

Interview with **Marian Logan**

Date: December 9, 1988

Interviewer: Paul Stekler

Camera Rolls: 4074-4077

Sound Rolls: 431-432

Team: D

Interview gathered as part of *Eyes on the Prize II: America at the Racial Crossroads, 1965-mid 1980s*. Produced by Blackside, Inc. Housed at the Washington University Film and Media Archive, Henry Hampton Collection.

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Note: These transcripts contain material that did not appear in the final program. Only text appearing in *bold italics* was used in the final version of *Eyes on the Prize II*.

[camera roll #4074]

[sound roll #431]

00:00:13:00

Camera Crew Member #1:

Mark it.

Camera Crew Member #2:

Logan.

[slate]

00:00:17:00

Interviewer:

I think people lose track of who Martin Luther King was as a person in this, all this history and all these things. What was Martin Luther King like as a man?

00:00:27:00

Marian Logan:

As a man, I'm glad...I wish someone would say as a man and really follow through, you know. Because first of all, he was a man, and he was a human being. He was...marvelous sense of humor. Loved to joke. Loved to play jokes on any of us, you know, particularly Ralph or Andy. And me sometimes. And he loved to sing, he loved all kinds of music, not just the hymns and the freedom songs that we sang, you know. I can remember in Oslo, when he sang "I Left my Heart in San Francisco". And he couldn't remember all the words, but that was all right. He had a good voice. [car horn] And he would often tell jokes. And if we were, on the road somewhere, you know, on a trip somewhere, or at a convention, at night Martin was one who did not sleep. My husband would give him pills. My husband was the doctor and would give him pills 'cause he complained about not being able to sleep. And Martin would take the pills and then sit up and talk [train passes] the pill effect away, you know. He would come to my suite some nights, two or three o'clock in the morning, knock on the door and say, Hello darlings, I just came to say good night. Have prayers with you and say good night. I said, Martin you're lying, you didn't come to say good night. Come in and sit down. And he would sit and he would look around. And I knew what he was lookin' for. And I said, What's the matter, Martin? Martin, he said, Marian, you don't treat your leader right. I said, What's wrong? He said, Well, you didn't give me anything so I can go to sleep. He was lookin' for a drink, you know. He trusted me enough, I have now thought about it many times. And since others have spoken of it, I think at that time he trusted me enough to let me know that he did like to have drink once in a while, and it did relax him. But then he would start talkin' and it would go on for hours. I'd look up, it'd be seven or eight o'clock in the morning, and we were supposed to be going somewhere, staff and whatnot had a press conference or something. And Martin would go, I have to get some sleep. He would maybe sleep for an hour or so and then get up. I've never in my life seen a man so brilliant when it came [car passes] to thinking on his feet out of a dead sleep. We'd be [car horn] on a plane, and when we'd land somewhere the press would come in with the cameras, you know, with the lights blaring right in his eyes, right in his face, and he would wake up. And they would start interviewing and Martin would be brilliant. How he did it I don't know. These are things I think a lotta people didn't know about him. He was a brilliant man. And I don't need to tell you how he could speak and really work people up with his, not just "I Have a Dream" and "with this faith" and a lot of themes that he followed, you know.

00:03:38:00

Interviewer:

Let's cut for a second.

Camera Crew Member #1:

Cut.

Interviewer:

Make sure

Marian Logan:

I'm sorr—

[cut]

Camera Crew Member #1:

Mark.

[slate]

Marian Logan:

[laughs]

Interviewer:

It's...

00:03:44:00

Camera Crew Member #1:

OK.

00:03:45:00

Interviewer:

It's early 1967 and—

Marian Logan:

Yes.

Interviewer:

—and Dr. King is about to take a stand that, that a lotta people are gonna have a lot of things to say about a stand against the Vietnam War.

00:03:56:00

Marian Logan:

Very unpopular among many of our friends and, I guess I dare say, all of the other leaders of the, what we called the Big Six. [car horn] You know, they were very against it. As a matter of fact, frankly in the beginning so was I. And I'm not so sure Dr. Logan was really against it. He was more of a thinker, and he was trying to figure just from where Martin was coming, you know. But we had meetings here at the house where Whitney and Roy [car horn] and Bayard and Dorothy Height and Martin, I'm tryin' to think whom else, I've left out somebody. But anyway, the six would get around, and everyone, as I remember, was against it except Martin. But Martin tried to explain, he really was dedicated to his feeling of the moral-morality or the lack of morality in the Vietnam War. And the same way he was committed to real, true nonviolence. And sometimes that interfered with the, the thinking or the machinations of others, you know, who had their own agendas, or different agendas, maybe than Martin's. Martin was very rigid about his nonviolence. And when he finally got around to the Vietnam War he was really, [train passes] you know, really bent on it. You could not move him. And as has turned out years later, I've often wondered what Martin would say now.

