

Stokely Carmichael to Kwame Ture (1941-1998): “Infinitely political, infinitely human”

Ed. Note: Following is a conversation between Prof. Jules Chametzky of the Review and Ekwueme Michael Thelwell which took place last August at Thelwell's residence in Pelham. The subject is the forthcoming autobiography of the late Kwame Ture aka Stokely Carmichael who died in November of 1998.

EMT: Come in, Brother. Welcome. Sit down. Let me turn this stuff off and give you my full attention.

MR: Was that . . . What was that I was hearing as I came in? Sounded like a conversation as if there were someone with you in the study. It was a tape, right? For a moment I thought I was hearing things.

EMT: You were. But you weren't hallucinating. The magic of modern electronics: we bring good things to life. It was our brother's voice. I was reviewing some tapes we'd made. A little eerie, no?

MR: Only for an instant. So . . . how's the work going?

EMT: Very well, I think. But excruciating slow . . . except, you know, it's slow because the material the brother (peace be unto him) left us is so rich. But what exactly is your pleasure today?

MR: Well . . . as you know this year marks the fortieth anniversary of the *Review* and we were thinking . . . Do you realize that it was exactly thirty-three years ago that the *Review* published the first definitive statement by Stokely Carmichael on Black Power? You and he worked together on that piece, so we thought . . .

EMT: Oh, wow. Of course. *Towards Black Liberation*. You know that essay has had quite a career. Distressingly prophetic it proved too. It's actually been thirty years, huh?

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Talk about making a man feel like a historic relic.

MR: So . . . since you are again working together, this time on his autobiography, the *Review* felt that the pages of our anniversary issue would be an appropriate place to talk about this latest project . . . it would be, so to say, symmetrical?

EMT: Seems appropriate. In fact it's an excellent idea. So . . . where do you want to start?

MR: Perhaps by describing the project . . . its genesis . . . your precise role, the nature of your involvement and the collaboration, the man himself and so forth. We sense that there is some considerable interest in the man and the period. And, of course, the project itself.

EMT: Whoa Nellie. That covers a lot of territory, Bro. Clearly you don't heed the caution of the old blues line, "Don't start me talking . . . Ah tell you evrahtang I knows." First two things: one, I cannot remember ever being involved in any project that commands such widespread good will. And second, I can't remember any project that—thus far anyway—has been attended by such amazing good fortune. Now, I am not a superstitious man, but looking at some of the fortunate accidents—the sheer dumb luck we've encountered—I could easily be persuaded that the ancestors have their hands firmly around this effort.

MR: Well, that's provocative enough. What do you mean by the "goodwill"?

EMT: Just that there seems to be a great many people who (a) feel that it is important that Kwame's memoirs get published and (b) are willing to be as helpful as possible to that end. You could start with my department here at the University. Or actually with that excellent lady, President Ruth Simmons of Smith College without whose kindness we may never have gotten together. Kwame's project came up just as we were launching the most important academic initiative we've ever undertaken—a ground-breaking Ph.D. program in Black Studies. My col-

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leagues, indeed, I wouldn't have dared approached at such a time on a matter less critical. But my chairman [Professor Esther Alexander Terry] and all my colleagues have been solidly supportive and that has been a real source of strength to me. Give praise and thanks, luckily it's a great department.

And, there have been a variety of other folks, activists, scholars, from all around the country and the world too, old movement friends, total strangers, even some media people—particularly a really committed sister, Mama Nzinga—who have all volunteered assistance and good wishes.

What's been particularly good is the movement folk. Because of their response I feel as though I'm back in the old SNCC days. Working within the group. Old comrades have really gathered round the project: Ivanhoe Donaldson, Judy Richardson, Julian Bond, Cleve Sellers, Courtland Cox, Ed Brown, Karen Edmonds. Ol' Julius Lester gave me some photos from Cuba! It's regenerated a sense of family that has been an unexpected benefaction. And there's been folks from the All-African People's Party who have been just stalwart: Lamine Jongha, Mawina Kouyate, Ture's long-time walking partner Bob Brown and the grizzled old warrior, David Brothers. It really all started with a sister called Masani Bediako of the Pan-African Center in Chicago.

MR: Interesting. How do you account for all this?

EMT: Well, the movement motivation is clear. The others, hard to say. A number of ways, I think. Some clearly has to do with our brother's spirit. His personality, the charisma, warmth and magnetism. I'm rediscovering every day the extent to which he was genuinely and widely loved and admired. That's a large part of it, a personal attachment which carries over to the project.

