

So what I would now like to do with this situation paper (see [Situation Paper](#)) is to create a situation which might be closer to your experience because you are obviously not plantation workers in the Delta of Mississippi. We are going to use this experience to get you into the circumstances of relative powerlessness and then see how you think your way out of it, and what kind of leadership you think ought to be developed to get your way out of it. We are using this situation as a parallel to what people found when they went visiting homes of the African American people when they went visiting the people of the Delta of Mississippi and what were called the Black Belt counties which stretched from southeast Georgia through Alabama and Mississippi over into the Delta of Arkansas. That was the focus of these full time SNCC field secretaries' work. Any questions?

I'm going to try to do two things at once which is a little hard to do. So I'm going to use my hat for playing two different roles. When I put my hat on, I'm going to be me. When my hat is off, I'm going to be the President of Mary McCleod College with whom you are going to meeting , let's say, 15 minutes. I'm going to give you 15 minutes to figure out what you want to do. Actually, I got one thing I want to do before that. What would be the likely first response of a typical President of a college like this to a request from students to meet with him?

Five: From the President? A statement of what this is going to _____?

Mike: yeah, you are on the track I am interested in

One: are you asking what the steps, A-Z, that-

Mike: there's a call from some student and the President's secretary answers it, they want to have a meeting with the President. What might be the likely response?

One: I don't have time, I'll set you up with an appointment with blah blah

Mike: exactly. And what does that say to those seeking the meeting?

Two: they are being skirted

Mike: and what does it say about THEM, though, that's in fact the case

Three: they're not important

Mike: they're not important! Exactly, "who are you?!"

One: the students don't really have any decision making—

Mike: —the students are powerless—

One: —involved in it. It's all upper academia

Mike: The trustees, the donors, this is a private liberal arts college,. The people who give the money, the administration, the academic senate and the serfs are the students.

Two: I understand what you are saying. What would prompt that student to call it would be something posted up on the board, some sort of thing that said, school policy is such and such, not an ethical decision . .

Mike what they did is in the paper – they said no more Howard Zinn’s *People’s History of the United States*. Are you all familiar with that book? Either a text or an alternative reading in many, many history or social studies classes now. So. Overcoming the refusal to meet might be the first challenge that students would face. But I’m assuming for the sake of this situation that we are creating that you figured out how to do that or maybe the President is a little more open to student participation so he said he would meet so you didn’t have this initial difficulty to overcome. So I’m going to give you 15 minutes when I come back, I’m going to be the president and we are going to do some role playing

[Mike leaves]

Student: One of the things he was talking about was legitimising us as a way of getting more power or connections. What do people think about that . . let’s brainstorm...

Student Five: I think there’s hierarch in the school. The students of course have no power, but the faculty has only a little but might be worth getting them behind us. . . yes, it’s all relative

Three: Lets’ go above the President

Six: there’s the media too. Maybe that’s what you could do after the meeting or have that in your mind, but not as a first response

Student: we don’t want to seem disrespectful

Student twelve: An article in the school paper so you’ve got student support, that way it’s more than just a handful of students, you got the whole student body behind you or a majority of the student body behind you. So when you go before the President, you can say

Student: “we represent _____”

Twelve: exactly

Three: Do we have a petition already signed to give him?

Two: All of us aren’t’ going to be at the table to ask as many questions as we would like to to the president. So therefore my suggestion might be to pick 3 or 4 people that would be able to – that cuts down on the confusion, on unnecessary cross talk. The thing that I would like to go with. This person is sort of like an important person so its best to go in there, lay down the cards—

Student: --because of the time—

Two:--because of the time factor and the fact is, at least in business, and this is our business, we want to get straight to the point. We want to first tell him what's the matter, get to the point, give them a result. If we just go in there and we simply go in there with our mouths open and nothing in our hands then its going to sound as if we are talking out of the side of our neck.

Student: so to be clear and have some specific points

Four: I agree. We have to anticipate that the first thing he is going to say to us is, "well, this isn't my decision. People above told me to do this." That's what they always say. So we have to be prepared to say, "okay, we know you're not going to do anything about it, so we're going to tell you what we're going to do about it." We aren't going to get him to change his mind without putting pressure. People don't respond to nothing but pressure. He got pressure from above, so we need to tell him what kind of pressure he's going to get from below. Otherwise he's not going to change nothing. So we are going to tell him hard that we're going to bring him hard in the student newspaper. We're going to organize people, get students to boycott classes.

Three: because he's not going to do anything, be prepared to request a meeting with the Board, or whomever it was who told him no—

Student: — ask him if he can't , who can? who is open to discussing possible change- names of people even. Is that what you're saying?

Three: well yeah, if it's the board that's above him, we need a meeting of the board.

Two: The other thing I was thinking about is demeanor. Demeanor is kind of important. If we go in angry ants, then we're not going to accomplish anything, however, at what point, we'll have to decide at what point are we getting nowhere and when that happens, what to do. Because if we can't get those two points pretty clear before we go in there, then we're probably wasting each other's time. Because we need to have at least a two part plan. We need to be open to listening as well as speaking what's' on our minds.

Five: One thing that could be used is the caucus? So that the spokespersons maybe presented what they represent, and they got a response, and they are not sure what their next steps are going to be, they excuse themselves briefly and then come back as a united front.

Seven: oh yeah, so including the whole group at every pivotal point

Four: I just noticed [reading from the situation paper] "The President had suggested to the trustees that the Zinn book remain an optional reading" so is that what we want? Back on the optional reading list? Or do we want it back in the class? If we just want it on the optional list, this guy is on our side and we have to recruit him, ask him to help us. We don't want to make you look bad

in our protest. How can we make you look good? Or if we're against him, and we want it back in the class, we got to say, "you thought it should be on the list."

One: The options list is like—

Eight: —it's part of the class, an opportunity for them to participate, give their feed back!

Two: The option list, even though its not an impacting place, where we want it, we can stall say, "I appreciate it being on the option list, but how can we get it beyond this point?"

Eight: so our goal is to have it—

Two: —in the classroom—

Eight: —as our text.

Two: as the text. So what we're saying here is that we are acknowledging the fact that they didn't throw it out entirely and that we are grateful for the fat that it is on an active list

[multiple voices]

Two: cause option list means either/or. It's in an active place, it's just a questionable place.

Kathy: I think he's back

Two: the thing is to acknowledge the fact that it's there and be thankful for it then we can do step one. It's a matter of not stepping on his toes in the process.

Seven: are you saying to ask him to include it on the optional list?

Two: No, what I'm saying is to thank him that it's on the optional list

Seven: oh, I didn't know that it was though.

Two: it is on the option list, isn't it?

Seven: no, it got taken off

Five: I think this can also be used, he'll say " well, we'll put it back on the optional list, and we say, "well, that's very appreciated but it's not enough." One thing that needs to be said, is that" you are always telling us we don't know our history.

Three: We have to understand what their objections are and then be ready to counter them. The reasons why those objections are unreasonable and then if there's something that can be brought out, like it's unconstitutional of them to refuse to teach it.

Five: it's a private school

One: it doesn't matter

Three: it could still be unconstitutional

One: in a private school, I really have no idea,. I assume there are still legal limitations and things.

Seven: We want to find out what their objections are specifically as specifically as possible

Three if you don't know what they are you can't be prepared to—

One: and if he can't tell us, tell us who can

Two: How many meetings are we willing to take? This is another issue. I realize that we can't jump from frying pan to the fire, but I do realize we can do baby steps. Say if something was completely off the list and made it to the option list, that's one step. Once you got that then you can go someplace else. So it's a matter of being diplomatic about it, and what I mean about diplomatic is acknowledging each stage, and kinda not talk beyond that stage when you are trying to go for it. Because what happens is it is easy to get lost you can just say, "I'm all confused" but you home him in on one particular item, there's no way they can shuck and jive, because we're talking about the same thing, we're all on the same level, and we're not going above that level until we solve what the problem is.

