

2 o'clock

"Thank you very much, tear down this wall"! President Reagan demands on the video.

Levittown, Pennsylvania - Transcript

Interviewer: "Levittown is a census designated place and planned community. Consider Levittown, Delaware Valley, USA. One of the world's largest single unit housing developments, located in the fast growing industrial area between Philadelphia and New York City. This is no mere collection of homes, but a carefully planned community complete with modern schools and churches chosen by the residences but conforming architecturally with other Levittown buildings".

"This is Levittown, Pennsylvania, August 1957, Levittown, Pennsylvania attracted international attention when violence erupted as William Meyers Jr. and his family moved into the three bedroom house at Daffodil and Deep Green Lane".

Interviewer: "Do you think a negro family moving here will affect the community as a whole"?

Neighbor: "Definitely."

Interviewer: "In what way"?

Neighbor: "I think that well, the property values will immediately go way down if they are allowed to move in here in any number".

Interviewer: "Aside from the effect on property values, do you have anything against the Meyers"?"

Neighbor: "He's got three children, and evidently he feels they will be accepted socially and I don't feel that they ever will be. But the whole trouble with this integration business is that in the end it probably will end up with mixing socially, and you will have, well, I think their aim is mixed marriages and becoming equal with the whites".

Interviewer: "Do you intend to move"?"

Neighbor: "At the time, no. It's a pretty impossible situation, we have our home here and if the colored move in and run real estate values down there are a lot of us, the G.I. s particularly, who are going to be more or less stuck with their homes".

Interviewer: "Are you aware that a negro family has moved into Levittown"?"

Neighbor: "Yes, I heard about it".

Interviewer: "What was your reaction"?"

Neighbor: "Dynamite, dynamite"!

Interviewer: "What have you done about it"?"

Neighbor: "Well, I guess we just discussed it".

Interviewer: "How do you feel about the Meyers moving in"?"

Neighbor: "Oh, I'm very definitely against it".

Interviewer: "Before coming to Levittown, did you have any contact with negroes"?

Neighbor: "Well, I came from a small town where we didn't have any colored people, and at that time I had no feelings either way. But while we were waiting for our house to be built, we lived in Trenton for nine months, and it was my first contact with them, both in work and going through car sections to work and I was very happy that I was moving into an all white community".

Interviewer: "Have you ever discussed the Meyers at home with your children"?

Neighbor: "Never before in our house was anything mentioned pro or con about colored people, because I feel that they have to be in contact with them to a certain extent and why should their minds be prejudiced. But since they have moved here they have heard remarks and well I'm afraid that they are going to dislike the idea".

Neighbor: "There were colored children in the school my son attended last year for the first time and he often came home and said there had been trouble between them during the day at school. I don't think you can take a middle of a stand here, either you're for them or against them".

Neighbor: "I've taken a stand for peace and nonviolence and no intimidation of the Meyers. I don't have any prejudice against the colored, it's just that I wouldn't like to have one as a neighbor. We would act to them as we would act to any other neighbors. We would be friendly towards them and speak to them and visit with them".

Neighbor: "I wouldn't care to live in the community where the negroes would be living. I think that the majority of people here will accept things and believe as I believe that a good neighbor is not one whose color is white or black, just as a good citizen and such. Mr. Meyers and all the negroes have a right. I'm no better than them, they're as good as I am, but the only reason that Mr. Meyers came into Levittown is to show people that he could get here. I just feel that they're within their legal rights to move in here and if they move in and are law abiding citizens, I have no complaints".

Neighbor: "If more colored are allowed to move in, Levittown is going to go downhill. I don't think that the Meyers have anything to do with the property decreasing or increasing. I think it's purely a white problem, not a negro problem".

Interviewer: "What has been the effect of the Meyers coming here"?

Neighbor: "Well, it's created a great deal of tension, not among the neighbors because we all feel the same, but it's naturally made everyone tense in their home. I mean this is affecting our homes and it's bound to create tension. It's a subject that's talked about all the time. But, there are others who are for the Meyers"?

Interviewer: "Yes, I've heard about them. For what reason, do you think, do they support the Meyers"?

Neighbor: "Frankly, I don't know what reasons they can have for it. If they are homeowners in Levittown I don't see what reasons they can have for it".

Interviewer: "Do you think the Meyers will be able to live here comfortably"?

Neighbor: "Comfortably, no".

Interviewer: "What course of action are you going to follow"?

Neighbor: "I'll do what I can to help, to get them out legally and peacefully, and as far as accepting them socially, if that's what you mean, I could never do that. Some of the people are definitely against integration and they have told my children that they have to marry niggers, and my child doesn't even know what a nigger is, but from the sound, it had scared them and they have come just crying, "Mommy do I have to marry nigras"?, and my answer is, "You can marry whomever you wish". The words will never hurt me"!

A Raisin in the Sun -Transcript

Community Manager: "How do you do Miss"?

