

Subject: James Randolph
Interviewer: "Button Project"
Place: Eatonville

I: The purpose of this study, I don't know if we told you or not, what we are doing is going around the state talking to black elected officials. We want to investigate the impact of the black vote since 1965, paying particular attention to the effects of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, ^{and} what that did. We also want to find out how effective is the vote, once ^a the minority gets the vote. How much can they do with it. ^{We've got} ~~We have~~ several sections here of questions to probe each of these areas. All of the results of this are completely ⁿ anonymous. We will use them and then the tapes will be erased. So, feel free to say anything you want to. OK, the first group of questions are asked to find out specifically about how well the Voting Rights Act has helped blacks to take part in Florida politics. What year did you first register to vote?

S: 1970.

I: And what year were you first eligible to vote?

S: 1965.

I: Did local registrars ever turn you down when you applied register?

S: No.

I: How long have you lived in Eatonville?

S: Approximately six years.

I: OK. Where did you live before that?

S: Orlando.

I: OK. Have voter registration drives been held here in Eatonville?

S: Yes, they have.

I: How successful were those drives?

S: They were 50 percent effective, I think. I'll say even 75 percent effective. They really woke some people up. People got really interested in the Eatonville politics. And we had ^{oh} approximately two hundred, three hundred new registered voters in '75 alone. [#]

I: What were some of the organizations? Were there organizations involved with these?

S: Yes. It was the young peoples' organizations for a better government. And I think the drive was ^{real} real good and successful. We didn't, by being anti we didn't win the election but we did come up with, you know, at least ^{out} 150 more votes from the younger people from 25 on down that we wouldn't have gotten, ^{we wouldn't have gotten} if we didn't have the voter registration.

I: Were there any registration drives held before 1975?

S: Not to my knowledge, no.

I: OK. Are there any things here in Eatonville that prevent blacks from registering to vote?

S: No, ^{it's not} there's not anything. It's really wide open, you know. The people can vote, ^{can} come down and register to vote like they want to. There is nothing really to hold them back. I think alot of people just aren't interested, the officials, you know, just not actually them vote. But I think, from '75 on, I think we would see ^{# of a lot} alot more people getting involved in ^{their} the government and registering to vote. So, I think the last election has been real critical ^{and of course it's} in it has [#] shown alot of people some things happening in our town. We have to register to vote to speak ^{their} our opinion.

I: OK. We have a list of factors here that have each, or that have been found in studies in other areas to be causes, or things that prevent

people from registering to vote. And I'd like to ask you to comment on whether you think here that each of these factors is very important, fairly important, or not important in preventing people from registering to vote. The first one is economic dependence on whites?

S: That's not a problem ~~here~~. I think ^{in Eatonville.} ~~that~~ it don't have any bearing on people registering to vote ^{here} in Eatonville. I think it, it's like I said getting back to the statement I made a few minutes ago, it's ^{Really} up to the individual and up to the particular candidates whether they are going ~~to get~~ ^{go out there and} those people and bring them in to register. I don't think they ^{they} ~~will~~ ^{won't} come in voluntarily. I think during the last election, ^{I think,} we had to go out and seek people that wasn't registered voters, you know. So, I don't think that has any bearing on it at all.

I: OK. What about fear of physical violence from whites?

S: No, not in Eatonville because it is all black, ^{you know.}
^{Um hum. Okay.}

I: ~~What~~ about complicated registration forms?

S: No, that's not a problem not here in Eatonville. I haven't seen one outside of Eatonville, you know, a form or anything. But here in Eatonville, it's very simple. I think a 15 or 10 year old ^{Really} could do it. It's very simple.

I: OK. What about poor registration hours?

S: I think the registration hours during the you know, I think they should be maybe from 6 to 7. Or sit a certain week aside or two weeks or three ^{you know} weeks where you are going to have the office so people can register to vote. As you know, probably 90 percent of the people in Eatonville, work outside of Eatonville. ^{And} ~~The~~ usually ^{have} ~~out~~ from 8 to 5 or 9 to 6, and town hall is closed on Saturday so really, ^{it} they got to loose some time from work to come in and register to vote. Say before election

or just after election, we were having, you know, extend^{ing} the hours or work something out that the people could get in to register to vote at night or have someone to go around and register to vote these people. I think this is going to be, with the situation as it is, I think it should be left up to the individual candidate~~s~~ to get these people in.