00:05:41:00

Interviewer:

In those conversations at the house, what, what, what did Roy Wilkens and Whitney Young, why did they tell him they were against this?

00:05:51:00

Marian Logan:

I think, I'm tryin' to remember. I wanna be fair to everybody. But I think at the time Roy and Mart...Roy and Whitney, I think, were more politically indoctrinated. And maybe more politically aware of things which Martin didn't feel was important as his beliefs. You know what I mean?

00:06:17:00

Interviewer:

What were they thinking?

00:06:19:00

Marian Logan:

Well, I think for one thing they felt if we, we took the stand against the war it would be anti the administration of the time, which happened to be Johnson. And they felt that Johnson had, and he had, done some very good things in the civil rights era, I think will go down in history's written truly. Lyndon Johnson was one of the finest presidents for domestic affairs

in our lifetime, in this era. I think, well I know the Vietnam War was what killed Lyndon, you know.

00:06:54:00

Interviewer:

You said when you first heard about Dr. King, or first heard that he was gonna come out strongly against the war you, too, initially were against it.

00:07:01:00

Marian Logan:

Yeah—

Interviewer:

What [unintelligible]

Marian Logan:

—'cause I thought that he, he was getting into the politics, and he should stay with the civil rights thing. And then when he explained that this had a lot to do with civil rights, not just civil rights but human rights. He always tried to make that distinction 'cause everybody...the press, everybody always said everything was civil rights, you know. And they'd always talk about Black leaders. Martin's thing always was human rights, and not just Blacks. People didn't realize or didn't understand it was, I don't think it was said enough, stressed enough. There were lots of Whites involved in the civil rights struggle, and there were lots more poor Whites, by virtue of the fact they're lot more Whites, you know, than there were Blacks who were poor in this country. And those are the people about whom Martin cared. And those are the ones whose concerns he tried to espouse. And, unfortunately, sometimes it got mixed up with their, you know, with the politics and with whatever happened to be the theme of the time. We had different currents running through the country, you know.

00:08:14:00

Interviewer:

There was something you told me, or I think you told Jackie on the phone—

Marian Logan:

Mm.

Interviewer:

—that you said that, that this was a real turning point in terms of his mood. And that after the Riverside speech and after he came out strongly against the war, he was affected by the reaction.

Marian Logan:

Yes.

Interviewer:

Do you remember?

00:08:29:00

Marian Logan:

Yes. He was very depressed. I think he stayed depressed and he got progressively more depressed as he went along. He'd have these up times, I mean you could make him laugh and joke, that kinda thing. But I think innately he was a very unhappy, distressed person. I don't think it was because he doubted the position he had taken, that it was wrong. I think he felt badly that a lotta people didn't agree with him, or couldn't understand his reason for taking that stand. And it depressed him terribly and I, I began to see him, you know, going down from that. [voice in background] It was a sad thing to see. I wished I had been, been able to be more supportive at the end.

00:09:25:00

Interviewer:

Let's cut for a second.

[cut]

00:09:28:00

Camera Crew Member #1:

Mark it.

[slate]

Interviewer:

[plane flies over] So, when you first heard about Dr. King's coming out against the war in Vietnam, how did you feel?

Marian Logan:

Well, I was shocked, I was surprised.

00:09:39:00

Interviewer:

Can you start by saying, "When I first heard...?"

00:09:41:00

Marian Logan:

Oh. I'm sorry. When I first heard about Dr. King coming out against the war in Vietnam, I was really surprised. And I'm not sure that I was really in agreement with him at the beginning. Although, I came to understand his position, which was that of a, a moral commitment he had, and the feeling that it was unjust. Also, I think he had discovered long before we did that there were many more Black soldiers in Vietnam fighting and dying. And he was just against the war. *You know, wasn't a thing he had to do. I think it was, it was, was not a political thing. Turned out, I think it was kinda like a death knell for him, but it was a very brave thing for him to do because he went against all the people, you know, who we considered reasonable* people, you know. Not just the President and those in the Democratic Party, but all the lea-*leadership* of the Black community, and others of our Jewish friends, you know, who wouldn't be brave enough to come out and say what I think...I think it was a very brave act for Martin, and I was proud of him for that.

00:11:03:00

Interviewer:

Was he really isolated by this?

Camera Crew Member #1:

We have to cut.

Marian Logan:

Yes.

Interviewer:

OK.