Seven: so in terms of this, wouldn't you say, should we say right from the start our goal is to have the text reinstated as an official textbook, and we're committed to doing that—

Two: in baby steps, in steps

Four: the students read the book as part of the class last year and they ought to do it the same this year. As far as I'm concerned, nothing less than that

Two: oh, okay, that's my fault

Four: at the very least we expect it to be on the list . but we are

Seven: that's our goal and that's what we're going, to achieving that goal no matter how many meetings we have to take

Four: if we take a little today, we're going to have to take a little next year, and a little bit more the year after that, so there's no books anymore except for the ones they want us to read

Two: okay, I understand

Five: I wouldn't say we are committed to as many meetings as it takes. I think that has to be looked at after each meeting. What do we have coming up next and just see how it goes.

Seven: we don't have to say that, we can just let him know that this is our goal period and internally that's something we could discuss.

Three: if we have not just what our goal is, but why we have this goal, what is behind our drive to have this. If we think its important we have to say why its important and why they're wrong.

Eight: should we start outlining this now?

Kathy: Do you want to write on an easer pad?

Eight: we need on speaker for all of us?

Two: I think there should be 3, the reason why is because there are different styles.

Three: and somebody has to play, if someone steps into it, the other guy has to save him

[laughter]

Two: yes, that's good, that's where its at. If we have 3 good speakers who can speak, what happens is a tag game. He never gets to be let up. And that's kind of important, because you have him, not necessarily on the edge, but in a place where he has to think a little bit more about what he is saying because he's got three people who'll, he's got all the rest of the people on the side. He's going to be in a position where he has no chance but to listen and to give us some intelligent answers because we're not stupid. And that's the bottom line, the bottom line is that there's a difference between not being afraid and not being able to do something. We're actually doing something when we participate in such a conference

Mike: Hello everybody, I didn't expect to see so many of you this morning. A beautiful morning. I would think that you students would be at the park or the beach drinking beer. I understand that you want some discussion about the decision on the Zinn book. I really don't want to have a meeting with a big group like this. I think if 2 or 3 of you want to come into my office, we could do that.

Five: We need about five more minutes before we can respond to that

Mike: you need time to respond to that?

Two: Weld like to choose our spokesperson, is that okay?

Mike: Oh, okay.

Four: And or diced whether or not that's how we want to do it. We were under the understanding that you were meeting with the whole group. We—

Mike: I thought it was a group, 2 or 3 people. Well, I do have another meeting at 12:30 but I can give you another 5 minutes if you want it.

One: Actually, it will only take 30 seconds

Five: Thank you!

[Mike leaves]

Two: at this point we need to nominate someone

One I'm kinda opposed to only 4 people being there. I think everyone can be there but 4 people can speak. Is that okay? I think everyone should be there. I don't know if that's possible.

Two: I'm not going to do it because I want to watch

Many voices: Three, Four, Seven?

Three: Do we want to do good cop, bad cop thing?

Four: I'm that!!! I always lose it and start yelling.

Seven: I'm sort of a natural counter to that

Two: so who are the nominees?

Three: Four is number one, then Seven and I am back up

Five: are we agreed that we just have the 3 people in there?

Four: we would like to have the whole group hear it, but only speaking with the 3 of us.

[multiple voices in agreement]

Eight: let's put our ideas in an outline, so you can present your stance before he can start, giving questions about, so I jotted down a few ideas: The Zinn book offers more than what we know, even though its' kind of an against the grain book, it allows us to be critical about another person's point of view. Maybe mention, that, yeah we understand why you don't want it in the class, but look at what it can offer us, a more critical understanding of what has occurred .

Five: It's against the grain. We think its good, we want to use it.

Seven: It's important

Five: there's no "buts"

Seven: I would suggest that it supports the critical thinking curriculums.

Five: can we also acknowledge that you appreciate his suggestion, his suggestion to the trustees. We want to give him some credit.

Eight: besides taking into consideration about the board. The trustees also have to take into consideration the students that the board is making decisions for. It's not just the board you have to listen to, but you have to listen to students too, that are taking in what your supposed to be telling them. The students point of view is really important. We're not just signing this check. [laughter]

Three: let's pretend we have a petition.

[Mike returns]

Mike: okay, it's been 5 minutes

Four: Okay we have chosen 3 spokespersons, but we would like the whole group to hear yor responses.

Mike: well, they can report what we talk about. I'd like to have an informal conversation which is difficult to have with 15 people

Four: only 3 of us will be communicating with you.

Mike: okay

[Mike takes his hat off – that is, he is now changing roles back to the teacher for analysis of what just happened]

Mike: now, why might I want only 3 of you in the room

Three: divide and conquer

Four: when I come back and report what you said, they are all hating on me and not you.

Mike: very good. Say more

Four: as soon as you get me in there, you're going to try to get me to your side, to where you're coming from. The group has to be in my position too.

Mike: you are right on target, who else wants to elaborate?

Nine: just few out of the many, you can use the few for divide and conquer kind of strategy.

Basically, the people who meet with you become your spokespersons.

Mike: Well, that's the assumption, that they sell out in a way. That's one of the possibilities and certainly in the history of all social movements that has happened. Clearly. But let's be a little more generous to your spokespeople at least for the first meeting.

Ten: It's easier to convince people of things if you have no one backing you. If you say I only want to meet with a couple of you in my office and its close quarters, and everyone isn't behind you, its less support and its easier to sway people's minds that way. As you said, divide and conquer.

Mike: exactly! Anyone else?

Eleven: It's easier to convince 2-3 people than 200 people or 15 people.

Mike: okay.

Two: If 15 people are saying the same thing, there may be some truth to it, or maybe not

Mike: well, there's more likely to be truth to it, right? Why else is that important?

Five: When this group goes to the larger student body, it's the legitimisation of what they're doing

Mike: exactly

Three: If you only have 3 people, you only have 3 perspectives on what happened instead of 15 witnesses. Other people will see different things happening. As a group you have an opportunity, more brains are better

Mike: that was good.

Four: For just me to go into a room with you. I don't feel this group is really fresh and we don't have a real narrow agenda yet, like we just had a bunch of ideas. So, I would feel more comfortable if we had a specific agenda.

Mike: There's a certain unreality in the role play. In a usual situation, you would have had a couple of hours to prepare for this meeting.

One: really we have no choice. The president says, I can only see 4, I can't see 30. and we can't have a meeting unless there are only four of you. So, there you are.

Mike: I was going to come to exactly that. So what would you do then?

One: well, you'd send in the students and you see if you can come to an agreement. You should send in the 4 and see what agreement comes out. What happens.

Mike: who should decide that?

One: Well, that's difficult. If no one decides no one will go in and things will escalate. But if the 4 go in and things go well, then. . .

Mike: you're going farther than I want to go yet. Who should decide the question, though?

Five: whether only 3 go in? well, the group that's present.

Mike: everyone agree with that?

Five: you couldn't make it a bigger group

Mike right. The group that's present. Now, had you had this time in advance that you normally would have, one of the things you would have anticipated is the possibility of him saying, I'll only meet with one, two or three, and you would've figure out what's our stance to that. Why might there be in a typical group particularly in a community, maybe less so on a campus, but in a community, why might this be a pretty divisive question? In the group itself, whether the whole group should go or just 3?

Two: because even though there are good intentions there are 3 reps that we have put on a pedestal, in a way, a short one. We don't see it yet. But if you insisted on meeting with just those 3, then we're going to feel left behind.

Mike: the other 13 you mean? Okay. That's one feeling that's going to exist. What's another feeling? Why might the President have some support in the group for his request that there only be 3?