I: OK. What about the fact that, is registration not held often enough?

S: I would think so. You know, it's like I said, it's held often enough. It's just the individual, individual candidates. You got to motivate the people, ^{here} you know.

I: So, would you say ^{that} that's very important, not important?

S: It's important, it's important, you know. I think it's definitely important.

I: Very important?

S: Yeah.

I: OK. What about the indifference of blacks to voting?

S: How do you figure that, how...

I: OK. Some studies have shown that black people just don't care about voting because many have been, say feel, particularly some younger blacks, feel that it doesn't matter ~~that~~ ^{if} they vote. They are a minority. What can they do.

S: I can't speak for, you know, any other city, you know, that...

I: Just here in Eatonville.

S: Just Eatonville. ^{I can speak for Eatonville.} I think this year in the '75, say '73, I think,

I think, ~~the~~ young blacks, 90 percent of the people ~~who~~ we registered was young blacks. So I'm really proud of the young blacks in Eatonville.

I feel that they are getting involved in their government. They want to see Eatonville's progress and this is very important to get in-

volved, to know that their votes do count, regardless of whether
1. registering these people are inter-
esting to explain to them that their votes do count.

I: How often is reregistration required?

S: It's not required if you vote every year. I'm not absolutely sure.
But if you vote every year in the general city election, it's not
required. You ^{can} do it, you know, every time you vote. You ~~are~~
automatically renew~~d~~.

I: OK. When you were campaigning, were you able to campaign freely, that
is, were you threatened in any way ^{during} ~~in~~ your campaign?

S: No, I wasn't threatened in any way during it. ^{It was a free,} ~~It~~ was a darn good
campaign. It was run, you know, I think it was ^{rather} ~~but~~ clean and I have to
respect the man that did beat me^{out}. I think he ran a good honest cam-
paign. You know, if you don't hear anything or someone comes to you,
it's a good clean campaign.

I: How many times did you run for election?

S: Three times.

I: The first two, you won?

S: Right.

I: OK. Were you threatened during either of those?

S: No, ^{no,} neither one of those.

I: Were you handicapped by a lack of campaign money?

S: (Mumble) I don't think so. I think it's ^a basic. I think you can get
out here with a few dedicated people and really motivate yourself. I
think money is less important in a campaign election. It plays a major
part, you know, it plays a major part. I'd say 50 percent of the part.
But I think 50 percent depends on the individual because we are a

small ~~enough~~ ^{municipality} here. We can walk from door to door. You know, ^{and} I think it plays, the money in this situation, plays a small part unless you want to go public, you know, if you want ~~to~~ go spend some money on ~~say~~ advertising media, the radio, in the media. I don't see where that helps, the media ^{in Eatonville,} ~~anyway~~. I think person to person contact be the only way.

I: OK. How much did you spend ⁱⁿ ~~on~~, ~~let's~~ say ~~on~~ your first campaign, and your second campaign?

S: ~~Oh~~ ^{Oh} my first campaign, absolutely nothing. Oh, I'll say, no. I ~~won't~~ ^{would} say ~~that~~ ^{for} about 25 bucks ~~because~~ I did have a victory party. The second campaign ran me, oh about, 200 dollars and the third ^{one} ~~run~~ about 350.

I: How come your prices went up?

S: Well, the prices went up simply because, you know, you had to get more literature out and you had to get people involved with taking people to the poles...

I: Was it easier to win the first time than ^{it was} the second ~~time~~?

S: Yes, I had no opponent the first time.

I: Oh, OK, that explains it. Why did you decide to run for office?

S: First of all, I came to Eatonville with the hope that Eatonville could progress like some [?] around the municipality, you know. I came in with the idea that Eatonville could be an ideal community for blacks. It could be a model city for blacks. This is my first, my first concern for Eatonville. Simply because it ~~is~~ an all black town. And ^{if the} ~~they say that~~ blacks are always second class citizens. I think that I had in mind, ~~that~~ we were going to show the world what kind of a city we could have ~~here~~.

