

SUBJECT: Nathaniel Yereen

INTERVIEWER:

DATE: Aug. 3, 1975

- I: ... ~~was~~ determine how well the Voting Rights Act of 1965 has worked. What year did you first register to vote in?
- V: I ~~XXXX~~ registered to vote in 1950, I believe.
- I: And what year were you first eligible to register?
- V: Uh, well, I went to, I went into the service in '43...
- I: Mm hm.
- V: ...^{le} At the age of 19. Then I got out of the service in the year '40, '40, uh, '45...no, it was '46 when I got out. Got a _____ '46.
- I: Mm hm.
- V: And, uh, I went to school at Savannah State in June of 1946. Then I graduated in '49, worked up in the state of Georgia from, for one year. Then I started work in Orange^e County in '50. So when I first came to Orange County, I registered. I did not have any difficulty in registering at all in Orange County. But I do know in the, in the state of, state of Georgia where I was working that the, in the black community there, Douglas, Georgia, if you were, if the power structure had influence over you, they would encourage you to vote. But if they didn't have influence over you, though, they didn't encourage you to vote, I mean to register, I'm sorry.
- I: Mm hm.
- V: I meant register rather than vote. So you see/ I'm just giving that, uh, you a little background so you uh, just, uh—
- I: You anticipated my next question as well, as to the difficulty.
- V: Right, yeah.

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I: Have voter registration drives been held in Eatonville?

V: Uh, yes and no. uh, we have, during election time normally we somewhat put on somewhat of a personal type effort, to get people registered. But so far as a drive, per se, we have not put one on as yet. Now we do have in the making a personal, an effort to get people out to register, I think sometime in September. And I think this will be the first sort of an open, organized procedure that we've used to get people to register.

I: Um, these so-called voter registration drives that you have on a personal basis before elections, how successful are they, usually?

V: Well, we, we uh, we think that they've been maybe, let's say on a rating scale of, average...

I: ^{have you been,} What percent of the population of the eligible population have you been able to get registered?

V: Well I think that we, about 75-80% of the eligible people in Eatonville, we've been able to get them, uh, get them registered.

I: And these are held every year, as a rule?

V: Yes, right, every year. Some party or another ought to encourage certain people to get down there and get, really get, uh, registered.

I: Can you think of any factors which might prevent people in your district in Eatonville from registering?

V: Uh, no, we, I don't know of any factor in the town of Eatonville. We encourage it.

I: Mm hm.

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V: Uh, ~~XXXX~~ we have a, a, actually a, we go around during this particular time and encourage everyone to get down and get/registered, regardless of, I do know that I have some workers that get out and get the people and, we try to get them registered, and, and the emphasis is on getting them registered, and once we get them on the book then, we try to get/ to influence them then to vote a particular way, but normally the emphasis has been just on registering.

I: Okay. I have a list here of some factors which in other cities and other parts of the country have been found to impede other, ^{uh}er, impede people, prevent people from registering. Uh, would you rate each of these as to its importance in Eatonville? Uh, I understand in the first one, economic dependence on whites, well, there are no whites in Eatonville. I understand many of the people do work out of the town, is that correct?

V: Yes, uh huh, yes, quite a lot.

I: Would this come into play at all in voter registration here?

V: Um, I don't see where it, the economic dependence on whites would ~~XXXXXX~~ play any factor in registering in Eatonville. Uh, I, I think that ⁺ might somewhat help because of the exposure in the white community on issues, and the whites trying to get them to register and vote on, you know, national issues that affect all of us, you know, county-wide, and also uh, state and national. It might help to some extent, some, some influence in a fairly important or maybe ^{you} a, might rate that first, in there.

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I: Okay. What about the fear of physical violence?

V: Fear of physical violence from whites? I don't think this would have any effect on that at all. We never had any, any type of...

I: Okay, what about complicated registration forms?