One: it may be how you feel you want to be represented. You feel that 3 people, makes for a meeting that's more calm, more organized, more businesslike. What message do we want to make? Do we want to look really organized? Look really big> what kind of impression do we want to make on him? Is that what you are asking?

Mike: Exactly. Everybody understand? In our understanding of how things like this ought to take place, we have the idea that it's through representatives that we ought properly to speak, and that all of us shouldn't participate. You all see that?

Four: I think by that you can spark an internal debate where some of us say, oh it should be the whole group, while others, oh no, we should have spokesmen and that just enters a new debate into our group that we didn't necessarily want to waste our energies on.

Mike: Exactly.

Five: Even if you don't want to waste your energy on it, I think it would result in a more solid group with more support for the people we select.

Four: maybe that's a necessary part of the group, that we have to go through that process.

Mike: Maybe the group can't reach agreement, so all sorts of accommodations are made by people like me, who's spent their lives as organizers. One of them is, I'll tell you a funny little story. I was organizing tenants right here in the Mission district. We were dealing with a pretty fancy landlord who had an office, he managed other properties. We anticipated that the tenants might be divided over this question. So what we did was brought a microphone and a speaker with a long cord. We said, alright, you only want to meet with three of us then we'd like to put the microphone on the table and have a speaker outside so all the tenants can hear. And every once in a while we are going to have to meet with them.

Five: We have talked about calling a caucus during the meeting.

Mike So some of you have some experience! A caucus, or time out. Interestingly, many times this idea of a time out is controversial among people, who for the first time, are participating in some meeting with authority. And the reason for that is that authority in part means the ability to define the rules. The rules are what keep people powerless. Rules as they are, are designed by people who have power to keep people powerless. So the rules I am working with when I am the President, the first one was to ignore you. That would have, for many at least, would have confirmed your sense of powerlessness. So it is a common experience in communities, especially low income communities, but among any constituency of people whose experience is of powerlessness. An incident arises, people get angry over the incident, they demand a meeting with authority, someone in authority. The person in authority refuses to meet with them and the group kind of fizzles out. Because authority has said, who are you to think you can meet with me int his way? And there's enough of the sense, well, authority, they must be right confirms their feeling of powerlessness, they fold their tent and disappear. That happens very frequently.

So when people were working in the South, they had to deal with the experience that people would have in going to the court hours in groups. The registrar would take people one at a time to register. All this is a process designed to increase people's sense of powerlessness. And so it was tremendously important for these SNCC field secretaries to try to hold these little fragile groups of people, with whom they had worked, sometimes for months, to get a first small group to go down to the county courthouse to try to register to vote. Which is in effect the meeting with the President of the college.

Okay, you have passed the first hurdle. You've kept your group together. You have spokespeople. Now I'm the President.

Four: I'd like to start off by congratulating you on standing up to the trustees with trying to keep the Zinn book at least on the optional list. But, of course, our group, we'd like to see the text back as part of the main course that's what we're here to discuss. We understand the pressure you have from the trustees. So, basically, we just wanted to let you know we are beginning to organize against this. We understand that you don't have the power nor the desire to change that right now, but we do. This is a petition [hands him a petition]. This is just the first of many petitions that we will be gathering.

Mike: So, are we done with our meeting? You are informing me what you are going to do.

Liz: We also want to find out what the specific objections to the book are.

Mike: Well, I'm not a historian, but evidently several of the trustees had done some research, or others had done research which they gave to these trustees. They cited errors both of omission and well mostly errors of omission in the Zinn book.

Three: If there are errors of omission, I mean, these are the things we would like to be able to know exactly what the objections are, see the research, and the cited errors of omissions because if that is your reasoning for excluding the Zinn book then all the other textbooks, by their omissions should be tossed out the door.

Mike: anyone else have anything to say?

Kin: I'm requesting that you actually give us, in writing, the trustees' objections, the research behind the objections with the cited omissions and we can evaluate for ourselves whether those objections are legitimate or not.

Mike: Well, as I said, I'm not a historian and really what you should do to find out more about that is, I think, meet with the Chair of the history department--

Three: --no, no—

Mike: --who would be able to—I can't answer specific questions about American history. I'm a biologist.

Liz: you can't

Mike: by background

Four: Can we set up a meeting with the trustees and find out from the trustees

Mike: Well, I think they, like me, are not historians

Four: Well its their job

Liz: What's the name of—

Four: They are playing historians

Mike: Well, they were briefed by members of the American Historical Association

Three: We would like their names

Mike: and faculty, well, yeah, that's what the chairman of the history department can give you, could easily give that to you.

Liz: So the people you met with to tell them that you think it should be on the optional list. That happened, right?

Mike: yes

Liz: Who was that who you told, specifically?

Mike: oh, trustees Rogers, Meadows and Andrews. They were the 3 trustees who called this to my attention. And to whom I said more or less what you said. They felt that these were more grievous than the typical omissions that one inevitably finds in any work of history.

Four: All of those omissions are probably to be found in the standard text that the student reads, along with the Zinn book. We will find that out. We have any number of actions, that's where I'm coming from. I don't expect nothing. All he gives us is the run around. That's his job.

Mike: I didn't come here to be attacked [he gets up]

Four: We didn't come here to have our intelligence insulted

Mike: the meeting is over.

Four: I'll be back and I'm bringing a lot of people.

----- Break -----

Mike: okay, what happened here?

Two: The first thing I discovered, when you had said in your first statement, it was negative thing. And I looked at her and said this is going to go down hill from here. When I said diplomatic, I meant we have to be careful about the avenues which we go down.

Three: we need to be talking so he can hear us.

Mike: yeah, you agree that this was kind of offensive, right?

Three: When I said we should trash all the textbooks, that wasn't so good

Mike: Well, I let that one pass [laughter]

Two: The thing is, when I think that I'm right, I get self righteous [murmurs of agreement] We can't let self-righteousness get into a diplomatic conversation because self-righteousness is the thing that blind sides us..

One: Yeah, I think you're right.

Mike: Anyone else? [speaks directly to Four] you have do defenders? I succeed in isolating the most militant leader!! That was too easy!

Four: I' m going to break off from this group anyway and start a more radical group [laughter]

Five: An important thing we need to learn is how to say what's really important in a way so that the people who are, who we think are on the other side can hear us.

Liz: and to establish some commonalities.

Five: Which was why we wanted to say thank you for being on the side of having the book at least on the optional list, because that's a commonality. It's not quite as much as we want but it's recognizing that you think there's some value in the book.

John: The three had to decide among themselves who was going to be tithe initial spokesperson to present the case, and perhaps putting the best foot forwards. And then have the hammer when we need it [laughter]. And then the third person looking for weaknesses in the argument. If there are three trustees out of the nine. They are a minority. Why are they having a veto on the majority. There' all sorts of points here that could have been addressed in a fairly straight forward way

Liz: one thing we could've done too, is maybe paused when we felt like, without as much preparation time as we would have had normally, to have a list of what we would say and his possible reactions and our reactions to each of those. But without that preparation, what we could have done is paused and let's go back to the group, and say, let's regroup instead of just responding to him.

Three: yeah, I could see it spiralling.

Mike: I want to now move on a bit, and I want to summarize . This is all you need to know about political theory in 5 minutes. One idea that is in this conversation about why he's not responding positively is that he doesn't know. So a common theory about why systems don't respond to the needs of excluded, oppressed, discriminated against whatever people is the system doesn't know. So if you think the system doesn't know, what ought to be your strategy?

Three: educate it

Mike: educate it, inform it, something like that.