- I: OK. What political party do you belong to, ^a political party?
- S: Yes, I am affiliated with the democrats, the democrat party.
- I: Did you get any support from the party in any of your campaigns?
- S: Yes, yes, I think I got some good encouragement from them. And they offered me any way, ^{I can help them, to they could.} ~~they could~~ help me, minor ^{active.} ~~political party~~ ^{like} ~~like I say~~ ^{a very}
- I: Did they ^{like} help you in door to door campaignings or something like that?
- S: Yes, yes. There ~~was~~ some people that are democrats which is 90 percent of the people out here are democrats. They did help me do a little bit of ~~the~~ campaigning.
- I: OK. What were the two or three most important issues that you campaigned on in your first election and then again in your second election?
- S: OK. My first election was basically, people wasn't, I think I campaigned on Eatonville, my first election, to the best of my recollection, we didn't have any people in Eatonville who were really interested in the town. I think my platform there was fairness to all people in government. I think this is a big part, you know. Now it's sort of, politics is sort of, ^{you know, that} the man ~~who~~ don't have, the forgotten man, he never gets anything he wants from you except, you know, when you go vote for him. I think that's a little unfair. And this is my reason for running ~~to~~ my first election. And I thought I could do so much for Eatonville. This ^{one, this} ~~is~~ another thing ^{there} ~~is~~ And this is my major concern when I first ran for office.
- I: OK. What about in your second election?
- S: In my second election, I think that really, you get a little more in

detail and get a little more, you know, ^{as} ~~in~~ the campaign ^{swing} ~~along~~ in there.

I thought this second election that, my thing was improving the town, you know, you sit back the first election, the first couple years, ^{you sit back} and you have to observe. And the second, I thought about improving some of the services ⁱⁿ ~~of~~ our town, would be ~~x~~ really ^a good campaign platform. We have our water system that is just beginning, just beginning to be revamped. And I think this is my platform. And to get Eatonville on the move. My second election. I think ^{you know,} Eatonville is dying. To me ^{as, you know} it is really dying. ^{If} You can look at municipalities around ^{it}, it is not a very good model. And this is some of the things that I want people to really see. My third election, I get, you know, a little carried away, it's more interesting than the first. I think the third election was honesty in our government, you know, fairness, integrity in our government. And I think these three things, as you know, last year the Watergate scandal, I think these things are really important ^{now} in any city government. You got to have the trust of the people, with you. I think now backing up again, to shape up but like I say, one day I might want to run again but for now I don't see any hope of even thinking about running again. I think after Watergate I am getting back to the third, after Watergate, ^{I think} people are a little leary ^{of} of their official and an official's whole life, you know. And I think to get ^{a really,} we have a really, city government, that has integrity, honesty in government, and fairness to the people. I think this is what the people want. I think People get tired of wasted spending of their tax dollars. And this is my program in the last election. This is my platform. Course you are going to have people that say well everybody is ^{going to} ~~on the~~ take, every official is on the take. I think that is absolutely wrong.

I think we have some very good, honest officials.

I: ~~What~~ about, what percentage of the blacks in this area, well it's ^{Right? S: Um hum. I:}
the people, I guess, everybody in ~~the~~ town is black, what percentage
of people of voting age here in town are registered to vote?

S: I honestly feel that 50 percent or maybe higher ^{is} ~~are~~ registered to
vote. I honestly feel that.

I: OK. The first time you ran for election, about what percentage of
the people that are registered to vote, do you think voted in the
election?

S: About 10 percent.

I: What about the second time?

S: The second time, about 25 percent.

I: And the third time?

S: Oh, about 40, 45 percent.

I: Well, OK. In the first election, you had no opponent and in the second
election, how many opponents did you have?

S: One opponent.

I: And in the third election?

S: One.

I: OK. What percentage of the total vote did you get the second time?

S: OK. I'd say about 45 percent.

I: And the third time?

S: Oh, I'm sorry. The second time?

I: Yeah.

S: About 60 percent.

I: And the third time was about 45...

S: 45 percent.

I: OK. The next questions are asked to determine how well black officials can rep, benefit those ^{that} they represent. ^{Now} How effective have you been. In what ways do you think you have helped ^{the} people in your district?

