

Join the Student Sit-Ins

Act Five Transcript

Video online at: <http://americanhistory.si.edu/freedomandjustice/A5.asx>

Codes:

A = Actor (Samuel P. Leonard)

P = Participant

“ “ =interrupting, pause

[] = not speaker's words

A = Hmm, you all realize what we just practiced was very mild. You'll all have to expect much worse treatment at a real sit-in. But the same rules apply and if we follow them usually we won't be attacked physically. Now if you are, do not fight back, but do protect your head from being beaten and protect each other. One thing you can do you can move yourself up against the wall and curl up into a tight ball and cover your face as best you can. Now let's say we have one person who's taking a severe beating. We can all get up and put our bodies between them and the violence. Imagine more people, the violence is more evenly distributed and then hopefully no one will get seriously injured. And in future sessions we are going to practice some of these techniques. All right, I think we are starting to become a real group of believers here today. There's one more lesson I would like to share with you all before we go. That lesson is on the power of song. You know singing is one of our most important nonviolent tactics. Hey you should all know there is a good chance we will all be arrested. But through singing we can all stay together. Even from a jail cell. They arrested us, they took us out to this jailhouse with hardened criminals. They put the women on one side and the men on the other, that means we couldn't talk to, we couldn't comfort each other, but we could still sing and we sang song after song. This made everybody feel better except the guards. But even the worst convicts whom the guards bribed to attack us were moved by our devotion. Now here's the rule we have about singing: it's protest singing. It ain't like a concert. We are not singing to sound good. We are singing to make our country a better

place, to make it live up to the words in The Declaration of Impendence, to create another new birth of freedom. And because of that everyone sings, no exceptions. All right, now if you can't sing, can't carry a tune, can't hold a note, can't sing at all, well, then what I want you to do is sing louder. All right and it's real simple, all you have to do is repeat after me and this is how it goes: I'm on my way.

P = I'm on my way.

A = Pretty good. To freedom land.

P = To freedom land.

A = I'm on my way.

P = I'm on my way.

A = To freedom land.

P = To freedom land.

A = I'm on my way.

P = I'm on my way.

A = To freedom land.

P = To freedom land.

A = All right, now try this part with me. I'm on my way, oh Lord, to freedom land. That's everybody together all right you got it? Here we go. I'm on my way.

P = I'm on my way.

A = To freedom land.

P = To freedom land.

A = I'm on my way

P = I'm on my way

A = To freedom land

P = To freedom land

A = I'm on my way

P = I'm on my way

A = To freedom land

P= To freedom land

A = Together. I'm on my way, oh Lord, to freedom land. Pretty good. I asked my mother.

P = I asked my mother.

A = Come go with me.

P = Come go with me.

A = I asked my mother.

P = I asked my mother.

A = Come go with me.

P = Come go with me.

A = I asked my mother.

P = I asked my mother.

A = Come go with me.

P = Come go with me.

A = I'm on my way, oh Lord, to freedom land.

P = I'm on my way, oh Lord, to freedom land.

A = Together. And if she don't go.

P = And if she don't go.

A = Going anyhow.

P = Going anyhow.

A = If she don't go.

P = If she don't go.

A = Going anyhow.

P = Going anyhow.

A = If she don't go.

P = If she don't go.

A = Going anyhow.

P = Going anyhow.

A = I'm on my way, oh Lord, to freedom land. Once again. I'm on my way.

P = I'm on my way.

A = To freedom land.

P = To freedom land.

A = I'm on my way.

P = I'm on my way.

A = To freedom land.

P = To freedom land.

A = I'm on my way.

P = I'm on my way.

A = To freedom land.

P = To freedom land.

A = I'm on my way, oh Lord, to freedom land.

P = I'm on my way, oh Lord, to freedom land.