



Source 6

Record of a conversation with the President's special assistant for civil rights, 3 July 1963, about changes to the law
(Catalogue ref: FO 371/168484)

Questions

1. What did Mr. White think would happen if Congress did not pass the Civil Rights Bill in its full form?
2. What do you think was the difference between the aims of "wanting in" and "separatism"?



Source 6

CIVIL RIGHTS

I had lunch today with Mr. Lee White, the President's Special Assistant for civil rights matters.

5. Mr. White thought that if the present legislation was either frustrated by the filibuster or emasculated (he said in passing that the Negroes thought the measures aimed at Negro unemployment were the most crucial), there would be what

would amount to a Negro uprising all over the country. Nobody could say what would then happen, though an obvious course would be for Congress to have second thoughts.

6. For all the seriousness of the position Mr. White was confident that through the crisis the Negroes would stick to their objective of "wanting in". Though the Black Muslims had a tremendous emotional appeal which put great pressure on other Negro leaders, they had no realisable solutions to offer. Separatism, though possible in theory, did not seem conceivable in practice in the American context.