Marian Logan:

[unintelligible]

Camera Crew Member #2:

OK, that's roll out on forty, seventy-four.

Interviewer:

That was really nice.

[cut]

[camera roll #4075]

Camera Crew Member #2

Four, three, one. Sound continuing.

Camera Crew Member #1:

Mark it.

[slate]

00:11:14:00

Camera Crew Member #1:

OK, ready Paul.

00:11:15:00

Interviewer:

Later in 1967, into the, the summer, into the fall Martin King came up with a new idea. It was an idea of a Poor, Poor People's Campaign.

Marian Logan:

Right. [train passes]

00:11:26:00

Interviewer:

And what were your reactions when you first heard it? Why? And why?

00:11:33:00

Marian Logan:

[laughs] Well, when I first heard it I thought, I don't know. I, I, I couldn't envision what it was gonna be. I didn't know the potential or anything. But the more I heard of it, and the more I thought about it, the more I felt that it was not wise. I was afraid what would happen, going to Washington. Martin's idea, you know, it grew kinda like Topsy, to the point where he just said, Everybody, y'all come. And as it turned out, people left their homes, they left everything [car passes] and just came to Washington. Riding on buses, those who could, some walked. People came all kinds of ways, but left everything. Came 'cause they believed something really was gonna happen and the government was going to take care of them. And I began to feel that we had bitten off a lot more than we were gonna be able to chew. So, I talked [background knocking] to Martin about it, we had our disagreements. Then I sat down, I guess, over a period of a couple a weeks or so, I thought about, 'bout it and I wrote a memo.

00:12:52:00

Interviewer:

Stop.

Camera Crew Member #1:

Stop down.

Marian Logan:

Yeah—

[cut]

Camera Crew Member #2:

Speed.

00:12:55:00

Camera Crew Member #1:

Mark it, please.

[slate]

00:12:57:00

Interviewer:

I wanna go back to the Poor People's Campaign. Specifically starting again with, "When I first heard..." 'cause I know that you had qualms about the tenor of the times and the possible effect on Dr. King.

Marian Logan:

Yes.

Interviewer:

So, let me start the question again. How did you feel about the Poor People's Campaign and why?

00:13:18:00

Marian Logan:

When I first heard about it, I was really very apprehensive. I thought that, as it began to develop or as I heard about how it was developing, that it was becoming much too big and unwieldy for us to be able to handle. And, also, considering the tenor of the times, I wasn't sure that it could be a success. I, I wasn't sure that Congress and the powers that be in Washington D.C. would be welcoming. It wasn't like '63, which was such a glorious march and glorious day, you know. This bringing poor people to the seat of government was like, you know, throwing it in their faces. I didn't think too many of the officialdom of Washington was gonna take that with any great grace. So I had many reservations about it. And after thinking about it for a long time and speaking to my husband about it and other friends, I've devised this memo, and I sent it to Martin. At the same time, I sent copies to every member of the board of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, because Martin had a way of getting my letters, and messages, and memos, and things, and we would laugh and talk about, but he would never tell anybody [laughs] else, you know. And I felt this was something that was very important, that the board as a whole should know about it. And Martin was very unhappy with me about that.

00:14:56:00

Interviewer:

And then the last week before he died.

00:14:59:00

Marian Logan:

Yes.

Interviewer:

And you had a long evening with you and your husband and Dr. King.

Marian Logan:

Right.

00:15:02:00

Interviewer:

Can you tell us about that night?

00:15:05:00

Marian Logan:

Well, it was an horrendous evening. He came around eight o'clock in the evening. And he stayed until I guess it was almost 7:30 a.m., eight o'clock the next morning. We sat up and talked and had drinks, but mainly Martin was trying to turn me around, to change my mind about my opposition to the war—I mean the, not the war, the Poor People's Campaign. And finally my husband said, Martin, leave her alone, you know. She's not gonna change her mind, she believes in this very strongly. And I think you should accept it. Martin left, you see, just to... I don't think he could ever accept it because at the end of that... that was on a Monday night, he called me every night, every day, sometimes twice day, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, and Thursday was the night he was killed.

00:16:01:00

Interviewer:

You were upset at the end of that night?

00:16:03:00

Marian Logan:

Oh, Lord, yes. Oh, I was devastated by it. And I've always felt if only we had a little more time to talk, not that I would've changed his mind, but maybe we could have come to an adjustment of our feelings about it so that we wouldn't be as rigid. I was hoping that he would really understand my feelings and why my decision was as it was. And I also was

hoping, more importantly, that I could make him know that I understood his position and how he felt it was so necessary that he do this.