V: Oh, this I don't think has, has any, any bearing in this, the fear might be from just a psychological, personal point of view that they don't want people to know that maybe they can't read, or read or write, or something like that. But so far there hasn't been any barrier there, so, to getting ^{out and} ~~in~~ ^{registering} ~~rating~~ this, I don't think this plays any factor at all.

I: Okay. Registration hours, poor registration...

V: Poor registration hours? My judgment—I think that this might have some effect on it, uh, and it does have some degree on the, on the uh, on preventing blacks from, from registering. Although we have put on drives to get people ~~KN~~ registered beyond the 5:00 deadline, even and this has been very successful. Sometimes I can/remember trying to build up on our registration numbers. We did ask that the books be open from after 5:00. And at one time we did use our own registration books, or registration lists. And uh, it was not until, uh, since we had our own registration that year that I first went into office. And we used our registration lists—must have been about '65 when we went over to the county, using the county's registration list. Or it may have been as late as '67...it was, it was '67, ~~mmmmmmmm~~ We, we started using the county's registration then.

I: Mm hm.

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V: And--but up until that time, -- '63 when I was in office ^{up until that} ~~time~~
 we had our own registration. And we did let the books be open
 until, I mean, up until then, the time of registering, it was, people
 could register, the books were open at a certain time preceding the
 election...

I: Right.

V: ^{about} ~~That was~~ every year/ from, of the first Saturday in March. And uh, about...
 There was a period in there about 15 days, that, when the books would
 be open. And uh, they could not register up until then, until they
 was open, at that particular time. And at the end of that particular
 time, limited hours there, they could, uh, we had the books set up
~~there~~ in the grocery store. And then uh, we let the clerk be in the
 office from 5-8, and uh, -- ^{le} And then when we went to the county's,
 in '67 we went to using the county's registration list, then we
 threw out a lot of people that were registered here in Eatonville.

But there again, we got them to uh, let them register out here.

I: Since the cou--since ~~you~~ ^{you've} started using the county books, have you
 had ^{registration} night time/hours for people to register who work all day?

V: No, we haven't. ^{not.}

I: Since 1967?

V: Right, we have not had them.

I: Okay. What about registration not being held often enough?

V: What, this has definitely affected here, and I think I may ~~be~~ the
comment in another question.

I: Yes.

V: Right.

I: Okay, what about the indifference of blacks, or ~~the~~ indifference of

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the people in general in this case, to voting?

V: Yeah, this definitely plays a part. You have so many people that, that are apathetic when it comes down to wanting to get involved. They are simply _____, do what they want to do anyway. They have this act of indifference ^{to the} ~~during~~/voting, and then during local and national elections. And uh, we, a number of times we try to sit down, talk to people...and uh, people believe in you, they just don't want to get out and vote. And I've been able to influence a number of people to get out and register, because it does make a difference. And we find out that some of them have this fear of the voting machine. They didn't, they thought it was much more complicated than what it ~~is~~.

I: Oh.

V: ~~How~~ where I could get them to come into the town hall and register, I could not get them to go down to Dixie Barber here and register.

I: Okay. How often is re-registration required here, by the way?

V: Well, as long as, I think the law is set up just like for the county, here is, let me follow the county regulations.

I: Mm hm.

V: I knew you'd like to say we used their _____ ? ?

I: Right.

V: -if uh, if, as long as you vote and maintain a record there, then you don't have to, but I think if you don't vote in, I think it's around two years, I'm not--well, whatever the county regulations are governing it. HA

I: Uh huh.

V: Yeah.

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V: ~~He~~ pulls him. They carried it into a lawsuit.

I: At that point you came into office?

V: uh, well, it was during that particular episode that I ended up running for office, as a compromise candidate. The two candidates that, the candidate that won and the incumbent that lost did not want to, uh, the incumbent did not want to get out of office. So I was in, the citizens didn't want to accept the winning candidate, the majority of them; so they said that they would accept a compromise and they wanted me to run. So instead of the person that--yeah, oh yeah, the person that lost did not run.

I: Hm, he didn't run!