However one thing in particular is becoming much clearer. I once heard Cleve Sellers tell him, "Man, you are not an event, you are a process." That expresses the extent to which for activists and idealistic blacks of our generation, the trajectory of Kwame Ture's public life embodies the evolution of a political and cultural vision, so to say

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the evolution of consciousness of an entire embattled generation. So I get a real sense that people feel that in telling his story Kwame will once more be representing them honestly. That the Brother's story, properly told, places our collective experience on the record bold and clear, in a way which for reasons we understand only too well, has not yet happened. Except perhaps to a certain extent with Malcolm's autobiography.

The other part is more objective. People's perception of the importance of his life story and public career to the historical record. The conviction that the absence [of his personal account] leaves a yawning lacuna in the record. And I must say, on the evidence of the material I'm working with, they are absolutely right. But whatever the cause, a lot of folk really seem to want that story to be published and available. They seem deeply invested in the project's completion and success. So they call up, or send me stuff. They volunteer materials—letters, tapes, pictures, FBI files—or personal assistance. That's what I meant by the good will. Actually it's both inspiring and a trifle intimidating at the same time.

MR: Why intimidating?

EMT: Oh, because this level of interest and investment implies at least some great expectations. (In some cases, of course, it's possible to detect personal agendas at work.) But in the main it's merely high expectation. And who the hell is to say exactly what these expectations might be and the ways in which they may well be disappointed. Expectations and disappointment . . . one inevitably implies the other.

MR: And this is the possibility that concerns you. You used the word intimidating. That's a strong word.

EMT: Yeah, well. It isn't really [intimidating] only because of the nature of the project. It isn't a biography which I'm writing. That would be entirely the creation of my own judgements, interpretation, insight, language and discretion. Which would be a lot easier in some ways. But this

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is Kwame's account of his life and political career. It's his story. The material of his political life, *in his own terms*. Presented by his own account, wishes, language and instruction. And he's entitled to place his vision of the meaning of his life on record. All political leaders are. After which, as happened to Malcolm, Frederick Douglass, Paul Robeson, Dubois, the professional revisers can come pick and scratch around. But our brother (peace be to his name) and indeed posterity, is entitled to his account. And that is where my responsibility lies, to Kwame's vision and intention. That's what I must keep faith with, not the expectations of varied constituencies, no matter how well-disposed or well-intentioned. And, of course, there will be those who are neither disinterested nor well-disposed, the brother did have enemies and detractors, but that will sort itself out. But overall, I don't anticipate much honest disappointment.

MR: Oh? And why is that? I thought you were making a convincing case for the high expectation—and all that it implies. The downside. But you conclude by saying you don't anticipate . . . disappointment.

EMT: I know, I know. Gimme a break. It's early in the morning. Sounds like a contradiction but it isn't really. It's true I keep getting the impression that a lot of folk seem to have an intellectual and political investment in the story. Because they have an investment in the period and the politics and perhaps even in the man. And he is a very complex figure. All these folks cherish their own subjective version of a very complex figure. O.K.? So these expectations being subjective have implications for disagreement or disappointment. But the reason I really don't expect either in a serious way is precisely because Kwame's is so remarkable a life. It's interesting in its own terms. And often it goes against the media image or the received wisdom. So even if the persona or the book isn't exactly what one expects, it shouldn't be disappointing. The story is just too powerful. The material is often quite amazing and intrinsically interesting.

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Another reason is the brother's honesty. This is not campaign biography. Kwame (peace be unto him) is not running for Congress. And even if he were, his instinct would still be towards honesty. As it always has been. And that quality, I think, comes out clearly. I mean, whenever I'd say something like, "So tell me. What exactly is it you want this book to do? I need to be sure I understand what you want it to do," he'd look at me like I was crazy, simple-minded or both.

"To tell the truth. That's all, Thelwell. It must tell the truth." Of course Brother Ture, as he reveals himself, is a very complex figure, containing many truths. But he is also a very . . . engaging figure and despite a natural and innate modesty, even a heroic one. But, I think, he is always interesting and funny and he is a very, very smart guy. And the story he tells is important in filling a certain void. Which does not mean that one will necessarily agree with all his political conclusions.

MR: Do you? Always agree with him? Or is that not an appropriate question?