00:16:47:00

Interviewer:

Did you fear the Poor People's Campaign, how it would affect his credibility as a leader and how well it was gonna be organized?

00:16:55:00

Marian Logan:

I was, I was afraid that our group, the people in our organization were not gonna be enough to handle a countrywide mass of people, you know. There were a lot more people, I think, than we'd expected would come. People were... Martin just said, Y'all come, and people were coming from everywhere, all over the country. Black, White, Indians, Mexicans, everything. And I didn't know how we were gonna control that and keep it really nonviolent, which was the main thing because Martin would've been just overwhelmed at anything not gone nonviolently, as the shock on his face the night before in Memphis, when they took him outta the march. [background knocking] Martin was not afraid for himself, as many people interpreted, said Martin looked like he was scared. He wasn't. I think Martin was so shocked that anything relating to violence could be around him. He just couldn't believe such a thing could happen.

00:18:02:00

Interviewer:

Didn't he call you that night after the aborted march?

Marian Logan:

Yeah. Yeah.

Interviewer:

What did you advise him to do?

00:18:06:00

Marian Logan:

[laughs] [background knocking] Well, I'll tell you. I did tell him he oughta get his ass outta Memphis. Those were my very words. And he said, Darlin', we can't turn round now. He said, We have to keep going. I said, OK, Martin. You know. [background knocking]

00:18:25:00

Interviewer:

Hang on for a second.

Camera Crew Member #2:

That's clean, that's clean, that was clean.

Camera Crew Member #3:

Yeah.

Interviewer:

Let's cut.

[cut]

[wild sound]

Marian Logan:

Oh, me repeating what I said, you mean?

Interviewer:

Yeah, essentially.

Marian Logan:

Oh.

Camera Crew Member #1:

Rolling.

Camera Crew Member #2:

Speed.

Interviewer:

Well, spontaneously as well. [laughs]

Marian Logan:

[laughs]

[picture resumes]

00:18:36:00

Camera Crew Member #1:

Mark it, please.

[slate]

00:18:38:00

Interviewer:

After the aborted march in Memphis, did Dr. King call you?

00:18:42:00

Marian Logan:

Yes. And I was upset because I had seen the expression on his face, and I saw Ralph, of course, who was with him, he was distressed. And I just told him, I said, Martin, I think you need to get your ass out of Memphis. And he said, Well, darlin', he said, you know we have to keep going, this is our movement. I said, But you haven't prepared those garbage workers, like we generally have, you know, we'd send Andy in and Wyatt and a few others to [sighs] to get people organized in nonviolence and make them understand how important it was. And these garbage workers were not trained like that. And it was really, you know, a polyglot group of men, you know, it was a union movement. And...but Martin wouldn't give in because he just had to go back and show that, prove that he could do, lead a nonviolent march of garbage workers in Memphis, Tennessee, in 1968.

00:19:54:00

Interviewer:

When you say there was the threat of violence in Washington, if there had been violence in Washington, what would that have produced?

00:20:01:00

Marian Logan:

Oh, I think you would've seen all kinds of troops from federal to state to city, all the police. I think there would've been a terrible massacre en masse. Head-whipping and everything. I think it would've been terrible.

00:20:17:00

Interviewer:

Would it have led to a backlash in the elections?

Marian Logan:

Oh, no question. Of course.

Interviewer:

Can you start by, when I say, "Would it, would it [train passes] lead to a backlash?" mentioning [unintelligible]?

00:20:25:00

Marian Logan:

Oh. Lead to backlash, my goodness, there's no question. A terrible backlash because there were many people who felt that the civil rights movement had gotten too many things already, you know. We'd gotten the Civil Rights Bill passed, you know, many things had happened nat—you know, after President Kennedy was killed and Johnson was doing, President Johnson was doing, I think, a terrific job on the domestic front. And I think many people in this country who thought that we had given the Blacks enough, you know.

00:21:02:00

Interviewer:

And the violence, if there had been violence in Washington that would've provoked them?

00:21:06:00

Marian Logan:

Oh, yes. Certainly. Yeah. I don't think any way that the troops or anybody else could've, could've kept it in [plane flies over] a calm situation 'cause I think it would've been Whites

fighting Blacks, and Blacks fighting Whites. Because there were a lot more than just nonviolent committed people from SCLC. You know, there were people from all over the country then, you know, who came. And they may not be as committed, or were not as committed, probably, to the mission of nonviolence.

00:21:43:00

Interviewer:

You know, a lot of people came from around the country. And, and Resurrection City didn't work out very well.

Marian Logan:

Mm.

Interviewer:

Was there anything that you felt that was unfortunate about that?