S: OK. First, I think I have helped them here quite well. I think I have represented them best of my ability. I think I ^{put} bought some things, I have some issues out that was real relevant to Eatonville. I think I tried to show them what is going on in Eatonville and how to get people involved in Eatonville. And you cannot represent the people if you don't know what's, you know, what ~~s~~ some of the things that people want, you know. What's some of the things ~~that~~ ^{they} ~~people~~ demand. ^{suppose} You go around and say ^{well} that I need to fix this street ^{or} fix ~~and~~ this water. ^{me,} That may not be ^{some} things ^{that} they want. ^{You know the} I think people are going to have to get involved, you know. For quite some time, the people wasn't getting involved. And it's in the last two or three years they got involved. Then you really find out what people want and what they are thinking about.

I: Were there any specific projects that you were able to get through?

S: No, I, yes, I think with the help of the council and the mayor, I think we got through improving our water system. ^{and} When I came here we had a volunteer fire department. I think we got ~~that~~, you know, got that pretty well moving now. I think ~~in~~ the last ~~three~~ ^{I; Okay, S; Now} or four years all our services have improved a hundred percent. ^{all of} I don't say ~~that~~ one man done ^{it}. It takes everybody to, from the council here, to get into the legislation that is going to benefit all the people. I think legislation has been passed where it benefitted individuals, not the town as a whole, you know, I think this is why our county is ^{you know,} so, ^{hasn't} been able to really move like any other town around us can move.

I: OK. What, if anything, has prevented you from doing a better job?

S: I think the division ~~we have~~ here in Eatonville, we have half anti and half not anti. This will block it.

I: Anti and not anti what?

S: Well, what I mean

I: With reference to what?

S: I would say in reference to, you know, in any city you are going to have people that have their people in office, you know. ^{You follow me?} You have people, I would say that are part of the establishment, you follow. ~~me~~ So, I think ^{that} in order to get anything accomplished, every member on the council is going to have to vote for that particular legislation or 3 to 2 for this legislation to pass. Legislation can be passed in Eatonville, and when the actual work need to be done, it don't get done, ^{why,} because no council here is, no councilman here is a day to day administrator. Your mayor is your day to day administrator. So, if this passed and he doesn't want it, or a couple other councilmen don't want it, all they do is stall it and stall it and a project never gets, you know, any attention at all. It lay on a shelf dead. There is always a problem ~~here~~, you know. But I think if he want a project through, he would, the administration, would find time for the individual supervisors or someone to do these things, you know. And I think ~~is~~ the council has passed it and it should be put into effect immediately, you know. I think this has been the hold up here in Eatonville. A number of the legislation has been passed, a number of ^{as far as they get is to the shelf.} them. But ~~they are still on the shelf, they are still on the shelf.~~

I: Do you have an example of that?

S: Well, I'll say for instance, you know, just like when I was there, we had money, ^{bought} a pool for the water system, a year ago. We are just getting around to it now. We have money in the pool and we are just getting something done which should be done when it passed because there is a definite need for these things when it is passed. And this money is just left on the shelf or planned, like I say our water system, our street lights system, plans been made four, five years ago but they are not being implemented.

I: OK. We have a list of factors ^{here} that have according to studies prevented elected officials, particularly black elected officials from doing a better job. Again, rate each of these factors, if you would as being very important, fairly important or not important. OK, the first factor is the office has no real authority, in other words, it's just sort of a figure head position.

S: True. It is true. I think, ^{in Eatonville, in effect,} ~~it needn't be ineffective~~. It has been a figure head position, even though, you know, you get your vote on the council. But what good is it legislation passes the council and it doesn't be implemented, you know. I think it is a figure head ^{here} position.

I: OK. What about not enough revenue available, not enough money.

S: As you know, money is the main problem all over the country. There's not enough money here to really do what we want to do in Eatonville, ^{I think,} As you know, 90 percent of Eatonville is residential, ^{I'll} say 95 percent. And we have to really depend on ^{our} federal and state for really funds coming in here. We have no businesses here. We have no tax base here, business tax base. There is so much you can do with ad-velorum tax, you know. And I think you have to depend on the federal

and state ^{funds} government for support. I think right now about 60 percent or more than that of our money is coming from the federal and state government. So without them, we are just a drop in the bucket.

I: OK. What about being unfamiliar with the administrative duties of the office.

S: I don't think, I think most councilmen are aware of what his duties and what his duties are not. I think primarily, you know, they know their duties. It's the legislative making body and that's it.

I: OK. What about lack of cooperation from the citizens?