EMT: It is and it isn't. Hey, what do I know from appropriate? I'll give you an answer now and whether or not it survives into the published text will tell us whether it was appropriate or not. Now you made me forget the question . . .

MR: Do you both always agree . . .

EMT: With all his conclusions? Of course not. But that is not my job to agree or disagree with his history. I found his memory uncommonly accurate for events and people. That's my job, to make sure the history is accurate, names, places, dates. But it's his book. His reflection on his life and its meaning. Whether or not I agree with his judgments is irrelevant.

But . . . having said that let me hasten to add, I have not encountered any fundamental, principled disagreement between us in political or moral terms. That would have been tough for me. But our essential vision of the

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politics and the history is very close. Where there are differences, they are of degree, proportion, emphasis and importance . . . stuff like that. And on those I had a duty to advise and suggest and that was largely on literary questions. But as I said he the King, I merely the Griot. The King's wishes must prevail.

MR: But, as you said, now the Griot can no longer consult the King. How does that affect the work?

EMT: In a number of ways. But mainly it slows it down considerably. See, as long as he was around to be consulted I could move quickly to take advantage of that presence. I could afford to take chances in assembling the text, confident that he was there to correct or refocus anything that failed to accurately reflect his meaning or intention. And he did that for more than half the book. So that part is cool. With the last third which will not have the benefit of his final reading I've got to stay rigidly on the literal letter of his accounts and adhere very strictly to his very specific, very clear instructions. Also he doesn't have an opportunity to rethink or revise what he initially put on tape so far as the stories or the instructions went. Some of which he carefully wrote down. Some of which he put in his tapes. Some of which [instruction] emerged in his editing of the chapters we completed before he danced and went to join the ancestors. But no question . . . it's a multi-faceted story and he a very complex guy even though on fundamental questions he was very clear and consistent. So I'm fully confident that I really do have the story he wanted told . . . and that I know . . . clearly . . . how he wanted the rest to be presented.

MR: Not to quibble, but how possible is that? And is the story you have complete? Are you confident it is?

EMT: Yo, that's no quibble. Those are real questions which will and should arise. But I'm confident on both counts . . . Of course, no one can say whether, had he lived, he would have changed his mind on some small thing or other.

MR: Both counts?

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EMT: Yeah. Is it, or will it be, complete? Absolutely, complete so far as the important questions about the man, and his public life and the history. Complete to my satisfaction. Complete, but of course not exhaustive. No autobiography can be *exhaustive* of any life no matter how simple and uneventful. And our brother's life was neither simple nor uneventful.

On the second question: my being confident of completing his vision accurately. Yes. Because, you know, I'm not exactly working in a vacuum here. And because he was such an incredibly stubborn and determined man. He had already been diagnosed with terminal cancer before we even started to discuss this. So there were real questions. Was this feasible? Would we have time? Could we find a publisher? We could start, but could we finish? Would the brother remain strong enough to put enough on tape so it could be completed? That's why I said one could understandably get the impression that the ancestors were constantly running interference, 'cause everything fell into place remarkably. Everything. The answer to all those questions, improbably enough, turned out to be yes. And largely because he willed it so. Once committed to the project, he did an enormous amount of work in a relatively, as such things go, short time and under extremely difficult circumstances. Look, I mean. The cancer was diagnosed in January 1996. It was very advanced in the bone, in the chest. The prognosis was six to eight months. Yo, the brother hung in 'til November, 1998. He hung in and *worked*. I mean on planes, on ships, at nights wracked with pain in his bed, always with that little tape recorder. "No, Thelwell, I can't go to sleep. I gotta finish this work." This book will exist only because the brother willed it to. All he really left for me to do was finish it up . . . and I promised him I would.

MR: You seem to constantly minimize your role. I've heard you say you're "not writing Kwame's book." How exactly would you describe what you do?

EMT: Glad you asked. It's not false modesty on my part. Hey, in my time, I been called many things but ain't nobody

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ever called me modest, Republican, politically correct, nor a child o' God. But I'm really not *writing* this book. If I were, it'd have been finished a year ago. I'm checking, organizing, structuring and occasionally filling in Kwame's material. I am responsible for the organizing of the chapters, which stories go where. The logic and continuity of the narrative.

The image that occurs to me is from music about which I know next to nothing. But I think I'm doing something very akin to what an arranger must do to a score composed by someone else. Kwame is the composer, I the arranger.