V: He didn't re-run, right. I was the compromise candidate, so he gave up. And my~~self~~,

I: How did he maintain the office, how did he stay in the office if he'd been voted out?

V: Uh, well, the council supported him in the, in the charges that there were irregularities in~~the~~,

I: In the elections?

V: ~~It~~ in the election, and according to the Eatonville, uh, little booklet that they had at that time, uh, it was _____ and this was the thing, and this was what they based it on. So instead of the, when they carried it into court, the fellow that lost, well they decided to ask for a compromise condition.

I: I see.

V: This is what the courts went along with.

I: In all of your elections, were you able to campaign freely? Did you

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ever have any harrassment of threats?

V: No, I don't remember.

I: Okay.

V: Never had anything ~~at~~.

I: Were you handicapped by a lack of campaign money at any point along the way?

V: ^u Well, in Eatonville it's a little unique in that, so far as campaign funds are concerned, we never have had that much money. Uh, assuming that a normal election around here would cost about, getting out and posters and this type of thing. ~~44~~

I: Mm hm.

V: ~~at~~ and when I first ran for office a number of citizens involved would say, "Well, listen we'll do this for you," and uh. And so far as any radio time, or even the newspaper would carry your, would carry your platform or something, and other than that, in Eatonville it's ~~XXXXXX~~ ^{only} ~~XXXXXX~~ ^{only} been/more or less/one-to-one type thing. community, you just about know ...

I: There are some incidentals, or something like that. How much roughly do the incidentals add up to? In your first election, ^{you,} say, roughly how much? The first one/~~that~~ you won, the compromise ~~XXXX~~ election.

V: I think maybe about \$30. /

I: And then the second regular election?

V: Something like that, they usually run like that, for some publications ^{ions} and

I: In your last election what were your campaign expenses?

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- V: Mm... basically the expenses were, uh, basically, as far as the, we served a barbeque and I think everybody just chipped in. ^{le} We furnished different things, and kept the funds and things down.
- I: How much do you think the barbeque cost? ... What we're trying to get is the general assessment.
- V: Right, yeah I think--
- T: ~~of~~ of what you spent totally.
- V: Maybe--must have been about \$150, or something like that.
costs
- I: So your total campaign/for the last campaign were--rough estimate.
- V: Let's see... less than \$200.
- I: Okay. Uh, why did you decide to run for office? The first time.
- V: The first time?
- I: Yeah, the one you lost in.
- V: The first I was, successfully ran, you know, for council member.
- I: Yeah, for council.
- V: Um, well, I've always had a feel for the community in which I live, and uh, I went in as a volunteer fireman, representing the, uh, wanting to do something for the community and not having any aspirations at all for any political calling, just a volunteer fireman.
- I: Mm hm.
- V: And uh, I was one of the first volunteer firemen in the community.
out
And the commissioners, uh, we, we were always/requesting things from the county, ^m from the city commissioners, uh, council men. They didn't appear to be too, too willing to give us any funds. And uh, the firemen felt that if they had a representative on the ^{le} board, then they would have somebody on the ^{or} board that they could rely on to fight

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their cause and feed their cause before, before the commissioners.

Um, before I got on the board, we got involved into the project of building a volunteer fire, building a fire department building.

The city was interested then, in giving ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ us the land. So we solicited funds, and that's how we got our first fire house—fire station. / This sort of was the request of my peers in the fire department, that interested me in running the first time.

I: Okay. Uh, in later elections, then, your reasons for running?

V: My reasons for? As a result of getting involved into it, then I became interested in my community. Uh, we uh, thank the... I had then a, I was in the teaching profession/at that time... and people were always getting on me about things they were reading in paper in the paper. They'd ~~say~~ said, "Boy! Why do you let your mayor do this type of thing?"

And I asked one fellow in Orlando there who is an old, real old-time teacher. And every time he would see me, he'd always be punching after me, you know. Why, he's such a, he'd make it his business to see me at the meeting. Sort of, you might call it, make fun type of thing on the community. And uh, ^{this} sort of annoyed me, too, and he really had some points type of publicity we were getting. And I uh, I figured we deserved a little better publicity than that, so...