00:21:52:00

Marian Logan:

Yes, the whole thing, [laughs] I think it was so tragic. I remember when I went down there. The thing was it wasn't well planned. There were things like toilets that weren't functioning and, as a result, water, and not just water, feces and everything was running all around the thing. The most god awful stench in the world, and it was a health hazard among other things.

[rollout on camera roll]

[wild sound]

Marian Logan:

But the powers that be felt that it had to stay for a while and had to happen. And Ramsey Clark at the time was Attorney General who believed that poor people had to—.

00:22:38:00

Interviewer:

I wanna start on this again. The film just ran out.

Marian Logan:

Oh. OK, I'm sorry.

Camera Crew Member #2:

OK, that's rollout [inaudible].

Interviewer:

Not your fault, that's the way film—

[cut]

[wild sound]

Marian Logan:

Where we goin'?

Interviewer:

We're going to Resurrection City.

Marian Logan:

Oh, all right.

Interviewer:

And I'm gonna back up a little bit. I wanna ask you one question about Resurrection City.

Marian Logan:

OK.

Camera Crew Member #2:

OK. Forty, seventy-six. Timecode oh, four, thirteen. Continuing sound four, three, one.

[camera roll #4076]

00:23:00:00

Camera Crew Member #1:

Mark it, please.

[slate]

00:23:02:00

Interviewer:

You were telling me on the phone, or maybe Jackie on the phone about how Resurrection City had these problems, but there were also things you could laugh at. And you were just tellin' us the story.

00:23:11:00

Marian Logan:

[laughs] Yes, well. That's one thing, boy, if we didn't have any humor in the movement we were dead. But I went one morning with Roger and a couple of guys from the Justice Department whom Ramsey had sent over with us, and somehow Roger slipped on one of those boards that was just crusted with the mess, and he fell into the thing. Well, I had to laugh, it was so funny. I felt sorry for him, but it, it broke the tensions 'cause we were very nervous, we never knew what was gonna happen next, you know. And they had sent the, the FBI people, or the, the justice people around to kinda watch over things.

00:23:51:00

Interviewer:

Can I interrupt you for one second?

Marian Logan:

Mm-hmm.

Interviewer:

Could you tell us that same story, but could you say, "Roger Wilkins?"

Marian Logan:

Oh, I'm sorry, yeah.

Interviewer:

That's all right.

00:23:58:00

Marian Logan:

OK.

00:23:59:00

Interviewer:

So, you're telling us about things that were at least funny sometimes, that happened in Resurrection City.

00:24:03:00

Marian Logan:

Yes. I went one morning with Roger Wilkins, who was with the Justice Department, and a couple of other fellas from there. And you...Justice Department people wore the tweed jackets and the well-pressed pants and things, and their Cordovan boots and kind of elegant, you know. And Roger wasn't that elegant, I must say, but he had on a pretty nice plaid shirt. He slipped on the board where some of this crud was and fell. And I had to laugh, it was, well it was so ridiculous and so horrible. And...but it was funny. And you had to have things to laugh about, otherwise you woulda cried so hard you couldn't stand it. You know.

00:24:49:00

Interviewer:

I wanna take you back to the night that Dr. King died.

Marian Logan:

Mm.

Interviewer:

You were talking about the phone calls you were getting. The president called. Can you tell us about?

00:25:00:00

Marian Logan:

Well, now, he didn't call. I didn't know that he called. I picked up my phone and the line was open. And I said hello, and this voice said, Mrs. Logan? I said, Yes. She said, This is the White House. Will you leave your line open? And I said, Well, all right. And she said, You

do have another line in your house, don't you? I said, Yes, we have another line. She said, Well, leave it open, please, because President Johnson would like to speak. He didn't get on right away, and Ramsey Clark got on and we commiserated awhile about how horrible it all was. At that moment, it had not been announced on the news, we were watching Huntley-Brinkley, that Martin was dead. But of course, as it turned out, he had died almost immediately. But they were trying to put people in place, in Memphis and all over the country, before they announced his death. And, of course, as it turned out, you know, the country went crazy. And later on, the President got on and he wanted to get ideas about what we suggested should be done. We felt one of the things should be that he meet, he the President meet with the other leaders, remaining leaders like Whitney Young and Roy Wilkins and Bayard Rustin and Dorothy Height.

00:26:24:00

Interviewer:

Can I cut you for one second?

Marian Logan:

Surely.

Interviewer:

I think what's most interesting about what you were talking about was why he was calling you, what he was fearful of.

Marian Logan:

Oh.

Interviewer:

If I ask you that question again and just—

Marian Logan:

Yeah, all right.