Three: I was already thinking, okay, we're done here. Let's go back and regroup. And first thing I was going to do was to go back to the chairperson of the history department and get those other 3 people in the same room. Well, get the information first. We need to be educated too. Find

out what their objections are and come up with counter arguments, come up with a mini summit or something and talk about the importance of history and why we think –

Mike We need to move on a little bit. I want to present 3 theories of why systems don't respond and then discuss them a bit and then move on. One theory is that the system doesn't know. And if that's the case, the strategy is to educate it or inform it. A second major theory, when you listen to the news, put this filter in your mind about it doesn't know. The second one is, is that it is incompetent. The system is incompetent to solve these problems and so if your theory is that the system is incompetent, what is your strategy then for change?

One: reform the system.

Mike: Well, that's a pretty radical one.

One: If the system is incompetent, give it options to perform we need it to until we can reform it..

Mike, yeah, there are specific ideas associated with dealing with incompetence. When individuals are thought to be incompetent and you want to be generous about their motives. It's not that they're being lazy or shiftless or whatever. What do you usually think of doing to deal with incompetence?

Two: Talk to them about it.

Mike: Well, yeah, and you discover

Christina: giving them resources?

Mike: yeah, giving them resources in order that you might what? There's a specific word.

Students: training? Education?

Mike: Well, education has to do with people not having the information or ideas, but not having skills, usually an idea is that you train or retrain people. When organizations are thought to be incompetent, for structural or historic or whatever reasons, a typical idea is that you reorganize them. Only the last resort is to replace them, or to create an alternative. In most people's minds. When you listen to politicians campaigning about, for example, the department of corrections in California, where some of you may have noticed recently judge Henderson is going to appoint a receiver to take over the health treatment of prisoners in California's prisons. He's come to the conclusion that the system is so structurally incompetent that it cannot reform itself. And prisoners are actually dying as a result. He's going to replace the present administrator of the health care of state prisons with a receiver who's going to be responsible for running the health care.

Five: Let's back up and not have such an extreme example. If the group is having problems functioning and therefore having trouble getting results, wouldn't you have a consultant work with them?

Mike: yeah, this replacing I'm talking about is the last options. If the theory is incompetence then the last step, typically, is to replace. So retraining of individuals, reorganization of systems and only as a last resort, replacing.

Three: How receptive would your organization be to us saying, you need to reorganize?

Mike: That's a good lead into my third point! The last reason we might have for why the system is not solving the problems is that it has different interests and if we think of interests rather than lack of information or knowledge or lack of competence, then we have all together different ideas of what is going on here. What when we think about the major institutions of American society, where decisions are made about the lives of everybody, we can think of legislative bodies what's the interests of legislators? The bottom line interests of legislators

Four: Money

Mike: Well so yeah, votes

Student: Makes it easy

Mike: They need the money to buy the media time to get the votes. The bottom line interest for people that are elected is votes. What's the bottom line interest for uh, uh corporations, business privately owned business? profits. It's the bottom line profit. What's the bottom line for bureaucracies?

Student: To confuse you

Mike: Well that's a tactic

Student: Self Preservation

Mike: Stability, appropriations so that the budget, they want stability, calm. What about non-profit organizations? I am talking about big ones, like universities

Student: Results to get more grants

Mike: Getting funding and keeping whoever it is that are their clients or their beneficiaries, keeping them coming in their doors. So if we want to, if we are dealing with interests, the system has different interests. What would be our major strategies? Let me say it this way, if we are dealing with different interests then we either have to change their interests or we have to change the system. Are you with me about that?

Student: One tactic that we use in our business a lot, which is archaeology is that we sell poison a solution that when a situation occurs again where that same solution might be applied we sort of

just hold it out there as a pointed stick, sighting that this could happen again and that is what we frequently do with city governments anyway and it seems to work because they have had to spend so much time in the middle dealing with a project this way that if they don't follow these other rules and other steps during the process, it could turn out to be bad.

Student: it's risk management

Mike: This is what typically administrators of either public or non-profit bureaucracies are worried about, the minimization of risk because stability of their environment is what they most want, cause if they maintain stability in their environment appropriations or donations or contributions are likely to continue, employees are likely to not make major demands upon them, and the beneficiaries, of whatever it is that they offer whether it is fixing potholes or teaching students it won't rock the boat. So in this case implicit in Dan's approach to me is that I have different interests. I am somehow captive of these three conservative trustees. Implicit in your approach to me and a couple of others, that if we say it right we'll convince them, now were I doing training in a community organization we would have done this and after about ten minutes I would have put on my hat and I would have said it is a half hour later, and we would have continued doing the same thing, then I would put on my hat and it's a half hour later because I wanted to train people in an organized situation, particularly the leaders to understand that it is not simply a matter of saying it alright, presenting it nicely communicating with me, what's at stake here is that I have different interests. Some people never get that. Truly, they never get that. They think that if only we had said it right we would have got what we wanted, so you can't convince everybody, so Dan why is it important that you do so quickly what you did?

Dan: Cause I just cut it off completely and made you my enemy.

Mike: Why is that important, why does that matter? I am in fact, if we'd had the time to play this out you would have discovered that I'm part of the Bush right and these three trustees to my right are from the Coors brewing company or something like that. Even knowing that, why is it important that you not? Anybody know?

Student: Because he is admitting that you guys have different interests and he is not working with you to show that. Well by him, it is just showing that you guys are on different levels he is not working with you..

Mike: Why?

Student: together to show to find a different way to where your interests have been. So your opposite but maybe there is a middle ground where we can meet, you know?

Mike: Yeah, you are on the right track, why does that matter though to the outcome of this , so you are getting the zim book back in

Student: Because nothing can happen if you don't meet somewhere and he doesn't acknowledge your interest and you don't acknowledge his interest.

Mike: I am not going to agree. I don't care how well you guys say it, how politely, reasonably, backed up by, see, Kim was right on the right track see all history is myths. Cause when you look at all of us do it it's not evil all of us when we look at reality out there, assuming that there is one, we see it through the prism of our own experience, ideology, belief systems, whatever and then we select what we want to describe. So everybody does it, Zim happen to be the first major historian that looked at it from the bottom up rather than from what elites do uh but others have done that as well. So I am not going to agree cause this conservative crowd to whom I am beholdng does not want the Zim book in, the Zim book is stirring up to much on a campus students are demanding and supporting my janitors that want to unionize there supporting this campaign in the town for a living wage ordinance and all kind of things like that. But even with all that why is what he did premature?

Student: Because it bad talk communication

Mike: Why does that matter?

Student: Because in, well I can say

Mike: What if I had done this, and said ok it is a half hour later and you all were still trying to convince me huh, what has to happen in the cautious, what has to happen in the caucious?

Student: Well see I wasn't aware, I was getting ready to call a time out, but I wasn't sure if I was the one, if I had that right, and so, that is the thing that I was confused about that is when I turned and looked at her and I went like this and no one saw me. So

Mike: You are focusing on a very specific thing but I am asking a broader question and you are all dancing around it, maybe you get it.

Student: I don't know but the concern that I had was that first of all if you were not the person that could make these decisions and it was in fact the trustees uh it would be imperative to get to the trustees but before you get there it seems to me that we ought to find out the thinking of these trustees, maybe one of the three things that you mentioned, incompetent, uneducated, I just don't know if they have an agenda.

Mike: Ok, lets assume now that these three and I, and the chairman of the department, of the history department have different interests. Let's assume that because I want to deal with this one point. If I have different, let me ask this in a different way. If I have different interests and what you

have to do is change my interests what is it, what is the interest that I need to preserve from what I said before.

Student: Your relationship with the trustees

Mike: Well yeah, but more from the point of view of the institution, what do I want to avoid?

Student: Conflict or collapse of the university

Mike: Why do I want to avoid that?

Student: Aggression, just because

Mike: Conflict, why do I want to avoid that?

Student: well once you, once you make a statement and a declaration it's like something is really going to happen, so if I mean you are the president you would make sure that things are running together working together and you are representing everyone, so

Mike: Well yeah

Student: So

Mike: I don't wanna ... Rock the boat

Students: Yeah

Mike: He's going to rock the boat but in order for him to rock the boat what does he have to have?

