under ‘Speeches’ for the year 1970 under the month May: “May:...7, Benedict College Convocation [incl. program]” (“Robert E. McNair (1923-2007) Papers, 1953-2008”, 98,111). The evidence led us to conclude that these speeches took place on May 7, 1970 at the Sheraton Columbia Inn. Furthermore, Robert McNair and Isaiah Newman DeQuincey were already identified prior to beginning this project. The “Robert E. McNair (1923-2007) Papers, 1953-2008” provided ample biographical information on his role as governor of South Carolina from 1965-1971. DeQuincey, also present in the clip, played a vital role in the black community within South Carolina. He was a pastor, a civil right’s activist, and was a confidant to many politicians (“Isaiah Newman DeQuincey (1911-1985) Papers, 1929-2003” p. 2). The University of South Carolina’s archives

hold ample information on McNair and DeQuincey, which allowed a starting point to gather clues and information about the clip.

There were a lot of dead ends in researching McNair and DeQuincey. The information that would pop up would be information that was already provided by their respective archival collections. In revisiting the clip, Benedict College became another viable searching option. Benedict College led to the discovery of the third speaker from the clip. Tuskegee University's website provided evidence in identifying Benjamin Franklin Payton. Payton was the president of Benedict College from 1967-1972, and continued to advocate for higher education in the black community and later served as Tuskegee College president from 1981-2010. Dr. Benjamin Franklin Payton passed away on September 28, 2016, shortly after this research effort began. In examining Payton's biography, I became curious to learn about his wife, Thelma Plane. After locating her obituary, I compared it to the news clip, and concluded that there was significant resemblance between the image in the obituary and the woman in the clip. I then located Tennessee State University's yearbook, in hopes that there would be another photo to corroborate my findings. The 1954 yearbook included Thelma Plane's senior picture that, unsurprisingly, also resembled the woman in the news clip. These images provided strong evidence in determining that the woman sitting next to McNair is in fact Thelma Plane, Payton's wife. Additionally, the recording consists of important speeches that acknowledge and celebrate Benedict College's second century of higher education for people of color.

In the second part of this clip, a man is interviewed about soil erosion. This could have pertained to an event on Tuesday, May 5, 1970: the Richland County Soil and Water District held their Annual Certificate of Merit Day awards ceremony for distinguished landowners in the South Carolina county ("Soil and" 4-A). The event was covered repeatedly in Columbia's

newspapers *The Star* and *The State*, and boasted a keynote address by Norman A. Berg, who was at the time the associate administrator of the Soil Conservation Service in Washington, DC. The event was held at Redwood Cafeteria, State Fairgrounds and the ceremony was slated to begin at 5:20 p.m. The main certificates were presented to area farmers H.L. Bauknight, Foster D. Coleman, Edmund H. Monteith, and W.T. Floyd by the Columbia-based bank executive John Bonner Baxter.

As the interviewee in our film segment is primarily referring to soil conservation and spouting general statistics about farmers' finances, I am satisfied with establishing his connection to the aforementioned Richland County Soil and Water District event. In sharing our WIS video clip with James K. Mullis, who served on the board of the Richland committee in 1970, I was told that he did not recognize the man and that his accent betrays him as a non-native. Mullis' guess was that the man was associated with Goodyear, who sponsored many of the committee's ceremonies around this time, but I could find no mention of Goodyear's sponsorship in any articles on the ceremony on May 5, 1970. My best guess is that the man was either a local professor or an out-of-town specialist on soil conservation, perhaps someone in town with Norman A. Berg. Given the background of a grayish wall, the yellow-and-green bouquet behind the man, the shape and size of his nametag, and the air vent on the wall behind him, the speaker was almost certainly interviewed at the same May 7, 1970 Benedict College centennial event shown in the earlier parts of the clip.

WIS 7114

On May 6, 1970, Michael E. "Mike" Spears, Student Government President of the University of South Carolina, speaks about the student strike planned for the next two days and the different student factions that support it. Spears, a junior in Spring 1970, had just been

handed the presidency the day before on May 5 by his predecessor Barry Knobel. As President, Spears was responsible for signing the senate's resolution into effect, a decree which called for a boycott of all university activities on May 7 and 8. The protest was mainly in response to the tragically violent response to the Kent State protests of May 4, 1970, but also was meant to counteract the recent actions of South Carolina solicitor John Foard against left-wing students associated with the radical UFO Coffeehouse (Foard had successfully imprisoned the coffee house's owners in a very dubious trial), as well as an "[over-]policing of the Russell House," a student-run center on campus that many saw as being wrested from the peace-minded students' control (Carroll "Strike Is" 7-A). Talking to researcher Andrew Grose in 2005, Spears reflected that "We [the representatives of student government] projected a very middle of the road posture that was absolutely anti-violent, but permissive of free expression" (A. Grose 156).