S: I don't think that's real big factor in Eatonville. Like I say, it all depends on the individual. Is he going to motivate the citizens.

I think we have a lack of citizen participation in each city. It's here too. You know, ^{you get some citizen that's gonna work} ~~and it's going to work~~, you know, the same citizen over and over and over but you want to get those citizens ^{work, don't} that don't/never come down and see what's going on in their town. And like I say, you know, when I first ran here, we would have one citizen at a council meeting and now it's getting ^{so, you know,} ~~where~~ the council is almost full, the chamber has 50 or 60 people on that kind of thing. Some of them are interested in the town and some of them are interested in their particular candidate or they are friends or something like that. But I think, the citizens turnout is alot better than it used to be.

I: What about lack of cooperation from state officials?

S: I don't think so. I think that if each official wants something or he wants something for his city, I think that if you go to the state or you present them with a package or plan that will help your city or state, I think you can mostly get it. I don't think we have been turned down that much. I think it is a matter of getting funds from, it's getting your application out and writing a proposal in time and

following it through.

I: What about lack of cooperation from federal officials?

S: I think that that hasn't been a problem, ^{here} I don't see where that has been a problem here in Eatonville. I think that, it's like ~~our~~ ^{I say, it's a} ~~state~~ ^{of} matters ~~are~~ following through on your application, and so forth.

I: OK. Has criticism or lack of support from members of the community hindered you ~~from~~ ⁱⁿ holding office, in other words, do some people think you are just a token and you can't do anything and that you have no authority?

S: I think ^{you know,} there ~~are~~ ^{that} people ~~who~~ think that, you know. And ~~I think~~ ^{now} getting back to a question before, I stated a few minutes ago, that you know, it's ^{just} a figure head, you know. And there ~~are~~ ^{Eatonville has a unique} a few people who think that, you know, ~~or you have been in~~ a situation in the past where you have 3 or 2 councilmen for a program, 3 or 2 against, you know. So, really, it all depends, you know, what ^{our} program you thought would be best for the city, you know. Eatonville, you know, you can't disagree in Eatonville unless a citizen thinks you are disagreeable with someone, you know. I think ~~if~~ ^{can} you disagree with a man ^{and} you don't have to be disagreeable with him, you know. I think any official should analyze the specific legislation that is before him and vote to the best of his ability, ^{not} according to what each other councilman, ~~and~~ I think you have to root those things out.

I: OK. Do you think ^{that} white officials, county, state, federal officials, treat you differently from other municipal officials simply because you are black. Do they consider you a spokesman for blacks on racial matters and are you able to raise other issues?

- S: I think, in my experience, when I was here, I, they didn't treat me any differently, I think from any other official here. I think most of them in the political arena, they are concerned with the board. ~~and~~ if there is anything they can do to help you, they will. I think that most officials really look out for each other, you know. I think if ~~the~~ ^{their} city needs something they can do it, they will do it together. I ~~don't~~ ^{don't} think we have a problem there but you also have to realize that we are democratic out here. We are strictly a democratic town. And say Orange County is republican, you are going to get a little less out here from the republican officials than you are going to get out of democratic officials. So, it's, you know, that would be, that ^{is} is our main problem here. I think, you can't really say democrat or republican. I think black folks going to have to vote on what person, individual's going to help them.
- I: OK. You mentioned that you have been able to help the fire department and the development of water and sewer. What other services have you provided the people in the district that they didn't have before you took office?
- S: I think improved representation of the people. I think that fairness of the people here. I think, in a small municipality, it's sort of, like I like, the small, the men that never come to council meeting, you know, he always be the man who is left out. I think, let's say if you had a business you would be concerned about your business, you know, but you know, your business is real good, but it still yet ~~has~~ ^{you gotta be} ~~to~~ built around the people ^{that's} /in the community. You can't go out and put this here and ~~say~~ ^{away with} the heck ~~with the rest of~~ the people, you know. I've seen legislation that passed that was best for business or best

for the individual but is it good enough for the rest of the citizens. I think this is wrong. This is the kind of thing I wanted to get rid of here but it's still here and it will be years and years before you get rid of it.

I: OK. Please rate how effective you have been in each of the following service areas. Rate yourself as being very effective, somewhat effective, or not effective. The area first, police protection.