Student: Power, .. of?

Student: Of the student body

Mike: Ah! And in order to get the power of the student body what does he have to have in this group?

Student: Consensus

Mike: Consensus, why?

Student: Otherwise the student body is going to say, well what's with him

Mike: Exactly

Student: I am trying to represent anybody,

Mike: Well in fact

Student: Because he went independently, see your interests were what is being stated more your interests than our interests, or the student bodies interest

Student: Well he was also coming from a really strong place, a really good place he was like we need to do this, we are going to get what we want, this is what we are prepared to do.

Mike; See I think that you are on an earlier point still and I want to get past that point. Let's assume that we had met for an hour and you had said it for forty-five minuets you all have said it as well as it could be said and I am still not budging.

Student: Well that is why he is coming from a really good place because he already knows...

Mike: But why does he have to wait?

Students: ohhhhh

Mike: Why can't he immediately

Student: He needs others on his side

Mike/Students: ahhhh

Student: No I think he waits because you actually may give him information, I think he waits

Student: There is that too, the possibility

Student: Yeah that's it because I already know

Mike: Yes, it may be. You have to exhaust... See in each of your minds implicitly are these theories.

He doesn't know he is incompetent, many of you don't even have the theory that he

Student: This was a fact-finding mission to find the facts

Mike: yeah, we don't have time to do everything as meticulously as we would like to in the role-playing. So you understand that in this encounter with authority particularly in this group, which is presumably a group that is going to have to go out and mobilize more students. Which means that this group is going to have to exercise what? Out there? Influence

Student: Exactly

Mike: Leadership

Student: Exactly

Mike: Exactly, exactly, exactly everybody understand this? Everybody understand that she has a point? So while he is quote on quote correct from one point of view that is irrelevant because if he can't convince the rest of you of that, We ain't gonna move nothing out there

Student: Well we, we did already decide before we came into the meeting that we were going , so we kind of made a decision before we came in here

Mike: No you had a petition, you had a petition.

Student: But he felt confident that he could back-up his his

Mike: So in and in and in, that is a good point because under some circumstance but not the one that is connected with the first meeting, see this is your first meeting, under some circumstance he might have had, he might have come to the conclusion that the rest of you or most of you if you had been one to continue this dance with me are sell-outs! And he could have gone directly to the students discounted you all, the remaining fourteen or whatever and successfully pulled that off because he had a, we have met with that president for three hours he's in three different meetings he has repeated the same thing over and over again we've gone in with authoritative

documentation about why the Zinn book is an appropriate text or supplemental text of American history we haven't gotten any place and this committee wants to keep talking with the president or the dean or the whomever. What we have to do is rock the boat, and so Dan goes quits your group the sell-out group, yeah

Kathy: I just wanted to respond to that. You did have an agreement in terms of what your goals were, but you don't have an agreement as to what your theory is...see what I mean?

Student: I just never

Kathy: When you were meeting for the twenty minuets before Mike came in you had an agreement over what your goals were, but you didn't have an agreement over what your theory was. And you all didn't agree that talking nicely is going to work

Mike: And are you likely to come to that agreement before the meeting with me?

Student: No

Mike: No

Student: I don't think that we were going to say that you have to be nice

Mike: No exactly, so who is the educator of your group? Huh who's going to educate your group about how this president ticks, by his own behaviour he is.

Kathy: Experience and also talking about the experience and analyzing

Mike: Which you are then going to discuss afterwards

Kathy: Right

Student: Which is why you want to keep the door open at the end of this meeting as opposed to

Mike: No not necessarily, I am going to come to that in a minuet

Student: Well I just wanted to, I don't want to screw up your flow here but

Mike: No, the flow is out of what we do together so there ain't no program

Student: So, if the political theory, if I can summarize you know if your not sure why the system is not responding the way you are, it could be lack of knowledge, it could be lack of skills, it could be different interests. If we came at this assuming that it is all three because we don't know but it is probably all three then

Mike: No no no, it's not all three, it's not all three, see what have I repeatedly said here?

Mike: I have repeatedly said to you all

Student: yeah that's what you said

(Laughter from group)

Mike: I'm the president not you!

Student: The institution is unskilled and it lacks the knowledge so I'm coming at it yes that it is all three, it pretty much in my experience is all three but the different interests is the main, the main so we have to figure out how to package our argument in such a way that it is palpable to you

Mike: It's what?

Student: Palpable, no that's the theory that I don't know or I am incompetent

Student: No this is something else

(laughter)

this is palpable in the way that we balance the interests, because you have interests that are in conflict with another one of your interests. One of your interests is to not have the boat rocked, and the other interest is, and who knows what it is but we have, we have

Mike: What is an ideological political interest

Student: We have something that can be considered a carrot to a horse and I want to package it as a carrot

Student: Because we could rock the boat even further, is that what your saying?

Student: Yes

Student: Cause if your interest is to not have the boat rocked than that's

Student: We have a carrot but there is a counter weight on it

Mike: So what, what

Student: What's your carrot though, what can we do for them?

Student: Well that's were we have to learn what were the omissions that were

Mike: She's still in she doesn't know

Student: So you think that logic doesn't have anything to do with power

Student: No

Student: He has the power so even though his argumentation is illogical you will never explain that to him, you will never get him to change his mind

Mike: Ok,

Student: That's his job to

Mike: You did a, what we call a research action, and you have as part of it collected from the southern history review, the journal of American history, the America historians association and nine other authoritative academic journals. You have collected, reviews of the Zinn book, which all say that the zim book is an appropriate text or supplemental text for the teaching of American history, all right. And you have told me this as the president.

Student: Well I am going to do more than that, that

Mike: You need more than that?

Student: I am going to do more than that, I've done the research, the research is there now I have to use it and so lets say you create a carrot a package and we say well to make you look good so we balance your interests you have an interest to look good, we tie it in to some sort of white house initiative on Americas history and people and peoples

Mike: This Whitehouse, you think this Whitehouse is Zinn taught?

Student: They have different programs in place, now thy may not have anticipated that this would be a consequence of it, but you use what is already in place in this administration and there already is, there are tons of them

Mike: So you have presented that to me and I say Amy

Kim: I am going to create some sort of, it's going to be more, we'll get your board involved and the chair of the history department and invite and this is going to be a really cool workshop that makes your school looks good at the same time it is going to meet our interests. So we get these really high placed scholars and politicians that have an interest and we have this round table that your people can't

Mike: Kim

Kim: even go to because it is too prestigious, we create something and we make this carrot

Mike: I don't want Zim taught at Mary Mcleod

Kim: I know you don't so this is the way that I go around it. I created it in such a way that you have to accept it

Mike: Why?

Kim: Because you will look bad if you don't

Mike: To who

Kim: To the rest of the country

(laughter)

Mike: The country the way it is know, which planet are you on?

Student: you know the media hated you, the media hates Howard Zinn. The politicians hate you and Howard Zinn they don't want change, there all conservative they all want the status quo they don't want things shaken up your not going to get the support that you want to get

Student: We'll get Laura Bush to come to the meeting,

Mike: Whooooo, Laura bush is going to endorse Howard Zen now

Kim: She will

(laughter)

Mike: You all know this Downing street memo that is now in the media, everybody, anyone not know, ok in someone in the British Government leaked a memo internal memo, about the war in Iraq. And the language, I'm not going to quote it exactly but the language of this memo is that the data, that is the data on the facts on what is going on in Iraq, were cooked, were fixed, were fixed to fit the preconceived goal of a military invasion.

Student: Ok how would, we be saying that about our government. How many years have we been saying that?

Mike: you see, but you don't

Student: Forever

Mike: You don't quote on quote teach people that the government has different Interests than theirs by telling them that, that's the problem if I may be so bold, that is the problem with most of the

Student: Is there a consensus that using the word fixed is more of a British term?