MR: You keep referring to the good offices of the ancestors. Surely you don't plan to just leave that dangling in the wind out there?

EMT: My good brother. Do I detect a note of rationalist—or should that be secular humanist—skepticism? What's the story, you done grown away from your raising? No longer respect the existence of dybbuks, spirits, and angels?

MR: No, actually, I was wondering whether you had recently amended *your* position on magic realism. It was rather disdainful as I seem to recall.

EMT: (long, slow, rueful grin) All right, score one for your side. Sir, our references to the ancestors were not evocations of magical realist mumbo jumbo. It was mostly a figure of speech, a metaphor if you will. You ask, "For what?" For the uncanny way in which, at critical moments, things seemed to come together in ways favorable to the undertaking. Very improbably but always favorable ways. Almost the reverse of . . . what's that law? Murphy's? you know, whatever can go wrong, will. Well, I'm not accustomed to seeing it reversed . . . yet in any number of instances that seemed to happen . . . suggestive even to a rationalist of some invisible and benign agency at work. Hence the ancestors.

MR: I concede that you sound serious. Can we hear an example of the work of this invisible hand then?

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EMT: One? Try five or six. Be most happy to 'blige, Cap'n. Begin with how the project got started. Quite unplanned, totally accidental. I'm sure you remember that tribute our department held for Ture in April of '97?

MR: Of course. We were all there. An extraordinary evening, memorable. There was Bill Strickland, Judy Richardson, you, Carmichael. It was memorable . . .

EMT: Well, that's when it all began. Afterwards, it was real late, me and the brother were sitting around . . . in fact, at this very table . . . talking idly, you know, before going to bed. Then I decided to tease him.

"You lucky. I was gonna embarrass you during the introduction."

"Yeah, how? Ain't you learned yet, Thelwell? You can't embarrass me."

"Yeah? I was gonna tell the students about the last time you got your butt thrown in jail calling yourself overthrowing that military regime. But I had sympathy. Didn't want to bust your evening. . . . By the way, I never did hear, how the hell did you manage to get out of that one?"

Upon which he proceeds to tell me the most amazing story of the detention and why they finally had to release him. It was the kind of story one could not have imagined beforehand, but would immediately believe on hearing. It was ironic, funny, frightening, grim with a logic unique to Africa.

"Goddamn," I said. "That's one hell of a story. How many people know it?"

"Oh, a few people in the party."

"That's what I mean. You gotta write this stuff down. The ideology, everyone knows or can find. Scientific socialism, Pan-Africanism, they can read in a library. But your *life* is more important and interesting because only you really know it. You gotta write it down, man."

That's exactly how this started, by complete accident. Had I not started to tease him about the "coup" and his arrest, the conversation and what followed wouldn't have happened.

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MR: Do you have any idea why he hadn't before, written his memoirs, I mean.

EMT: I can't be sure. Probably more than one reason. Partly his restless activist inclination, never sitting still long enough. Partly a weird modesty. Of course once we began to discuss it you know I said, "It's important, you gotta do it." And the very original, "You owe it to history." He was clearly not impressed. "Thelwell, you have no idea how many people—all over the world—have told me that 'You owe it to history' business. Hey, I'm just an ordinary revolutionary. Why's my life got to be more important than all the other anonymous revolutionaries out there struggling?"

MR: Extraordinary. And he really believed that, you think?

EMT: Hey, he said it often. And one thing no one can doubt is that his identification with the masses was genuine and complete. Later we were working one day and he was telling me this amazing story of his visit to war-time Hanoi. Stuff I hadn't known. So I say, "Damn, man, that's some incredible (expletive). How come we didn't think to do this before?"

He said, "Everything in its time, my brother. Everything in its time. It just wasn't time before." And one day earlier, when it had begun to seem, against the odds, that this thing might really happen, I gushed, "Hey, this is really getting exciting. You getting excited yet, Bro?"

"Thelwell," he explained patiently. "My people excite me. Politics excite me. Revolution excites me. *Books* excite you. You go on and get excited for us both." But, you know, for a man professing not to be excited, he sure did an awesome lot of work. Give praise and thanks.

MR: Fill me in with the time line. When exactly was this conversation taking place?