In the video clip, Spears mentions a few of the following groups that came together to form the student strike committee which oversaw the strike proposal and voting process: "Student Senate, FREAK, the Inter-Fraternity Council, the Association of Afro-American Students, the Student Mobilization Committee (SMC), the American Association of University Professors, former members of AWARE, and numerous concerned apolitical students" (A. Grose 160). His additional point about the "Cambodian issue"—the controversial military violence waged on Cambodia at the time by the U.S. (this was many years before the Khmer Rouge)—prompting the strike seems to diverge from what *The State* called the "three pronged" catalyst of Kent State, Foard, and the Russell House, but jives with the nature of the resulting general protesters, one of whose homemade sign read: "Strike because there are cops in the Russell House, Strike because they invaded Cambodia, Strike because your classes are obscene in the face of death, Strike against Foard's witch hunt, Strike against dorm hours, Strike against

NARC's on campus, Strike against the ROTC, Strike against John Doe warrants, Strike against repression...STRIKE!" (A. Grose 160).

WIS 7115

On May 6, 1970, James "Jim" Bradford, Vice President of the Student Body of the University of South Carolina, reads a resolution authored by Senator Jim Leppard III, calling for "voluntary participation of all students, faculty and administrators in cessation of all University activities on May 7 and 8." The resolution asserts itself as a response to "a time of peril" for USC, with "academic freedom," "freedom of association and peaceful assembly," and protests "police or political restrictions on the use of the Russell House and other university buildings."

Jim Bradford, like President Mike Spears, served as a media liaison during the time of the strike, and is thus quoted often in *The State* during this time. His overseeing presence is also felt in articles of USC's *The Gamecock*, where during the strike Bradford is mentioned as a student body mediator, inciting mid-protest votes and relaying information between police and protesters. His denunciation of the "seizure of the Russell House" by students was published in the May 8 issue of *The Gamecock*, and is in line with Spears' and USC's president's views (Bradford 1).

WIS 7116 and 7117

May 7, 1970—Columbia, South Carolina—on the campus of University of South Carolina a group of students peacefully protested in the wake of the Kent State shootings, the closing down of local anti-war coffeehouses, and the unjust investigation into the lives of university professors, staff and the student body. This is the setting, the preface and continued action of the clips WIS 7116-7117.

James “Jim” Leppard, the young man in the green button up, was discovered while going over the University of South Carolina yearbook *Garnet and Black*. He speaks as a freshman during each of his appearances in 7116 and 7117, respectively. His support for the strike on May 7th and 8th and the projected length of it are conceived here in the footage. While he appears to only be giving support, a *Gamecock* article speaks of a more involved role: “The Senate passed, 35-14, a resolution authored by Sen. Jim Leppard, calling for ‘voluntary participation of all students, faculty and administrators in cessation of all University activities on May 7 and 8’” (“Senate Supports Strike” 3).

His points rise and fall on the multi-faceted issue of campus related freedoms. He gives mention to personal issues related to freedom of dress and hairstyle yet also allows consideration of professors who seem to have been besieged by the prying eyes of local officials as well. This is where he claims an election year was a possible reason for such over-involvement. In “Voices of Southern Protest During the Vietnam War Era,” Andrew Grose does a great job of synthesizing the wealth of information and series of events into a tangible whole. He brings forth the idea of *in loco parentis* policies, put into action by the administration at USC to, “repress the activities of counterculture activists,” as well as mentioning the fact that policies such as those, “were the immediate causes of the outbreak of massive protests” (Grose 154). Add to that the creation of “John Doe warrants (blank warrants used by police officers),” with students being arrested in early April on questionable possession charges, and the palpable discord created by the coffeehouse shutdowns, you had a ticking clock on a bomb of dissension (Grose 159).