Mike: Cooked

Student: Is more of a term that resonated

Mike: It was a British memo so

(laughter)

Mike: but I think the media, finally, finally some people in the mass media are beginning to get this story out that the data were cooked. To fit a pre-set agenda.

Anyway the point here is that you can't, if people throughout the country, throughout the world. People have these implicit theories about how systems work, they don't call them theories. It's part of the language, but if you start looking at the news through this filter that I am, doesn't know that informer educated is incompetent then retrain, reorganize, or replace him. Has different interests than change the interests or change the system. Start looking at news and events through those categories, you will find things out there make a good deal more sense to you. And my point here is that you can't tell people that have one theory, particularly the theory that is less controversial, obviously that don't know and incompetent are less controversial than the different interests theory, everybody see that, any questions about that? So you are not going to tell people who don't particularly like controversy, your wrong in the absence of an experience that you share that you can interpret together. And so what authority wants to do in the face of groups like yours, is prevent you from drawing a conclusion that Dan has already drawn, for whatever reason, past experience however he has arrived at that conclusion. In this case

he is absolutely right, everything that I am telling you about me, you can make me a member of the conservative member of the Republican Party these three trustees are very

conservative. Unless you rock the boat, I am not going to change. Because what you really and again we don't have time to go fully into this, what you really need to do in some way is energize the other six, because in fact the three are a majority of the board of trustees!

Student: So we would have to create enough of a disturbance among the student population to make you look bad in the eyes of the board because you are not keeping the status quo.

Mike: Yeah you need to divide me from these three trustees, because my interests, what is my personal interest here?

Student: To keep your job

Mike: Exactly, so it's not impossible to divide me from the three who are my ideological buddies, but push come to shove I am going to say he got to let this one go guys because six have more votes than you do. Now maybe if the three are responsible for eighty percent of the endowment of this college we might be back in trouble again.

Kim: So my strategy of twisting your arm in a nice way versus his which is twisting your arm in a more in your face way, um rocking the boat versus um I don't know what you would call it

Mike: Yeah you were going to try and offer me an alternative that was so attractive that I would put Zinn back in

Kim: Right

Mike: but you are ignoring the fact Kim despite no matter what I tell you, you don't want to accept that I don't want Zinn being taught here. Because I am a reactionary, conservative

Kim: I know that I accept that

Mike: John Birch

Kim: But I would put it in such a way that you have to acquiesce so that you don't look bad, and here you look bad

(laughter)

Kim: What would you rather have?

(laughter)

Mike: No that's why I am gonna cave in cause I can't afford to have a free speech movement on my campus.

Student: and you don't want

Mike: I can't afford to have a southern civil rights movement in my country. Now lets go back to the SNCC story and what happened in the south. In 1961 and two, 1961-62. There was this rise

of direct action activities through boycotts, sit-ins, freedom rides, and the Kennedy administration was interested in what? President John Kennedy was interested in what at the time? Well let me tell you more about what was going on. Disruptions going on in colleges, in college towns across the south. In Africa there were stories all the time about racism in the United States, and the Soviet Union was exploiting those stories. Soviet Union was saying through local communist parties and through its international movement, the United States proclaims all this stuff about democracy, look at how they're treating black people. When I was in Greenwood I wrote a news release that we sent to the what's the capital of Ghana?

Student: The capital of what?

Mike: Ghana? Anyway it was either the Ghana times or it was times it was the newspaper in the capital city. This news release that I wrote, ended up being a front-page story, in this newspaper. Embarrassing this can be to the state department and what it was trying to accomplish in Africa, with it's various programs. So what did the Kennedy administration want to do?

Student: Maintain stability from their other international

Mike: Exactly, everyone understand that? They wanted to get this stuff off the streets. They thought as it turned out naively, but they thought that the could challenge this energy into voter registration. And so within SNCC there emerged for a while a big division between what was called the direct action faction, the voter registration faction. Now it turned out, and there were big debates in SNCC about this. SNCC is providing leadership to a whole movement that is emerging in the south. These grass roots, small town and county voters leagues, voter associations, branches of the NAACP. Developing leadership in the way that were illustrating here in this role-play. And all of the sudden it appears that the Kennedy administration may be an ally to voter registration activity because it thought it would bring things off the street. Now what in fact happened was voter registration was as much direct action as direct action because people were getting fired their houses burned, killed whatever, there were demonstrations in court houses to register to vote and so the Kennedy administrations hope that voter registration was going to get voter registration off the streets didn't pan out. But like the president of this university it was trying to channel the leadership of this movement into a direction that would not disrupt in this case the country. Apart from the international scene what other interests did the Kennedy's, what was the fundamental domestic interest that you identified with earlier? What's the interest of elected officials?

Student: The elections

Mike: Yah, votes. Who's voting in the south? Whites. What party were they typically voting for then?

Student: Democrats

Mike: Democrats the south was overwhelmingly democratic until the Nixon administration. Nixon had a southern strategy that was aimed at dividing the white south from the black south and bringing it into the Republican party, and if you have noticed in the media recently, the Bush administration is now repudiating that saying it was a war we were wrong.

Kathy: That's because they want the black votes now too

Mike: Why, why are they doing that? Because they want to in my view they will be happy if they can increase the black vote to about twenty percent. If Republicans can increase the black vote from eight to ten percent were it typically is now to about twenty percent they will have accomplished a major strategic objective.

Student: Who's that guy recently that went instead of Bush to the NAACP meeting that ended up with who was saying that

Kathy: Nealmen

Student: Yeah, he brought that up, sort of apologizing, not really

Mike: Yeah that's right. Ok you have some things that you need to do?

Kathy: Um I think that uh I think that this is going well, people might be having their rear ends might be a little sore

Mike: You want to take a stretch break?

Kathy: Yeah a little stretch break, and then get some water, coffee uh and sit down, because although we do want to have lunch at one, we need to spend about ten minuets we have an amazing lunch

Student: It smells delicious

Kathy: It is an amazing lunch that we have and we want to put that together, so I, we have a half an hour more, so maybe we should stand-up and have a break

Mike: OK

Student: yeah I because I want to know what , what we need to do to be successful?

Mike: That's the next part of what we are going to be doing

Kathy: Take a pee break, get some water if you want more coffee if you want and then we will sit down and finish it then we will have this amazing lunch and then a great film, that will help pull it all together.

(Break)

Mike: well ok make it fast because

Student: Ok, when we were at break he was talking to me about, I asked about the time-out thing and he said generally when we have representatives we slip a note to them. I got that, but he did a technique also where he avoided looking at me during a time-out, so when I was doing a time-out what he simply did was face the other way and.

Mike: and I turned attention

Student: I was wondering, why is he giving his attention to me at this very moment I really did wonder

Student: So that's to say that you must be aware about what they are doing because they say a whole lot of things and we tend to follow whoever is speaking at that time so kinda like look around at one another because you won't miss the time out

Mike: So what, let's just say with Kim's point we disagree cause we are going to move on, we could go round and round about this point forever uh we disagree she has a different point of view. Everybody clear about it, what her, her view is that it is possible to create some alternative that would be so attractive to me that I would agree to putting Zinn back in

Student: But you wouldn't

(laughter)

Mike: Huh

Student: you already made up your mind before that we came to talk to you your interests will be your interests right and that's it

Mike: Well but she has a different view, anyways everyone understand, ok

Kathy: Yeah I think you were just clarifying her point

Mike: Yeah, ok so now in a typical group when we have gone, when I have been this recalcitrant obstacle. People will agree at some point that we have to end the meeting so that we can take the next step. The next step in some way or other is going to involve what?

Student: Consensus

Student: Rocking the boat

Mike: Rocking the boat. And for you all to successfully rock the boat, what do you all have to do with the rest of the student body?