S: I think the first, during the time I ^{would say the} ~~was elected~~ ^{oh,} last, ^a couple years ago, effective. I think ^{we} ~~it would~~ ^{really} have ^{been} effective.

I: Very effective? ^{or} Somewhat effective?

S: No, just effective. I think it has been somewhat effective by my sitting on the council.

I: OK. What about the area of streets and roads?

S: Not effective at all.

I: OK. In the area of housing?

S: Not effective.

I: In the area of employment?

S: Somewhat effective there. I think the reason I say that, we have hired some people that I think would be otherwise unemployed. They work for the city now, probably some of them on the different farms. I think people that wasn't working, they got a chance to come in and work, I think that means alot to have...

I: How many employees does the city have? ^{oh, I'd say it has now}

S: I really can't say. I would say ^{oh, I'd say it has now} probably about 50 employees.

I: OK. What about in the area of parks and recreation?

S: We don't have anything for parks and recreation. We are just getting started with a ^{little} ~~local~~ park here. Recreation we have. I think I have

been very effective in recreation. I think the whole county, it's really ^(cause, you know) hard to evaluate some of this because the whole council has to really ^{it and really} pass on ~~this is~~ ^{it's like to get the legislation} get the legislation through, ~~for your city~~. I think recreation has been very effective here.

I: You all have some tennis courts here, is that right?

S: Yes, yes. ^{we have tennis.} It's been very effective here. I think we all on the council have pulled for recreation for the teenagers, nobody is opposed.

I: What about in the area of water, sewage and garbage?

S: I think, I would say, I think water and sewage have been good, real effective. ^{in that} Garbage, you know, ^{as you know,} before recently, wasn't, ~~there was~~ you were ^{the} ~~a~~ commissioner over each department, sewers and sanitation. I mean ^{But sewage} I can't really say. ~~The sewers~~ and water, I think we have done a very good job, a very good job.

I: OK. What about the area of health and hospitals?

S: We don't have a hospital here in Eatonville, as you know. ^{But} ~~with~~ health and sanitation, ^{we} ~~that~~ ^{here and that would} would be our garbage and our ^{sewage} sewers and things like that. That's the only thing we would have ^{here in Eatonville as far as} ~~needed for it~~ sanitation.

I: OK. What about, have you been able to, as a member of the council, do anything about the ambulance service to Eatonville?

S: At one time, we did have an ambulance here. A guy was going into business here. But you know, ambulance service is franchised through the county. They have to meet certain requirements. This specific gentleman didn't have ^o these things, so we couldn't get our franchise for this area. But we did have one started here in Eatonville. I think we did maybe fair, 30 percent.

I: OK. What about the area of education?

S: Education as you know, here in Orange County, you have your school board, you have a city in there, a school in the city here but the city officially has nothing to do with that because the county always take _____ city.

I: What about the area of fire protection?

S: I think our fire protection has improved tremendously. I, when I first got in, we had a volunteer fire department. Our ratings were probably about a 10 or 11 then. Now it's down to about 8 or 9 something like that. So, insurance rating has gone down, you know. So, I think we did a very good job in fire protection.

I: Have you gotten federal funds for Eatonville?

S: Yes, we have. ^{We get quite a} It's like I said, getting back ^{I think 50 percent} to what I said before, ~~60 percent~~ or more of our total revenue is federal and state funds.

I think we could have gotten more if we had a better program coordinator in the past years.

I: You now have one, correct?

I: You did have one. S: But

S: No, we don't have one as of this time, we don't have one. ^{had a} We did have a couple of them. We had one that was very good, I think. We could have ^{of our} quite a bit more federal revenue share. I think it's a matter of the man ^{that's, he's} specifically geared ^{for} to that job, He knows that job, He knows what's ^{the average official} on the market for it. And I think by being an official in Eatonville which is part time, ^{you} don't have time to go ^{out} and seek these things.

I: Could you list some of the more important federal ~~funds~~ ^{grants} or ~~grants~~ ^{funds} that you have gotten?

S: Yes, I think CETA we got, revenue sharing, that's really important, our revenue sharing. That ^{is} definitely important.

I: How much do you get from revenue sharing?

S: I don't, I can't give you quite the figures now because that's been six months since I've been. But at one time, we were getting about oh, about one hundred eighty-five thousand dollars a year ^{from} ~~for~~ revenue sharing.