Interviewer:

—you know, what happened when President Johnson called. And you can start by saying, "When President Johnson called he said," but what you felt in his voice he was fearing.

00:26:45:00

Marian Logan:

Yes.

00:26:46:00

Interviewer:

So, what happened that night when President Johnson called?

Marian Logan:

Well, as I said, he didn't actually call me. I picked up the phone.

Interviewer:

OK, but when you talked to him.

00:26:56:00

Marian Logan:

When I talked, spoke with him, yes. I could tell he was very upset, not just about the impending death announcement that was gonna come out that Martin had died, but what was gonna happen to the country. And he, he felt that, you know, it was gonna be utter chaos all over the country. And you could hear the fear in his voice. And then Ramsey Clark got on the phone and we talked some more, and that's when we came up with the idea we suggested to the president that he meet with the leaders. As it turned out, Bayard Rustin had come here and then my husband took him to the airport 'cause he decided he was going to Memphis right away. And Bayard told me later that the president or the White House had pulled his plane early out of the air and landed him in Dulles Air Force.

00:27:51:00

Interviewer:

Let me ask you to do one thing for me. Bobby?

Camera Crew Member #1:

Yes.

Interviewer:

I wanna get one sentence from Mrs. Logan—

Camera Crew Member #2::

We rolling?

Interviewer:

—with a different focal length. Yeah, keep rolling.

Camera Crew Member #1:

Oh, go tighter?

Interviewer:

Yeah.

00:27:58:00

Camera Crew Member #1:

OK, tighter.

00:27:59:00

Interviewer:

One sentence. All I want you to tell me is that "The night that Dr. King was, was shot, I talked to President Johnson."

Marian Logan:

Mm-hmm.

Interviewer:

So, can you tell me that?

Marian Logan:

All right. The night Dr. King—

Interviewer:

Let's do a conversation.

Marian Logan:

Oh, all right.

Interviewer:

OK, so.

Marian Logan:

OK.

Interviewer:

What happened that night?

00:28:15:00

Marian Logan:

Well, I spoke with President Johnson.

00:28:18:00

Interviewer:

Sorry, sorry [unintelligible].

Marian Logan:

That's all right.

Camera Crew Member #1:

OK, we're cutting.

Marian Logan:

Tell me what you, just tell me what—

[cut]

00:28:24:00

Camera Crew Member #1:

Mark it.

[slate]

00:28:28:00

Interviewer:

OK. So, whenever you're ready.

00:28:31:00

Marian Logan:

The night Dr. King was shot, [car horn] I spoke with President Johnson on the phone and he, of course, was very distressed, very. I could hear the fear in his voice, you know. He spoke always very quietly, [car horn] but he was terribly upset and he just didn't know what to do. He was asking for help. And Ramsey Clark, who was on the phone also and we talked a while and, and my husband got on. We decided that the best thing was for the president to meet with the remaining leaders, the Black leaders.

00:29:09:00

Interviewer:

OK, we got it after that. That's fine.

Marian Logan:

OK.

Interviewer:

OK, cut. Cut.

Camera Crew Member #2:

That was very—

[cut]

00:29:14:00

Camera Crew Member #1:

Mark it.

[slate]

00:29:15:00

Interviewer:

So, in Washington, D.C., and it's the night that Bobby Kennedy's body comes back by train to Washington.

Marian Logan:

Oh, yes.

Interviewer:

Can you tell me about what happened that night?

00:29:23:00

Marian Logan:

Well, I was in Resurrection City. I was liaison between Resurrection City and the Justice Department. And I'd come back to the hotel when I got a call that the, actually, I was watching the funeral train, if you remember it went on all day down from New York, [background yelling] and they called me and told me, they used to call me Madame Board, some of the members of the movement, you know. And I got in a taxi and went out to Resurrection City, and when I got there they had Resurrection City ringed with armed guards, and the members of Resurrection City were all behind 'em, they were tryin' to keep them back. And I said to one of the guards, I said, Why are you doing this? They said, Well, you know, the funeral cortege is coming along and we don't want...

[rollout on camera]

[wild sound]

Marian Logan:

They said, Well, you know, the funeral cortege is coming along and we don't want—

00:30:19:00

Interviewer:

Did we just run out?

Camera Crew Member #1:

Yes.

Camera Crew Member #2:

OK. OK, that's roll out on—

Interviewer:

That's all right.

Marian Logan:

OK.

Camera Crew Member #2:

—forty, seven, six.

Marian Logan:

Well, I'll never forget that scene. That's really painted in my memory.

Camera Crew Member #1:

That other magazine's is in—

[cut]

[camera roll #4077]

[sound roll #432]

[wild sound]

Interviewer:

I wanna finish the, the RFK scene, the Bobby Kennedy scene first.