I: Who was giving you this, which paper was it that was giving you this publicity?

V: Sentinel, ~~front of the~~ Sentinel.

I: Uh, which party do you belong to, you belong to a political party?

V: Yes, I'm, Democratic party.

I: Okay. What were the two or three most important issues on which you

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lower case letters
 CAMPAIGNED, SAY, ON YOUR, IN YOUR COMPROMISE ^mcapaign, well, on the
 first council campaign what were the Big issues there?
 then, during were

V: The Big issues ~~XX~~ that particular time ~~XXX~~ the police department,
 improved fire department, and uh, recreation, no I didn't know when
 recreation ...but uh, organization of the town government. I ran on
~~the~~ organization, improved fire department and police department,
 and I think this was, these were the, were the issues.

I: Okay, in later campaigns how did the issues change, were there new
 issues coming up ?

V: Yes, uh huh. ~~There~~ ^{In} was later years, uh, the issues bacame streets,
 same—police department. The police department is usually, has always
 been an issue up until about two or three years ago. ~~We~~ ^{we} were able
 to organize an efficient police department. ~~But~~ ^{But} up until that time
 were ~~XXX~~ always asking why we can't get ahold of police ^a ^{man} when we
 want him. We did not have ^u ~~ah~~, type of communications we have now,
 24-hour communication between the station here and the police depart-
 ment, ~~uh~~ Uh, sewer, water, sewage has been the issues
 in the last campaign.

I: Have there been any other ^f issues, say, welfare or social service
 issues, ~~uh~~?

V: ^{we} Not as such in Eatonyville. We, the social programs are, the closest
 has been
 thing coming to this has been/recreation. _____

I: Okay, do you, do you think these issues were the biggest problems
 facing the community?

V: Uh, I, I really don't, personally I don't think the biggest issues
 facing our town has ever been these issues.

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I: Well what do you think are the biggest issues, the biggest problems?

V: I think the biggest problem in Eatonville has always been understanding, uh, understanding its government and an education of the citizens toward how its government works, their role into government, and the limitations of a person in office here in Eatonville, so far as the finances of the town. It more or less tend^s toward the attitude of the citizens. If someone, if the water is, goes off in Eatonville now, you know who they going to call? They going to call me. And uh, if they should come up somebody get arrested, something along like that, they going to call me. They expect me to, just because of the _____ - that they may have voted—I don't know how they voted. Some I do know may have voted and some may not. All of them think that the mayor is the government, government in Eatonville is based, centered around the mayor. So that's what I think. I say some education of ~~the~~ how the government works, and the role, and the limitations of it. A lot of think that just b^ecause they _____ . The lavish taxes in Eatonville would climb maybe about, half/acre would average less than \$50 per house. I think I'm going to get it, I'm going to get an average of this, ~~the~~ of whether ~~it~~ financial costs exist or how. They say, "Well, I paid government in Eaton-- I pay taxes in Eatonville." They think that just because they've paid me before they're fit to borrow some. Then ~~send covers in get some really sharp~~ ^{is entitles them to} special type treatments, ~~express your type treatment,~~ you know.

I: I see.

V: You ~~see~~ ^{see} what I mean? This has really been the type problem that we're faced with.