Student: Convince them

Mike: Convince them, and in order to do that you need to be united. And so the strategy of the decision maker, the tactics of the decision maker, in this case it's the president are essentially to keep you from being united. And one of the ways that I did that earlier in the role-play was I used Dan's approach to divide you because the majority of you were not yet ready to go where

he thought you had to go even though in fact he was absolutely right, everybody get that? It doesn't matter that he was right. So now I want to roll the reel forward and we will imagine that we have been meeting for forty-five minuets and now most of you are convinced that he is not going to move. No matter what we say we are not going to change his mind ok? So I am going to take my hat off and now I am the president again. As we were saying earlier, you know this is, if you want to meet with the chair of the history department to discuss these matters and I understand that you have done some research on the zinn book uh and I am familiar with these reviews that you site but you may know also that there is a great deal of controversy in the field of history bout relativism and uh history and journals and departments for the most part now are very unbalanced, they have been taken over by people who share this world view of moral relativism and we at Mary Meleod do not have this point of view. We think that there is a reality in the world, and that there are moral values and that it is not a relativistic universe there is design and purpose to it and that the purpose of education is to enable students to discover what that is.

Student: Well I am sorry that we don't see eye to eye on this and I guess we'll have to continue with our plans through some other avenue

Mike: So you don't want to have a dialogue?

Student: Well if it's for the past forty-five minuets it seems like well I guess there is something that I am assuming that I guess I want to confirm so can you give me a minuet to address the rest of the group or talk with the rest of the group.

Mike: Do you want me to leave? Or

Student; I don't know, yes

Student So ok yes

(Laughter)

Student: In the case ok the people who right you could get a note to or a signal too to say a time-out, and she was in a position, where to me she was kind of stumbling and needed we needed to regroup

Student right, which is why

Student: Which is why I pass the note to you, which means the outside members, no not the outside members, the other members could not call a time-out

Student: That was my intention even though it took me more words than in should of to say my intention was to say, sorry we don't see eye to eye and I need, lets we are going to regroup.

Student: I think that one of the things that is in your planning you agree in your planning how you do that so that its not out in left field an the other people are saying, what is she talking about

Kathy: All right get a caucus

Student: What if he said no, I 'm not leaving and you don't

Student: But he is gone, so now what do we say?

Student: We have to agree to disagree and find out what our next step is

Student: Yeah, what's our next step?

Student: Did we mention that we can go to the history department and talk to them? There is probably someone influential in the history department that has some pull

Student: and students um have a walk out

Student How do we wrap this up and does everyone want to wrap it up are we, who thinks that we might have more to say, and what would that be?

Student: Maybe a better way to say and how I ended my meeting would be to say, uh well obviously you are not going to help us with our goal, but were going to follow up as best we can

Student: Are people, is everyone in favour of wrapping the meeting up at this point

Student: What was his response to you?

Student: Oh uh he said something about how

Kathy: He said we don't believe in moral relativism, and Zinn represents moral real atavism so we are not going to have it

Student: Ok, ok so were are just responding as we don't see eye to eye

Student: So everyone does want to end the meeting?

Student: I would like to clear the room for a few minuets and then redirect, against the three trustees that we are with the majority of the students that if we are going to redirect and an action of some sort, is it easier to get the three to change their mind or is it easier to get the six to vote positively and I think that's what

Student: So are next step could be to approach the six other trustees, and if we decide we are going to do that is that something that we need to share with them?

Student: Yeah I think at this point we should try to stay even and just let it go

Student: Maybe you can rock him a little bit by saying end the meeting and say that you have all the students support a cohesive

Student: Ok, so is that is everybody in favour of doing that?

Student: so we are sort of taking the divide and conquer approach against him

Student: And everybody agrees with that?

Student: We need another meeting though with him, we can end this meeting now but we are going to

Student: You can probably say since you didn't have any answers for us we will probably need to get together with you again after we do get answers to those questions

Student: After we meet with the six remaining trustees

Student: But do we actually even need him anymore?

Student: I don't know, I am tending to think not

Student: It is important to maintain his chain of command I mean at least as appearance

Student: I mean you could say something like we'll be in touch in the future, something vague

Student: have another meeting in the future more than likely

Student: Let him know that we are going to need a meeting in a week, or

Student: Right, to give him an idea that this is an ongoing process, and this is not over

Student: Why don't we also enlist him to help us see the other trustees?

Student: Based on the earlier, just trying to get names from him and stuff, I think we can look that up on our own

Student: Well not getting the meeting is what I am talking about

Student: Well I think that we just call them

Student: But then aren't we showing our cards and isn't it better

Student: yeah I mean we are not obligated to tell him what our next step is

Student: because then he is going to go to the board and get them all, you know tight and

Student: I don't know that he is going to go to the board at this point

Student: Well I don't see why he wouldn't if he wanted to defend his position

Student: The first thing that he is going to do is call those three trustees that are on his side and tell him these students came into my office are given me shit and they are going towards the other six, so you guys have to pre-empt that or call them, whatever you have to do, he has to let the people above him know that the people below him are giving them trouble

Student: Right so we can just say thank you for your time, it turns out we don't see eye to eye but we are going to be continuing in our efforts to

Student: Do we even need to tell him that?

Student: Tell him what?

Student: That we are going to be continuing our efforts he is irrelevant at this point he is never going to help us so don't help him

Student: That's true, well he might not be completely irrelevant, well

Student: We are not going to be able to get any more information out of him if we stay and argue for five more minuets

Student: He doesn't give us

Student: Well he did give us the reason why, he gave us who's doing it, he gave us a place to go to get what we want, um so arguing with him

Student: So are you in favour of?

Student: I don't know does everyone feel like we accomplished what we came here to accomplish? I think if we are all feeling confident then we can

Student: Yeah I think we decided on that already, but I am not sure

Student: A lot of people would feel patronized

Student: By who?

Student: By , by the

Student: The president

Student: By the president, I feel very patronized

Student: Well maybe we should get

Student: Does that matter?

Student: Yeah it does, because

Mike: As I told you I have a loan, as a matter of fact it is with a major donor from the, who I was introduced to via the heritage foundation

(Laughter)

Mike: I am hoping for an endowment from the college, which is very important in keeping the tuition low as low as we can next year

Student: So who is your donor, I would like to know?

Mike: The president of Coors brewing company

(Laughter)

Mike: Sarcastic comments is that

Student: I didn't say that

Mike: Ok I will let you withdraw it

Student: I think what we have agreed on is that we would like to wrap up the meeting, and thank you for your time

Mike: I thought we were having a dialogue?

Student: Well some of our group doesn't feel like it is a dialogue

Mike: Well nobody said anything about what I said about what's going on in history departments, I mean you presented all of these reviews of Zinn's book, I mean the people who control history departments now are Zinn's friends, so of course they are going to write nice reviews about his book. There is a different view emerging in the country that

Student: Yeah there are different views and I think hats precisely the point

Student: That is why we wanted the Zinn book to supplement because the text gives us the kind of standard

Mike: Well it's in the library

Student: It gives us some criticism so you can have deeper critical thinking

Mike: The Zinn book is in the library

Student: Right but we want it as the textbook for the class and so that's what we are going to

Student: It seems to me that we are at an impasse, you are unwilling to see our point of view and we

Mike: I see your point of view

Student: respectfully disagree and we don't see the point in continuing the discussion because we are not getting anywhere, we are at an impasse here

Mike: Well, uh

Student: If you have any ideas on, any suggestions on what we can do we would welcome them and.

Mike: Well maybe we should try to have a mediator

Student: What's that?

Mike: maybe we ought to have mediator for our next meeting

Student: Can we choose the mediator?

Mike: Well I mean if we are going to have a real mediator we have to agree on who the mediator is, don't we?