Marian Logan:

Oh, yes.

[picture resumes]

Interviewer:

Thanks.

Camera Crew Member #2:

New camera roll forty, seventy-seven. Timecode oh, four, fourteen. New sound roll four—

Interviewer:

[unintelligible]

Camera Crew Member #2:

—three, two. Logan.

00:30:44:00

Camera Crew Member #1:

Mark it.

[slate]

00:30:46:00

Interviewer:

OK, it's the night that Bobby Kennedy's body is brought back to Washington, D.C.

Marian Logan:

Mm.

Interviewer:

Where did you go? And tell us what you saw.

00:30:54:00

Marian Logan:

I went to Resurrection City and the, the whole section had been ringed off, or runged off, I don't know how you say. Anyway, there were all these guards in khaki, whichever they were, whether it was state or, they weren't local police. And I asked them, I said, What are you doing? And they said, Well, Bobby Kennedy's funeral cortege is coming by. I said, But these people aren't gonna disrupt anything. They're still grieving over Martin, and Bobby dying is

just an extension of Martin's death, and they just want to be part of paying tribute to him. I said, Please open up and let them come out. So, finally...at the same time it started raining which I never will forget it, it was the strangest, eeriest thing. ***It started to rain. Very light rainfall.*** And they finally opened up and the people from Resurrection City started marching out. Now, if you can see this, it was Resurrection City here, there was a reflecting pool, and at the end there was the Lincoln Memorial with the spotlight on Lincoln's head. ***At the foot of the Lincoln Memorial there was a group of school children, because they had on mid-blouses and skirts, I remember, and they were singing "Battle Hymn of Republic". Oh, boy.*** So, the people from Resurrection City started marching up on either side of the reflecting pools, pool. And I walked along, and I got about the middle of the pool ***and I looked and I saw the hearse coming along, right in front at the foot of the Lincoln Memorial.*** In the hearse was the driver, Ethel Kennedy and Teddy Kennedy. And it stopped right there and Teddy, I could see, opened the door of the hearse and leaned on it, and Ethel leaned across him, and they were looking at the children who were singing the battle hymn. ***And people from Resurrection City kept moving and they started singing the battle hymn.*** At the same moment almost, ***I looked up and saw the pin-spot on Lincoln's head and above that was the moon. And it stopped raining.*** Oh, it was like a montage on stage, I'll never forget it. And, the Resurrection City people were marching and singing, and Teddy shut the door of the hearse and started to pull away. When it stopped, and I think it was Ethel or someone raised their hand and they looked over and saw the Resurrection people coming, and they were singing, and they just walked up and got in behind the hearse, in front of all the other cars, ***and they marched over the bridge into Arlington. It was one of the most dramatic, [background yelling] profoundly moving moments I've ever known in my life. [dog barks] I'll never forget it.***

00:34:24:00

Interviewer:

Cut.

[cut]

00:34:26:00

Camera Crew Member #1:

Mark it.

[slate]

00:34:29:00

Interviewer:

I want you to go back...Dr. King has been assassinated and SCLC's in a state of whatever. Why the decision to go on with Resurrection City?

00:34:42:00

Marian Logan:

I think that was something we all felt had to be done. It was kind of a con-continuity step to carry out what we knew was Martin's wish. Whether we agree, or at least I, whether I agreed with it or not, I felt very strongly that we should do this for Martin and because, mind you, everybody was just so distraught then. *We didn't know where we were goin', everything was in a state of flux. And [car horn] our leader was gone and we felt a great void and a terrible, sick emptiness. And I think we all felt we just had to do something that we hoped would be meaningful,* and we also hoped that other people would understand. It was our way of venting the terrible horror, you know. And, I guess, maybe hoping that, after that had all washed, we'd be able to pick up and do something meaningful and become an effective organization again.

00:35:50:00

Interviewer:

What was the planning like, though, for Resurrection City?

00:35:54:00

Marian Logan:

[laughs] I don't know there was too much planning. I think people just came. Like Andy used to say, When you have a movement, you, you just keep on goin'. If we stop because people say we shouldn't have a movement, we would never have one. And we always counted, as Martin used to say when we didn't know where to go or what to do, he said, Don't worry. He said, Bull Connor or somebody will come up and do something stupid and that'll help us, and it always did, you know, project us into another phase of the movement.

00:36:28:00

Interviewer:

You talked about all the people who came to Washington, D.C., who sacrificed a lot to come.

Marian Logan:

Yes.

Interviewer:

When Resurrection City came to its end, did you feel, did the leadership feel responsible?
Did you feel sad for what was happening?