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- I: Okay, we have a few questions, then, on the conditions which have enabled blacks to win office in Florida. Voting here, elections are at large, not by, broken up into small districts, correct? How many people roughly are in the district, just people in general?
- V: Are you talking about--now when you say district, what do you mean?
- I: Eatonville, who vote in Eatonville city--in district here we're talking about Eatonville city elections, whoever is eligible to vote, or in this case, we're including all the kids--the pop-- what's the population of Eatonville?
- V: Eatonville is about 2180--population of Eatonville,
- I: Okay.
- V: We have somewhere around between ⁰⁰77 and 800 registered, registered voters.
- I: Okay. And all the people here are black, correct?
- V: 99 and 9/10ths percent. We do have maybe one, two, three--we have uh, we expanded our city limits to the west. We took in one family. I think they^{re} is a mixed couple that's living, ~~KKKK~~ recently moved here, and there was a white couple that lives^d here. I think they've gone now.
- I: Okay. What percentage of those who are registered to vote do you estimate have actually voted when you were elected, not necessarily for you but just in the elections that you were elected in? uh, the first time, say, when you ran for councilman first.
- V: I'd say always would run about, during that particular time, it ran about ... in that particular time I would say at least 80-90%.
- I: Okay, as we get into,

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That's
V: /the first time.

I: ~~uh~~ Okay, as we get into the '60's, uh, in '64 there was election,
correct?

V: Yeah, we uh, we had an election every year in Eatonville.

I: ~~Oh~~ Certain terms are--the terms are staggered?

V: Yeah, okay, now -- the even years we have mayor, two councilmen
elected.

I: Right.

V: Okay, the odd years we have 3 councilmen, /so we have 3 and 3 every
year. I: Okay. V:)

I: Okay, so in '64 there was an election for mayor.

V: ~~MM~~...yeah.

I: So how, what percent--at which point you were running?

V: Mm hm.

I: So what percent age again, was it still up around 80 or 90% ?

V: Yes, uh huh, still up 80^{to} 90%.

I: When did it start to go down and how far down it go?

V: Well, during my whole ^{seven} 7 times in, you know, running, the last time
I--first time I didn't have any opposition at all, uh, it may have
come down to at least about 80%, but it's never been below 80, uh,
it's never below 80. Usually during the, the mayor--I feel like I'm
saying, see--the years the mayor runs, you get more people voting
than at any other time because, like I say, in Eatonville everything
is built around the mayor, and the people really get out and vote
then. Uh, they, uh, ~~KHAY~~ we had a real good turnout during the

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last, this was we call an off-year one, when just the councilmen ran, we had a pretty good turnout because there were issues in this last election that caused people to go out, I imagine than usual. I read--do you remember reading anything about Eatonville?

I: Uh, no. We looked around and we couldn't find very much about Eatonville.

V: You didn't?

I: Last year I don't remember reading anything about it.

V: You don't remember--you didn't read, you didn't get any of the headlines last year?

I: I don't think so, no, what happened last year?

V: You didn't?

I: Hm mm.

V: I know they had ~~at~~ ... I thought everybody heard about Eatonville then!

I: No, what, what happened.

V: Uh, we had a real, one of the hottest things going in here, and we made the headlines, about every day, we had a grand jury investigation of the finances of the town.

I: Oh! What was turned up in that investigation?

V: I was found with a conflict of interest.

I: I see. What was the conflict of interest?

V: Was the ^{at} Uh, in 1970 I entered into a contract to build the jail, and conflict of interest was that I was, by me being mayor, and I couldn't enter into an agreement to do business with myself. I think it was a technicality. But what ~~is~~ happened with the thing

was that as you stay in office you get political enemies, you get anti-people, you know. The longer you stay in there, the more of this type of thing. And you had some councilmen that were staying on the Board, that were on the board a long time that were desirous of becoming mayor, so they figured that the only thing they could to get to become mayor was to get me out of office through some way or another.

I: I see.

V: So that was the thing behind this thing.

I: Were those councilmen coming out then for election last year?

V: Yes, uh huh, yes they were.

I: And did they win...

V: No.

I: ...or lose.

V: They lost.

I: I see. Who were those councilmen, if you don't mind my asking?

V: Randolph and, uh, Tibbs.

I: I see.

V: And Roosevelt Scott, Scott also lost. Did you have Scott on your list?

I: Yes, Scott's on our list.

V: Scott's on your list.

I: He lives out in Maitland I believe doesn't he?

V: Yes, uh huh.

I: Um, okay then, so you had a very high turn out last year?

V: Right, uh huh.