In 7117, an important name comes up: John Foard. Jim Leppard mentions him as “Solicitor Foard,” and after continued research into the matter, our group discovered that he was indeed the 5th Circuit solicitor at the time. Also found in Andrew Grose’s piece, a further clue to

his embedded role concerning the strike of May 7th and 8th: “In January 1970, John Foard, the 5th Circuit solicitor of South Carolina, led a successful campaign to shut down the UFO Coffeeshouse” (Grose 159). Also mentioned by Leppard is the role of professors and staff in their choice to strike. Grose touches on the subject thusly; “Foard also blasted many of the university’s faculty members who testified for the defense in the UFO trial...” (159). Foard is quoted as saying, “I feel from this trial that there are professors who don’t belong at the university.”

Relevant as well is filling in the hole that is Leppard’s statement on a possible election year motive in the events taking place on campus. In the book “A History of the University of South Carolina, 1940-2000,” the author Henry H. Lesesne adds, “On April 29, Solicitor Ford—who was running for reelection in the fall of 1970—publicly assailed USC administrators, charging that they had failed to live up to promises to clear the Russell House of radical activity” (Lesesne 213) Unsurprisingly, as he mentions him a few times, Mr. Foard seems to be the “local authority” foremost on Jim Leppard’s mind. All these facts help to provide a background for the comments made by Jim Leppard and shed a light on the time period in general.

In the second part of 7116, C. Kenneth Powell, Republican Chair of Richland County, is shown giving a speech on party politics and the role of the Republican and Democratic parties of South Carolina. He, in overwhelming likelihood, is indeed speaking as the county chair, a role he held until the end of 1971 before he shifted into the position of Republican Chair of South Carolina (“C. Kenneth Powell Papers 2). Using the Library of South Carolina, located on the campus at USC, as a source, one of our group members keyword-searched several different terms until a picture was provided to match the face we had in our footage. We knew through his

speech, that he was concerned with the chairs of state and county, Republican and Democrat alike, so those terms become useful in any related search going forward.

After we discovered Powell's identity through the USC library, use of their attached finding aid, the "C. Kenneth Powell Papers" helped to enlighten us further on the quick rise of Mr. Powell within the government of South Carolina and give a better perspective on his personal and political views. From 1961-1964, he was a page in the South Carolina House, yet by 1971, was leading his party as the Republican Chair in Richland County (C. Kenneth Powell Papers, 2). In between that time, he worked for Floyd Spence, "the first prominent elected official in the state to change his party affiliation" (C. Kenneth Powell Papers 2).

What remains intriguing and still a bit confounding now, as it was when we first learned his name, is his political views in relation to the shifting ideology of the political party system, especially in the south around the beginning of the 1970s. At one point in 7116, Mr. Powell states, "Freedom and equal protection of the law are extended to any South Carolinians who may not have enjoyed this privilege in the past." This language would lead to a belief in his dedication to the Civil Rights cause. What complicates matters is his role in Albert Watson's run for Governor in 1970 as well his role as a "member of the committee to draft Congressman Albert Watson [for Governor]..." (C. Kenneth Powell Papers 2). That race was, which Watson lost, was considered, "...as having a racist tone and his defeat left the party at a crossroads." Despite this, upon his own election in 1970, Powell said, "I'm going to do everything I can to make everyone realize that the terms 'conservative' and 'racist' are not in any way synonymous" (C. Kenneth Powell Papers 2).

On such matters, further useful information was found using "Newspapers.com." Included in the vast database of South Carolina local newspapers, were articles that spoke to

Powell's beliefs and desires going forward. In a piece that ran in *The Greenville News* on February 10th, 1971, "He [Powell] said in many Negro areas the black citizens are not getting good water...Roads in Negro areas are often unpaved... 'They (Negroes) are getting horrible services in many places and the Republican party plans on correcting this' ... 'The black man is as much of a citizen as any other citizen.'" (Williams 3). Along with the quotes above, I like to believe Powell was on the right side of the Civil Rights issue of the time. For now, there is no known information to prove that he was not.

WIS 7118

The final video in this set, WIS 7118, is composed of three clips—all of which address an incident that took place on May 2nd, 1970 in the Camp Fornance neighborhood of Columbia, South Carolina. The first two clips depict a woman followed by a man speaking at a press conference or rally, while the third clip captures an interview with a man that after research was determined to be Richland County Sheriff Frank Powell. Each segment of the video took place on Wednesday, May 6, four days after the incident in question.