I: OK. Have you as an elected official or part of a local committee been able to bring industry or retail stores into the area?

S: No, we haven't. This is one of my main concerns, Industry here in Eatonville, because I stated in the past, ^{we} you can't make our advelorum taxes. I think for industry to come ^{here} ~~in~~ would be the greatest thing that ever happened to our community. ^{here}

I: Why do you think you have been unsuccessful in attracting industry to the area?

S: I think Eatonville, being an all black community, I think you are going to get those, you know, ^{gonna get} those companies who don't want to move to an all black community, you know. There is a stigma, you know, with some of these. You take a white business. They don't want to move here because he say you know that there might be rioting or, you know, some type trouble here or something like that ^{you know. But} ~~here~~. I think, you know, that things are changing. I think ^{they're going where} ~~when they think~~ they can get some good employees or their taxes are not so high, you know, or it's accessable to different things. I think you have to look at them when you are talking about bringing industry in.

I: OK. Have you been able, have you been able to see that the hiring practices, the government hiring practices, have been fair?

S: Within our city here?

I: Yeah.

S: Yeah, I think our hiring practices ~~here~~ have been fair within the city.
I would ^{say} 90 percent.

I: OK. Let's see. Have there been any black protests, ^{sit-ins} ~~sit-ins~~, boycotts, or riots in Eatonville in the last ten years?

S: Yes, there have. This was in one of our clubs here. We had a riot here probably about three or four years ago.

I: What were the issues?

S: It wasn't an issue then. It was an issue. We had a, I can't really get to the issue ^{of it}. It was a riot ^{It was} simply because _____
we had some county officer that came out and tried to arrest some blacks at one of our local clubs. And for some reason, it turned into a riot. And there were quite a few people that were hurt there. No one was fatally injured and I think that came from a lack of communication from a county level down to ^{our} ~~the~~ city level ^{here}.

I: Ok. What is briefly, what is your opinion of Governor Rubin Askew? Do you think he has been favorable in attitude and policy toward blacks in Florida, or not?

S: I respect the man very much. He will get my vote. There are some things that I ^{wouldn't want to} ~~would~~ elaborate on that, you know, I ^{thought} ~~think~~ ^{done} he did a poor job ^{of using his} ~~on~~ judgment in. ^{But,} I think I would have to rate him as one of the best governors Florida has had.

I: ^{Well,} ~~What's~~ your opinion of some other state officials and state representatives? Do you have any that particularly strike you as outstanding or ~~as~~ particularly bad?

S: No, I, ^{Lou Frey} ~~Luke Frey~~. I think he ^{has} done an outstanding job. I think really he ~~has~~ done more for Eatonville than any other elected official in the United States.

I: What is he?

S: He, I think he helped us get some ^{quite a few} federal funds.

I: Is he a congressman?

S: Yes, he's a congressman from Winter Park. I think he has done a very good job for the black people in Eatonville. And getting back to what I said, he is a republican, you know, and as you know, we are 95 percent democratic ^{here,} and I think you have to look at the man himself and not the party so much. And in the past, the republicans ~~got~~ ^{got maybe} one or two votes from out in Eatonville. And this last time he ran, I think he got almost one hundred votes from Eatonville. ^{You know,} It really shows that black people are beginning to vote for the candidate himself rather than the party he ~~is~~ in.

I: OK. This is the big question. Do you think that winning and holding office in Florida has been worth the effort?

S: Yes. To me, yes. It has been very educational and ^{has been} very rewarding for me. I would like to see every citizen, if he can only hold office for one term, ^{to} get in there and really try to hold office for one term. I think it is ^{I think it's} important to citizens, you know, to participate in city government. Then they get a chance to see what ~~is~~ ^{is} going on, you know, instead of complaining ^{You know,} which is their right to do by electing you. But if ~~you~~ ^{they} can get in there and see exactly what goes on in city government, then they will have a more, ^{they'll} a better knowledge of what is going on when they are out again, you know.

I: OK. These questions are just asked to comply with an overall group profile of black elected officials in Florida. No individual answers are going to be recorded. You are a city councilman?

S: Right.

I: You were first elected when?

S: March '71.

I: And you took office?

S: March '74.

I: You took office?

S: April...

I: You were first elected and then how long after the election was it until you took office?

S: Three days.

I: Three days.

S: Right.