Student: Is that how mediation works?

Student: We definitely need more than just you and us, we would want the whole board of trustees involved and the chair of the history department too

Mike: I can't speak for the trustees, I would be happy to have the

Student: We can't speak for the group either

MIKE: You are the group

Student: Well the three of us

Student: It is just a sampling of the group we have a large group

Student: So before you

Mike: We could have a, what is called a glass house mediation, the chair of the history department could be here and we could have it in a larger room with students as observers

Student: And the board of trustees too?

Mike: No, I can't schedule the

Student: No you can attempt

Mike: I can invite them

Student: It won't do any good if they are not present, so I would request that they be present

Mike: Well we could see if that is, I would be happy to invite them

Student: Yeah and I think that your offer about having there students present is a generous one, but the students are actually who you are serving in this school so they need to have a voice, not something being observed

Mike: You all are, have been acting as spokes people

Student: Yeah and we would continue to do that

Mike: Yeah and that's the role that you would play in this meeting with the mediator

Student: We will take that suggestion of yours back to the group and

Mike: What is this group that you are taking this back too? I thought you were the group?

Student: Yeah and meeting on our own time and discussing that at further length and getting back to you

Mike: OK

Student: A student mediator or?

Student, I don't know but at this point

Mike: So can we schedule a next meeting, where you will tell me what you think of this mediator idea?

Student: Sure

Student: The mediator sounds fine as long as the board of trustees and the chair of the history department are present

Student: And we would have to discuss

Mike: You mean all nine? No, all nine trustees I assure you, unless you want to wait 6 months these are busy people

Student: We will contact them also

Mike: Ok, that's fine, when do you want to meet again?

Student: I am sure there are three that are going to have a really tough time scheduling for that day, no matter what day it is

Student: Right, right

Student: Who is going to pay for this mediation?

Mike: the University the college

Student: Are you bringing in a professional, or legal?

Mike: Yes some group that you and I

Student: I oppose unless it is a student union or

Mike: We need a trained

Student: There is not going to be time for me to speak again, if we go sir can you leave again I mean
come on, so I am just going to talk now

Mike: I'm sorry?

Student: Can we ask you to leave again so that we can confer?

Mike: I mean I don't have anymore time, can we schedule a next meeting where we talk about the
mediation

Student: Yeah that would be great, yes

Mike: So what did I successfully just do?

Student: Discouraged. You successfully discouraged us

Mike: Yeah, what did I keep you from doing?

Student: Making a decision

Student: Rocking the boat

Mike: I kept you from ending the meeting on, that you had just spent fifteen minuets agreeing on that
it end on. Why do I not want the meeting ended on those terms?

Student: Cause you don't want a demonstration tomorrow

Mike: Whatever the next step is I don't want you to take a next step that takes the action outside this
room

Student: Right

Mike: Or some room that I can control, everybody clear about that?

Student: Yes

Mike: So do you all know Martin Luther King's letter from a Birmingham jail? You know of it? This
is a relatively short, can your reproduce this?

Kathy: Yes

Mike: In the letter from Birmingham jail, the origin is that a group f quote on quote moderate white
southern clergy had written to King, or a public letter, I think that it was a public, was it an
advertisement? It was in the newspapers in the south, you have it?

Student: You need it?

Mike: I know how to use my research assistant

Student: Is this the confrontations paragraph?

Student: I have never read it

Mike: Well I can't find it quickly but in this these southern moderate whites had said to King the problem is with your methods is that you are stirring things up and that is not the way to achieve racial desegregation. Now in fact racial segregation had gone on from about 1886, 84 whatever that emphasizes compromise had been and had gotten worse over the years. So in 1960 80 years later they are saying this is just, you are too disruptive and King in the letter from Birmingham jail defines why confrontation, non-violent confrontation is appropriate and necessary to accomplish the goal of racial justice

Kathy: This is what we know from painful experience that freedom is never voluntarily given by the oppressor, it must be demanded by the oppressed. Frankly I have never yet engaged in a direct action movement that was well timed. According to the timetable of those who have not suffered unduly from the disease of segregation. For years now I have heard the word wait, it rings in the ear of every Negro with a piercing familiarity. This wait has always meant never. Ect ect ect it is a good letter

Mike: So what I am doing now, it is a very important relatively short document in American History. What I am doing now is how to figure out how to keep you waiting. And you have been fast and good at recognizing what my tactics have been, but I caught you again.

(laughter)

Mike: You were all ready to break the meeting and the most difficult thing and King talks about it in the letter is we have to polarize the situation because in polarizing the situation we will make clear. See I am trying to make it muddy, I am muddying it up with all kinds of ideas of how history is taught, moral relativism I could go on and on and on for days with what I am doing and what I would accomplish in doing that is keeping you from polarizing or clarifying, polarizing clarifies. There is this view and this view whose side are you on. I don't want you to be able to do that because if you can make clear to the majority of the students at this college. Then there is an issue of academic freedom of basically academic freedom here of a respected alternative view of American History being presented as a part of the required or supplemental readings of American History. You will have the majority of students on your side, unless this was a very ideologically conservative college campus, in which case you wouldn't. Now these

three trustees and I are trying to turn it into a more ideological campus that is what is really going on and we are using Zinn book as a first step in that direction. Ok, I think Kathy

Kathy: Yes coming

Mike: Anyone want, lets just have a few words of evaluation

Student: I think that we all learned a lot it is very valuable

Student: You don't really get a lot of experience, and unless you experience it first hand you really don't have hope, a great sense of what somebody is going through or what somebody is talking about.

Student: That was something I was curious about, consensus about

Mike: You can't because the educational process that is accomplished in the experience with me is not yet taken place. One organizer that I know did this, he would have a big one of these big, an easel pad sheet like that and at the top it would say possible next steps and it would list all the things that could be done as possible next steps. So the president would see this it didn't mean that any of those steps had been agreed upon, but it told the president that, oh I, if they, if this meeting ends with them dissatisfied they might to some of these things. On there might have been petition campaign, meet with the chairman of the history department, meet with the nine trustees, organize a student strike there would have been a big list of all the possible things, none yet agreed upon. There may have even been some people like Kim might have said you can't put a student strike on there it is too threatening. Cause she wants to find this way out where everybody's

Student: Soft

Student: Wins

Mike: Win win, that's the win, win

Student: In negotiations with a power or power source,

Mike: Boy now we are getting back into the substance and we don't have the time, I just want to say are there any

Kathy: We are going to have lunch and you can sit with Mike are you going to sit though lunch
Mike?

Mike: well I have to go soon in about 15 minuets

Student: But this is kind of an important question

Mike: Ok, go ahead

Student: In negotiating things like this do you want you're the person you oppose openly to know what your next move is?

Mike: No probably not

Student: Should you keep it very secret?

Mike: No you don't want him to know what your next move is, but the likelihood is that he will know is very high because the likelihood that there are people that are going to be finks of some kid, uncle toms, spies, a jean provocateurs, a whole range of things. So my point of view as an organizer is that it doesn't matter

Student: it doesn't matter if they know or not

Mike: You may not want them to know all the exact details about what you might next do, but generally it doesn't matter

Student: Ok

Student: Well they can also think about ok, if this group doesn't get what they want what might they do

Mike: cause they have people on there side

Student: I mean should we be open about this is what we are going to do, you can be sure that we are going to do this?

Mike: No because you can't yet say that, why can't you yet say that?

Kathy: That's a good way to end because Bruce Harper is going to come in and talk about the non-violent day, he is going to talk about Ghandi and non-violence and in that way Ghandi was very clear of telling of actually telling people what happened and I think that Bob Moses did that to, so that's a particular theory of action that we can talk about because this will come up again. Every Saturday it there is going to be recurring things that come up again, I think we ought to break for lunch and we can continue the conversation informally.