I: Normally what's a turnout in off year?

V: Uh, usually we get about, uh, less than 300 people.

I: Okay. What's the largest number of opponents you've ever had run against you in any election?

V: Three, I've had two opponents run against me. Two's the largest.

I: Okay, you said you were unopposed in '64?

V: No, no in...

I: '63?

V: ...'74.

I: '74 you were unopposed. Okay, how many opponents did you have in '64?

V: Three, two opponents, there was three of us.

I: And how many did you have in '66?

V: Uh, three.

I: And in '68?

V: Uh, one.

I: And '70?

V: Uh, one.

I: And then in '72 how many did you have?

V: One.

I: Okay, the next group of questions here is, well first before we go into that, what percentage in your elections recently, what percentage did, for instance... in '74 you were unopposed.

V: Right.

I: In '72 what percentage of the total vote did you get?

V: I forget, in '74 I was unopposed.

I: Right in '72 what percentage of the total vote?

V: Uh, ^{I got} ~~60~~... about 66-67 percent.

I: Okay. The next group of questions here are asked to determine how well black officials in Florida have been able to benefit those that they represent. How effective have you been? In what ways do you think that you have helped blacks, or in other words all the people in your district by holding office?

V: Right, well, I think that as a result of my holding office here in the town of Eatonville I've been able to make some inroads into letting people know that they, that their town is being well represented throughout the state of Florida. My, uh, in my getting around throughout the state. That's one. Number two we've been able to get a number of federal programs, federal funds I mean, in the town here as results of my leadership. Uh, we've been able to involve people in the government. And all organized and put them on committees and let them see what they can do for their town. We've been, uh, involved in getting our people, getting them involved in issues during the national and state and local elections. And I think these are basically things that have helped the blacks and are...

I: Okay...

V: ...necessary and also serve as an image for blacks throughout, throughout this area. And I think that we, we do create quite an interest when I

do run, even in the white community. I have this, I have a number of white supporters that keep up with Eatonville much more than a number of citizens in the town. And they sort of pull for me now and then. Uh, involved in the council of local governments here which I was elected their chairman in, oh, 1970. The elected. We had a council of local governments which the mayor commissioners and so forth, and I was elected chairman therefore, in '70. And uh, this type of thing, sort of let them know that blacks can.

I: We have a, first off what if anything do you think has prevented you from doing a better job, especially in regard to benefiting the people in your district?

V: Well I think basically with the, uh, these attitudes of people that I have, I think their lack of participation, their lack of coming in, volunteer, trying to do something for the community. Uh, I would think this probably has been the thing that has hampered me more than anything else. I feel that the man made by so many of us citizens feel that we have a chest of funds up there that we go to and do what we want to do. The funds are just not there. And relating with that, I think that, I think funds have been, the lack of funds that I can hire persons, technical assistant people into a town to help the town is one of the things now that I've been lacking. It's been difficult, I can't, no way in the world for me to do it all myself. And I needed technical people on my staff so that I could get, so the lack of funds for high technical assistant people, technical people on my staff, so that we could...

I: What, what would be an example of a, a technical assistant?

V: Well, for example we have just recently hired a city planner. We hired him under the CETA program. Uh, we have just recently, when I say this year here, hired a projects coordinator, federal ^{and} state project coordinator to go for the federal funds. We just recently hired a, been able to put a librarian on the staff to work with the little kids. Just recently put a full time recreational person on the staff. And uh, these are just some areas there, what I call a technical assistant that would help in providing the types of staff so that I can really get into helping people. Uh, we just, of course we didn't keep him long, we were involved in putting a finance director, all of these are persons on the staff that can somewhat take care of something. Take the load off me. Uh, we hired a finance director in '72, I believe. And uh, here again, we, as results of putting technical people on, we drain our treasury, and thereby we were limited in providing along with the technical assistant, then you got to have some money to implement this type of recommendation, the things necessary to go with a good planning program, to go with a good recreational program, to go with a good librarian, see what I mean.