EMT: O.K. The idea first came up between us the night after the UMass tribute. That was April 14 [1997]. We argued

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about it at this table that night. Then in the morning as I put him on the train I told him that if he decided to do it, I'd be glad to give him any help he needed. And we parted. He had been away from home all spring and was really itching to get back to Conakry the next week. The day before he left [for Africa] he called and told me to check out possibilities in his absence. Then in June he came back and we discussed it some more. He gives me a letter authorizing me to put a deal together if I can and is off again.

To the end he refused "to let any cancer hold my work hostage" so he kept going all summer: to Cuba, Honduras, Africa, returning to New York for treatment every three weeks. It was during that summer [of '97] that I first began to detect the "hands of the ancestors" at work. And that's when he invited me to get excited for us both. See?

MR: It's a lot clearer. Now we're back to the departed kinsman, are we? How so?

EMT: Well, consider. It's late June and July and August. Summer in New York. Nobody is in their offices much. Kwame is only around for a few days at three week intervals so meetings can only take place within a narrow window. My own agent had recently parted company with me. So we've got to secure a new agent, get a proposal and find a publisher. Gimme a break. Or figure the odds. Besides you know better than most the direction of the country and the forces which govern and debase public discourse including commercial publishing in the country today. And here we are, talking about the memoirs of an unreconstructed, unapologetic, Marxist, Pan-Africanist, black nationalist revolutionary? Yet and still . . . it all came together. By July we had an agent, and by early September a publisher.

MR: That does seem fortuitous and very fast, but . . .

EMT: But what, my brother?

MR: As MacBeth said, "Supernatural aid withal," huh?

EMT: Figure of speech, my man. Figure of speech. You got your

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mind stayed on supernatural, huh? Besides in traditional Africa the ancestors aren't considered "supernatural," they are very much part of the natural world. Invisible presences yes, except in their influences and deeds, but quite natural.

But cut to the chase. If it were only a question of the pace of things, I'd still consider it mildly miraculous. But it isn't just the timing, it's also qualitative. The agent (whom the ancestors raised up?) is none other than Frances Goldin, the gallant lady who has been so ably and effectively representing Mumia abu Jamal, the brother who is currently being railroaded on death row in Pennsylvania as we speak. Then the book is placed with a house [Scribner]—which must be the last one left in corporate publishing—where everyone we've dealt with is not only highly competent professionally but are also uncommonly intelligent and decent people. They have not only been supportive but they seem to really understand things. (Before Kwame returned to Africa for the last time, both the publisher [Susan Moldow] and the editor [Nan Graham] left what they were doing in the middle of the work week and came down to D.C. for the farewell tribute.) So . . . you care to give me the odds on all this?

MR: All right. O.K. You win. You're making a believer of me.

EMT: Praise his holy name, brother. Glad to hear it. But now you done got me started. And, anyway, you still look very capable of backsliding. So I'm going to preach to you some more. I'm a preach to you like the ass preach to Baalam.

MR: Hallelujah!

EMT: Actually, there really is one uncanny incident I want to tell you about. Remember I had to go to Egypt last January? Now, you know that's a place I've always really wanted to visit. In fact, having been there I'm convinced Black people in the diaspora should establish a Haj of their own: as a matter of cultural health and insight, every family of African descent should, as soon as they can afford it, make an obligatory pilgrimage to Upper Egypt,

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the Land of the Nubians. I'd looked forward. Long standing commitment and all that . . . but the timing was terrible. It's January. The work is going well. I have to teach again in February. I just didn't want to go then. Did not want to go. The day I'm supposed to leave, mammoth blizzard. The grandfather of all snow storms. The drive to the airport—usually an hour—takes three and a half. I almost turned back several times. The airport's gotta be shut down, right? All praises and thanks to the ancestors. Except—the flight is not cancelled and the plane goes. We get to New York four hours late. Good. I'm greatly relieved. I've made a good faith effort. Either the Cairo flight is long gone or it ain't going. I can go home in good conscience. So what happens? The Egyptian plane is sitting there on the snow and takes off five hours late with yours truly on board. Gimme odds, bro. But what's the point? Well, one of the things Kwame was clearest about was, "Thelwell, I don't want this to be just an American book. I also want it to be Pan-African, read by Africans everywhere."