Daughter: "How do you do? I'm looking for.."

Daughter: "Yes? What do you want"?

Manager: "Mrs. Lina Youngwood".

Daughter:"Oh, that's my mother. Please excuse me just one second, won't you come in, please"?

Manager: "Thank you"!

Daughter: "My mother isn't here just now, is it on business"?

Manager: "Yes, well, the sort".

Daughter: "Won't you have a seat"?

Manager: "Thank you".

Son: "I'm Mrs.' Youngwood's son, I take care of most her business".

Manager: "Oh, well my name is Mark Linder and I...".

Son: " What can we do for you Mr. Linder"?

Manager: "Well, I'm a representative Clyburn Park Improvement Association".

Son: "Bags on the floor there, we're all cluttered unpacking and all that jazz, you know what I mean". **Manager:** "Oh, well thank you, as I was saying I'm from the Clyburn Park Improvement Association and we had it brought to our attention at the last meeting that you people, or at least your mother, has bought a piece of residential property at 4930 Clyburn Street".

Son: "That's right, would you care for something to drink"?

Manager: "Oh no, please".

Son: "Yeah, get him a beer".

Manager: "Thank you, but no thank you".

Son: "Some coffee then"?

Manager: "No thank you, nothing at all. Well, I don't know how much you folks know about our organization. Well, it's one of those community organizations, set up to look after, oh, you

know, things like block upkeep and special projects and then we also have what we call our new neighbors orientation committee".

Son: "Yes, and what do they do"?

Manager: "Well, it's a sort of welcoming committee I guess. Well, generally the committee go around and see the new people who move into the neighborhood and sort of give them the lowdown on the way we do things out in Clyburn Park. But, then we have the category of what the association calls, special community problems".

Son: "Yes, and what are some of those"?

Daughter: "Will you be quiet and let the gentleman talk"?

Manager: "Well, I'm sure that you people must be aware of some of the incidents that have happened in various parts of the city when colored people have moved into certain areas. Well, because we have what I think is going to be a unique type of an organization in American community life, not only do we deplore that kind of thing, but we're trying to do something about it! Now we feel that most of the trouble in this world, when you come right down to it, most of the trouble exists because people don't just sit down and talk to each other".

Son: "Oh, you can say that again, mister. That we don't try hard enough in this world, understand the other fella's problem, the other guys point of view".

Manager: "Well, you see our community is made up of people who've worked hard as the dickens for years to build up that little community. Now we're not rich or fancy people. I mean we're just hard working, honest people who don't really have much, but those little homes and

a dream of the kind of community that we want to raise our children in. Well, I don't say that we're perfect, and there's a lot wrong in some of the things we want, but you've got to admit that a man, right or wrong, has the right to want the neighborhood he lives in in a certain kind of way. I guess, well, at the moment the overwhelming majority of people out there feel that , well that people get along better, take more of a common interest of the life of the community, when they share a common background. Now wait, now wait, believe me I want you to believe me when I tell you that, that race prejudice simply doesn't enter in to it. It's a matter of the people of Clyburn Park believing now, not rightly or wrongly, that for the happiness of all concerned, that our negro families are happier when they live in their own communities".

Son: "This, friends, is the welcoming committee? So uh, this is what you came all the way across town to tell us, huh"?

Manager: "Well now, we've been having a fine conversation, I hope you'll hear me all the way through. Well, you see in the face of all the things I've said, we're prepared to make your family a very generous offer! Thirty pieces and not a coin less. No, our association is prepared to go through the collective efforts of our people to buy the house from you at a financial gain to your family"!

Son: "Lord have mercy, ain't this the living gall. Alright, are you through"?

Manager: "I want to give you the exact terms of the financial arrangements".

Son: "I don't want no exact terms of no financial arrangements. You got anything else to say about how people should sit down and talk these things over"?

Manager: "Well, I guess you don't feel like..."

Son: " You know how I feel ! Now get out of here".

Manager: "Well now, I don't understand why you people are reacting this way. I mean what do you think you're going to gain by moving into a neighborhood where you just aren't wanted and where some... now look, people get awful worked up when their whole way of life and everything they've ever worked for is threatened"!

Son: "Get out"!

Manager: " I'm sorry it went like this".

Son: "Just leave"!

Manager: "You just can't force people to change their hearts".

Here is an opportunity for you to read some CC&Rs from another subdivision, you will notice that in reality they are all the same. They're all there to keep the homeowner in line and ultimately to create fees and charges against you. The problem is, you don't know what those fees and charges are.

Now you're looking at a lawsuit concerning elder abuse. I recommend that those of you who have friends or relatives who are elderly take the opportunity to read this lawsuit, this is potential action against the Home Owner's Association . Finally, you're looking at another elder

abuse issue problem, take a look at these documents, become familiar with them, educate yourself about what you can do and how it can be done.

(Dr. Solomon is not an attorney nor does he give legal advice.)