I: OK. Let me see here. You ran for office three times?

S: Yes. No, four years. Twice.

I: Twice. OK. ^{51 Four years, I'} And then you ran a third time and lost?

S: Yes. Right.

I: OK. How old are you?

S: 33.

I: And your occupation?

S: Self employed.

I: Are you...

S: I am an owner of Central Florida Porcelain and Tables by Randall.

I: OK. And what's your level of education?

S: Two years high school and two years of business college.

I: OK. And what salary did you receive from your elected position?

S: One hundred, first of all we started with one hundred dollars a month and then we got up to, I mean, I'm sorry. Fifty dollars a month. Then the last two or three years, it has been one hundred dollars a month.

I: Were you active in the Civil Rights Movement of 1960 to 1966, the early sixties?

S: Yes, back home yes. I was still in _____ ~~which I was~~ originally, a year _____ I was, I did participate in some civil rights movement, where I thought it was very effective ^{over} there.

I: OK, what church do you belong to?

S: I belong to the Church of God in Christ.

I: And are you an official ^{in your church}?

S: No, I'm not.

I: Are there ~~any~~ other community organizations or activities that you are involved in?

S: No, I'm not. I'm so primed to getting involved in any group in any particular organization now. I think I gave ~~them~~ ^{to people} four good years and they have been really detrimental to my health. I think the less I get involved with any organization or anything else, the better my health will be.

I: OK. What was your father's occupation?

S: He was a farmer.

I: What social effects, or what effects generally have running for and holding office had on you and your family? Social life and things like that?

S: It has a great effect. More effect than you can really, the average person can really will can see. ^{But it} ~~you~~ changes your whole social life. ^{at a,} It turns around, you know, at an eighty degree angle, you know. There is so much, I think an official has to be, ^{you have to} give respect, and ^{you have} ~~has~~ to be respected so when there are things he can do, when he is not official,

he can do what other people overlook and there are things when he is an official, people won't over look, you know. He has to turn himself all completely around. His whole life changes one hundred percent.

I: OK. I believe that is just about it. You did enjoy...

S: I actually enjoyed it very, I say I enjoyed it very much. It was very rewarding to me/^{again}and maybe one of these days/^{sooner OR later}I might toss my hat in the ring again. But in the near future, I don't see me tossing the hat in there again. It has been detrimental to my health. It really has.

I: What do you think ^{is}~~has been~~ the biggest detriment to blacks gaining political power here in Eatonville first? Or ^{well}there isn't ~~really~~ any problem ^{Really}here in Eatonville. But generally speaking, ^{say}in the state of Florida or on the national level, what do you think ~~is~~ the single biggest factor ^{is}?

S: I think the single biggest factor is getting back to ^{it again,} you are going to take blacks to register and the black officials are going to participate in election. He is going to have to get motivated workers to get these black people out, young, ~~and~~ old or young, old or farmers, teachers, everyone to register these blacks. And I think ^{and}although the party can't look at a general election, ~~it's~~ like a county or a school board election ^{is} ~~but~~ getting all, particularly black votes, you are going to win. I think that official have to be geared so he gonna ~~have~~ ^{be able} to get some white votes to win too. I think you can gear yourself to get black votes in order to win, no election outside of Eatonville. You gotta gear yourself so you can ^{draw} ~~get~~ a vast majority of blacks and probably a minority of whites to get in, get elected.

I: OK. ^{Now,} This interview will be kept anonymous as I said. However, there is a project at the University of Florida called the Oral History

Project which is compiling ~~a~~ a collection of tapes of historical figures and people of the time~~s~~. In many cases, the people/~~we are~~ ^{that} we're talking to are some of the first black, elected officials since reconstruction (tape ends) (side 2) ... what they would like to do, is, they would, if you would be willing, they would like to take ^{this} ~~tape~~ and transcribe it and then send you a copy of the transcript and let you edit it, change it, put in things, delete things and then release it, sign a release form. You can, at the time you read the transcript, you can release certain parts of it, release it with modifications or you can say I don't want to release any of it. Now the purpose of ~~it~~ ^{this} is, it's not again a matter of public record, it's for scholars, it's kept in the university libraries, would you have any objections to this being done?

S: No, none whatsoever.

I: OK. Thank you very much.

S: ^{OK,}
(End of tape)