In Cairo, thanks to an old friend of ours [Radwa Ashour], I get a letter just as I'm leaving. It is from the Egyptian Supreme Council on Culture. Every year they translate and publish a very few books they consider of significant interest to Arab readers. They publish them in quality editions which are subsidized so as to be affordable to the average reader, Kwame's "our people." The letter was an offer to include Kwame's memoirs. I only wish I could have brought that letter back to him, placed it in his hands and watched his face as he read it. But he had left us two months earlier. I know he'd have been very pleased. He liked Cairo and had passed through on his way to South Africa the previous year.

MR: That's a good story to end on. Except, perhaps, what can you tell us about the actual scope, the contents of the book? Or is that premature?

EMT: I don't know about premature, try impossible, unless you want to spend another two hours sitting here. Let me put it this way . . . As I work with the material, I find myself

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giving thanks daily that the brother decided to do it. I think I knew the period, the man and the career better than most. And I do. But much of this material surprises and amazes me. And no question, had he not decided to do it when he did, much of this would have been irretrievably lost with his death. Then, too, there is the brother's personality. At the UMass tribute, Judy Richardson said something important, true and quite contrary to the media image. "*What Stokely showed us [in SNCC] is that you could be infinitely political and at the same time be infinitely human, infinitely caring, infinitely funny and charming.*"

In this regard, he was very like Malcolm. And, you know, that never really changed. That persona is revealed clearly in the quality of the narrative. Not from anything he says about himself (he is very resistant to self-puffery), but from its sensibility and abiding concerns.

Now, I'm probably not objective in what I'm about to say, but since Jimmy [Baldwin] died in '86 I've been teaching his course on the Civil Rights Movement. Consequently, I've become very familiar with the literature. It is, as you know, quite extensive and some of it is excellent. There are a great many memoirs by a lot of leaders which are not so excellent. Among these, Kwame's is quite unlike any other, except perhaps in some ways, Malcolm's. For one thing, there is just so much history. Man, just the characters—Malcolm X, Mrs. Hamer, Hartman Turnbow, Dr. King, Fidel Castro, Bob Moses, Mrs. Du Bois, Kwame Nkrumah, Ahmad Sekou Toure, Miriam Makeba, David Sebako, Jimmy Baldwin, Bayard Rustin, Bantu Steve Biko, H. Rap Brown, Harry Belafonte, Huey Newton, to name a few readily recognizable.

Hey, I'm fully cognizant how risky it is to try to predict anything so chancy and arbitrary as a book's career. But I certainly know of nothing, *nothing* quite like this one in the literature. It may at first be controversial because it engages prevailing myths and significantly revises the conventional wisdoms but when that dies down as it will, I think, this book will find a very pronounced place—alongside Equiano, Douglass, Du Bois, Booker T., and Malcolm—in the international tradition of black autobiography.

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MR: Really? Now that's a bold statement.

EMT: Hey, Bro . . . we calls 'em as we sees 'em. 'Course, I could be wrong. But that's how I feel. And also really very fortunate to have even a small role in its development. You know, when I first told my brother Richard about it . . . the first thing he said was, "Great . . . is anybody going to pay you this time?" And before I could say anything he said, "Don't answer that. Hell, Negro, *you* should be paying money to work on that book." Which is of course true but I wouldn't want that put about too much.

MR: Well, that seemed to go awfully quickly. Can you think of anything we haven't covered? Something else you might want to put on the record?

EMT: Ummm . . . Yes! Yes, you know, there is . . . In all of this there really is one other thing, above all else, for which I am particularly and deeply grateful. An opportunity, I wouldn't otherwise have had, to spend some real time with an old friend . . . in Harlem and Florida . . . during his illness. Something we hadn't really done in recent years. And, odd as this must sound, it was . . . actually . . . inspiring. That's the only word that comes to me.

Naturally, I immediately rediscovered those qualities about him which we had all so admired, indeed loved, back in the day. But, of course, he had changed over the years too. We all have. But, the thing is . . . the person he had become was in some ways even more impressive. Added to the old courage, clarity and principle was a new *gravitas*, a quality of grace . . . one lady mentioned an "aura" which was quite true. The people—all kinds and numbers of folk—who kept constantly streaming in to pay their respects, all seemed to leave visibly lighter than they had come in . . . strengthened and somehow encouraged. I know that I certainly felt that way every time we parted. That's what I shall always remember . . . and treasure most.

MR: Well, thank you kindly, friend. This should be very interesting and informative.

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EMT: Thank you. That actually was fun. I had no idea you were so skillful an interviewer, Sir.

MR: And I, no idea *you* were so voluble a talker, Sir.