00:36:44:00

Marian Logan:

I did, I can't speak for the leadership at the time 'cause I think everything was in such disarray. But, yes, I felt a great sense of responsibility. I don't know that I knew what I could do about it, but I felt terribly, terribly sad because I felt we had all these people for whom we had really become responsible. Many of whom, they told me, had left their homes. They'd say, Miss Logan, we just came, we just left everything, just came. I wonder where a lot of 'em were going back to, you know, what they were going back to, and how they were going back. I don't know, it all just kind of disintegrated when they finally closed down Resurrection City. And I have to tell you, I don't know what happened to many of those people.

00:37:38:00

Interviewer:

You know, this is 1968. Dr. King—

Camera Crew Member #1:

Cut for a second.

[cut]

[wild sound]

Interviewer:

—point in time, it's, it's, it's been a long, hard year at that point.

Marian Logan:

Mm.

Interviewer:

Dr. King—

[Crosstalk]

Camera Crew Member #2:

Rolling and speed.

Interviewer:

—you know, people have really been in a state of flux, a state of shock. Whenever you guys are ready. Bobby Kennedy has died.

[picture resumes]

00:38:03:00

Camera Crew Member #1:

Mark it.

[slate]

00:38:04:00

Interviewer:

Resurrection City has come to an unhappy end. Thinking the way you felt then, did the movement go into hiding? Did the movement die?

00:38:15:00

Marian Logan:

I tell you, I was just so desolated at that point. I'm speaking about me personally. I came home, I, I know my husband told me I, I guess, I remember having lost twenty-five pounds over a couple of months. My way of grieving was not always to cry, I was always too busy. But I don't think, I think the movement had lost its heart and its conscience. I think that we tried to keep up what Martin had laid out as his great plan, but I don't think we had anybody who could control it enough to make it work and inspire enough people to continue. [car passes] I think that was the tragic thing. The tragic thing, I think, all the leaders, none of them, Martin, Whitney, Roy, ever groomed anybody else to take their place. That may be arrogance, ego, I don't know how to explain it. But sitting here now, I think about that and I do know that none of 'em did that. They all thought they were gonna live forever, [laughs] you know. Although Martin always said he would die young.

00:39:39:00

Interviewer:

Cut for a second.

[cut]

00:39:41:00

Camera Crew Member #1:

Mark it.

[slate]

00:39:44:00

Interviewer:

So you were saying in, in the, in the aftermath of all that, what about the country?

00:39:50:00

Marian Logan:

Well, I think everybody was so devastated, on the liberal side. I mean, we, we lost Martin, and then Bobby was a very important factor in our thinking and in the liberal Democratic Party, naturally, you know. We all felt he was really our prince who was going to become president and be greater than any that had ever happened, 'cause we'd watched Bobby really learn a lot through, I was in Mississippi with Bobby and saw him sitting with a little Black boy on his lap and the tears streaming down his cheeks. He said, I cannot believe this is happening in America. He couldn't believe it. I said, Bobby, go see the Indians, go to California and see Cesar Chavez and all of 'em. He learned so much, you know, then. He would've been magnificent as a president. But then, of course, he got it. Then, you could almost feel the country took [truck passes] a wide right turn. And I don't think its recovered since. Oh, look at us now. I don't think its recovered.

00:40:59:00

Interviewer:

Let's stop down.

Camera Crew Member #1:

Cut.

[cut]

00:41:01:00

Camera Crew Member #1:

Mark it.

[slate]

00:41:03:00

Interviewer:

OK, you're back in that evening.

Marian Logan:

Mm-hmm.

Interviewer:

How did your husband finally end that evening, and what did Dr. King say?

00:41:10:00

Marian Logan:

Well, by that time Arthur was really getting very annoyed. We, we had been up all night, and Martin just wouldn't let up. So, Arthur finally said, Martin, leave her alone. Can't you see she's exhausted? She's not gonna change her mind. So, Martin said, Well, darlin', like he often said, I'll just have to pray for you. Just have to pray for you so you come around. Martin could put such a hurtin' on you, you know, make you feel so guilty. And I would get so angry. Sometimes I would give in, but just a little bit 'cause I was not about to let him think [laughs] he had won completely, you know. But I loved just tinkering with his brilliance and testing his mind, you know. And challenging him—

[rollout on camera]

[wild sound]

Marian Logan:

—in things.

00:42:05:00

Interviewer:

That's it.

Camera Crew Member #3:

I think that's it.

Interviewer:

Thank you very much.

Camera Crew Member #2:

OK.

Interviewer:

That was—

[cut]

[end of interview]

00:42:11:00

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