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1- McCormick Place (Mr. Peterson)

MCCORMICK PLACE

Don Cannon Show

WBBM

July 26, 1967 - 8:00 PM

Chicago

DISCUSSES POLITICAL CORRUPTION & MCCORMICK PLACE FIRE

(DON CANNON'S GUEST WAS DICK GREGORY)

GREGORY: "And I tell the people that live in the area of 61st and Woodlawn, where the Blackstone Rangers used to hang out at that grocery store all summer, the night the riots was goin' on you never found the Blackstone Rangers. Why? 'Cause they had orders to get off the street.

"A juvenile gang is a sickness, the cat lost his identity, so he joins a gang. The minute the gang get more than twenty cats in it he lose his identity again. But they kept tellin' us in this town that the Blackstone Rangers have something like -- oh -- 1500 guys, which meant they was payin' 50¢ a week dues, which meant that that's \$700, so it made a lot of people think that they was legitimately gettin' that money. But nobody in Chicago has ever, ever, ever walked down the street and seen over thirty cats standin' on a corner together. The Blackstone Rangers have never met with over thirty cats, and if you don't believe I know get this months issue of Esquire, where four months ago a guy was doin' an interview with me, and you'll read in there where I got with the Blackstone Rangers 'cause they came to me and told me where the money was coming from.

"And it's a very simple thing. You see, last year had Dr. Martin Luther King been hit, baby, and somebody yelled 'Mighty Blackstone Rangers' nobody would've dared believe they didn't do it. Don't nobody go out and snatch a pocketbook or shoot somebody and yell 'Might Blackstone Rangers.' A juvenile gang, and don't take my word, go back to the Federal Crime Commission, juvenile gangs have never shot up on porches and killed women and kids like they was doin' here. And if somebody gets the political muscle together and force Washington to come in here and do a tremendous study, because it might be goin' on in other towns.

"You see, it's a new thing goin' now, niggers get mad about urban renewal, so the white folks downtown done found

out that if you create juvenile gangs and scare the people they'll automatically move out the neighborhood. And urban renewal is a big thing for Woodlawn area, baby. And a lot of people now -- but I tell you the proof of the puddin' on the Blackstone Rangers, I coulda wiped them out in one night. All I had to do was go out on the Gold Coast and throw a brick at a rich white woman and yell 'Mighty Blackstone Rangers,' and they'd-a had all them punks put in jail in five minutes time.

"And I defy any of you out there to force Washington to come in here and hold an investigation. Are you outa your mind? You think the number one most political -- political tyrant in the world's gonna put up with some nigger juvenile gang, man? This Baley'd run the Syndicate-outta town if he decided they had to go. But all at once they tell us they can't do nothin'. And the police know this, and if one cop -- if some company would just put up fifty thousand dollars for a cop to come through and tell the truth and do the research, I knew Orlando Wilson was goin', I just didn't want to use it on my campaign, because I didn't want to get dirty.

"Those two Negro prostitutes that was found dead last January and they found out the police carried them bodies out there, and when the papers start runnin' an investigation on it they went and got some Syndicate cats to make like they was impersonatin' law enforcement officers, but this was a multi-million dollar thing they had goin' on here in this town, where the prostitutes would meet a white man downtown, the colored broads would take him to a hotel, and the white detectives would come in and shake him down and make him sign checks, and when them two girls was goin' to testify -- and if you don't believe it ask Moynahan(?) who's so damn controlled by -- by the -- the Syndicate-controlled political machine that he couldn't even do the investigation. And I tell you people that's gettin' ready to go and testify in this corrupt town, you ain't gonna do nothin' but die, baby, 'cause these cats is tellin' them where you are. And these two girls came up dead, again, don't take my word for it.

"I'm surprised somebody like Sears and Roebuck haven't had enough sense to go out and do an independent study like the steel companies been doin' on this town, here. And let me tell you somethin', Sears and Roe -- I saved you at the Black Power Convention, because they was gonna boycott all your stores, simply because that -- that Allstate Insurance that works for -- that runs Sears and Roebuck, don't treat Negroes right, sometimes they won't even insure them. And I saved them from that, not because I have any like for them, because I got a friend at Sears and Roebuck, but mainly because the ghetto brother who's throwin' the bricks can't relate with Sears and Roebuck. But Sears and Roebuck better do some research and find out what's hapnin', because if this town go up in smoke, baby, they gonna burn your joint down to the ground. They done already told me they gonna do that.

"And I think you people in business here oughta get together, because the riots last year in this town has kept a lotta white folks out of this town that was gonna spend big dough, and a lot of conventions. And the best thing happened for McCormick Place, I'm just sorry that guy got killed over there, and the city officials oughta give his widow a whole lots of money, because McCormick Place couldn't pay that note, baby, when conventions was cancelled out, and all at once it turns out burned down.

"If you business people, I don't care if you like niggers or not, if you understand when a riot hits your town you gonna lose money, then you better band together. It's real cute now when y'all sit downtown and just worry about that little Jew who you don't like anyway gettin' burned out, baby. But these cats is comin' on downtown, and there's a whole mess of white folks that's not comin' and spendin' this money simply because of the riots last year. And I think you ought to get together and investigate this thing. Because the politicians, they made a political deal in the last Democrat and Republican election. They knew they'd throw Waner out down the drain, but you nuts out there don't know this, and you business people know they throwed the man out down the drain, and if you would just take time and say, 'Baby, damn the political machine, I got to save this town so we all won't starve to death,' there'd be a lot of things that would come out."