Named after a Spanish Civil War training camp previously located in the same area, the small neighborhood of Camp Fornance was located in northwest Columbia, in an area now known as Earlewood (*Earlewood Community Citizens Organization*). During the 1960s and early 1970s, Camp Fornance was populated almost exclusively by black residents, many of whom had no access to running water. Numerous accounts from the late 1960s and early 1970s described the area as "dilapidated," "poverty-stricken," and "one of the worst areas in Columbia." (Records on the South Carolina Council on Human Relations). Even after criticism from the area's residents, *The State*, Columbia's foremost newspaper, repeatedly referred to Camp Fornance as "Black Bottom," a pejorative nickname referencing both the neighborhood's population and

socioeconomic status (Stirling 26-A). In late 1972, the entire neighborhood was razed as a part of a federally-funded urban renewal effort (O'Shea 1-B). Perhaps as a result of the demolition of Camp Fornance, very little has been written or reported about the area in recent years, and it now exists primarily as a footnote to Columbia's history.

The subject of WIS 7118 concerns an incident that took place on Saturday May 2, 1970 in Camp Fornance, when a "miniscule riot" occurred (Robert E. McNair Papers, Box 35, 1). Opposing sources provide vastly differing accounts of the evening's events, but the conflict seems to have arisen after county deputies and State Law Enforcement Division (SLED) agents went to Camp Fornance to search for an unnamed escaped prisoner. The officials "apparently attempted to impose 'martial law' upon the persons gathered on the corner of Emerson Street & Lucius Road," where a club known as the Camp Fornance Café was located. A crowd of over one hundred amassed, and one man was arrested for assaulting a police officer, disorderly conduct, and resisting arrest. Tear gas was deployed, and the Richland County Sheriff's Department was later criticized for their "dehumanizing" methods in dealing with the residents of Camp Fornance that evening. It is unclear what became of the escaped prisoner, but the Camp Fornance Café was padlocked on Wednesday, May 6, 1970 ("Camp Fornance Café Closed," 1-B). The rally shown in WIS 7118 depicts members of the Camp Fornance Urban Development Committee requesting a formal investigation by the governor, stating, "his non-response...will indicate to all of us that he prefers to wait until we have a South Carolina State College-type situation, rather than to formalize some proper solutions to these problems." Three weeks later, the governor's office forwarded the letter to the Columbia Community Relations Council—further correspondence reveals talk of the formation of a committee to investigate the riot, but

there is no evidence that any committee ever came to fruition (Robert E. McNair Papers, Box 35, 1-9).

While the specific location of WIS 7118 could not be determined, all parts of the video took place on Wednesday May 6, 1970. The woman speaking at the start of the clip references a letter to South Carolina's governor, Robert McNair, "dated today." The letter itself, obtained from the Robert E. McNair Papers at the University of South Carolina, was dated May 6, 1970. The interview with Sheriff Powell was also determined to have taken place on May 6, as evidenced by a news story in *The State's* May 7, 1970 issue that directly references Wednesday's padlocking of the Camp Fornance Café. In the video, Powell states, "We obtained from the court today an order, which I sent my officers down and we padlocked the building."

After discovering newspaper accounts of the incident in question, determining the identity of Sheriff Frank Powell was fairly simple. According to the Richland County Sheriff's Department's records, Powell served as sheriff from 1969-1988 (Mullineaux 2). Identifying Franchot Brown--still a practicing personal injury lawyer in Columbia--was more difficult, but former committee president and Columbia reverend Leroy Cannon assisted in this matter. Unfortunately, even after speaking to Mr. Brown and Mr. Cannon and obtaining a 1968 membership list and meeting minutes (held by the South Caroliniana Library at the University of South Carolina), the woman shown from the Camp Fornance Urban Development Committee could not be conclusively identified. The aforementioned article from *The State* refers to the exact press conference/rally seen in the video, but only refers to the speakers as a part of the Camp Fornance Urban Development Committee rather than by individual name.

Conclusion

As the research above demonstrates, these films from WIS were all shot within a very short period of time, over the course of May 5, 6, and 7, 1970. This was a time of significant social and political upheaval in South Carolina and throughout the United States, and these clips provide some insight into this unrest as it existed within the confines of Columbia, South Carolina. While the films cover a broad range of topics, they might be useful to researchers exploring Columbia history in the late 20th century, student movements in the 1960s, the role of historically black colleges, urban planning in the southern United States, and/or poverty and police relations during this time period.

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