

Transcript for Chief Justice Ernest A. Finney and Mrs. Frances Finney

The Finney's are sitting side by side in two brown leather chairs.

Chief Justice Ernest A. Finney: The civil rights movement in my view was a spontaneous movement that sort of fed on its strength. The more people heard about it, saw it, the more they recognized the injustice on African American systems. And they were momentous. Sometimes we had mass meetings all over the place.

There is one incident I will never forget. I received a telephone call that says they had a demonstration in Orangeburg, but they didn't have sufficient bond money to get the kids out. And a man, a black man, who had never been involved in the civil rights movement, heard about it and he came to me and said look, "What do you need?"

And I said, "We need \$10,000 for all these people down in Orangeburg."

And he didn't exchange words with me. He said, "Do you need cash or do you want an insurance bond."

Often during the demonstrations the kids would see this man and they would ridicule him, like kids would do, what are you doing, why don't you help. But he put his money where his mouth was and that was the kind of spirit that we had during that period of time.

Mrs. Frances Finney: All they need to do is look back at what their parents did. You know we didn't get to where we are by just going on the flowery beds of ease. None of us. We had to work hard to get where we are. And we got to always know that we can never let up. We must never let up.

But we can't do it with just one over there and one over there. We got together as a team.

Chief Justice Ernest A. Finney: One of the things we missed in the 40s and 50s was we did not do enough to preserve the good things that we had. Particularly business ventures. In those days, we had restaurants, a few hotels, ...



Mrs. Frances Finney: shopping ...

Chief Justice Ernest A. Finney: ... and we lost much of that because for some reason we were not able to come together and form the kinds of partnerships and ventures where we could pool our assets and build upon.

But basically some how or another with all that spirit and momentum we had, we never transcended it from the physical activist game to the economic game.

We left too many people behind. You know there are a few black citizens who are successful today...

My wife was just talking about young people. The opportunities are there on paper. But in so many instances they don't take advantage of it. And once they get above a certain economic level they tend to forget the bridge that brought them across.

We have not been able to convey the story of our history to the young people so they understand and appreciate. They thing the things is what they are doing, doing their thing. At the same time they don't know what it took to get us to where we are to provide them with these opportunities.

End of Video.