I: Okay I have a, another little slip there, fill it out please. List the factors that have been found to limit or to prevent black elected officials from doing a good job. The first one there, the office has no real authority. In other words, the man gets elected, ^{and} he discovers that he really can't do anything because either after he's elected or

before he's elected the powers of the office are limited or removed to the point where he can't do what he set out to do. Have you found a limitation of authority in you office has prevented you from doing what you want to do?

V: No, uh, not since I've been on the, been as mayor. Uh, I have always had very good cooperative council up until '74 during the time of the investigation. Uh, '73 I believe it started turning and uh, the uh, the type of government that we have is a strong mayor, council strong ability. And uh, by me being chairman of the board, by me being the administrative officer for the town.

I: Right.

V: Well here again, now it might seem that you can stronghold these people by you being in these positions. But you've got to be able to win the influence of the council to get them to vote with you. And I think that this has been the cause of my relationship with the council in presenting positive and good programs. I never have just presented something to the council for some personal benefit...

END OF SIDE ONE

... anything to the council that was not

V: [^] in my opinion for the best interest of the community. And uh, as a result of that we've been able to get the council to go up on, go with me because of their confidence and trust in my ability to administer the town. I'm somewhat always, I've always, uh, acted very conservative in my approach to the funds. Uh, and as a result of that we have always been able to have a confidence and trust of the government, and I've been able very much to do the things that our money would let us do.

I: Which brings up the next applicable one here. Do you think that lack of revenue has been very important, fairly important, or not important in preventing you from what you wanted to get done.

V: Oh yes, very important in terms of that.

I: Okay.

V: Well, when I first took office the funds of the town or the budget for the first audit reveals _____ had a general revenue of \$24,000.

I: So what's the general revenue now?

V: Uh, general revenue now is running pretty close to about \$400,000.

I: What about unfamiliarity with administrative duties. When you first came into the, when you first came into the council did it hinder you then, and then when you finally got into the mayor's position, did you then have new duties which you were unfamiliar with. And if so, in either case, how important would you say this was?

V: Well, after first getting into the city council in 1958 that seemed to arouse my interest in government, ^{as} as result^s of that. I, I started

school myself in terms of reading about local governments, uh, reading about government, taking a very interested, how other cities ran, I read the paper rather thoroughly and I, uh, kept up with things and I, uh, every, even the local government. I would go down, sit in on their meetings. But even this, I would think that there were some things, not actually holding the office yourself and not having any experience in administration as such there. This was the most, uh, difficult thing that I did have. But by having a, a good council that they were willing, they encouraged me to attend as many meetings as I possible^y could. They supported me. And as^a results^s of that I, uh, was able to cope with the situation. I found out this, that government is not run as a social organization, which so many people feel. You have your charter, you go by charter, that's it. And this was the thing when I tried to familiarize myself with the charter. And basically we did not have too much of a charter. Our charter was, uh, written in 19... in 1887, original charter. I think we had to revise it in 1921.

I: When, has it, it's been revised now.

V: We revised it in 1967.

I: What about lack of cooperation from you, I think you've said some of this before, just briefly would you say that it's very important, or fairly important, the lack of cooperation from the local citizens?

V: Yeah, uh, we, you know, lack of the understanding there. But even here, and the wa^ys that you have it here. Uh, in order for Eatonville,

a small town such as Eatonville, now, we can't just, uh, for to have survived in these trying times, we could not have survived without the cooperation of even whites. Uh, the city of Maitland there has been quite, uh...

I: How have they helped?

V: ...instrumental in providing help. Uh, when I first went in office, I received a call, whatever we can do here in the areas of technical advise, technical assistance, we'll be happy to do that for you. And one of the most political agencies that could help Eatonville has been the Orange County Commissioners. And uh, when I took office, the, should I say the way that the government operated a little different than now, they were real helpful in providing assistance to us. We could go to the ^{the} County ^{the} Commissioners when I first got in office and say listen, we'd like for you to come by grade our streets for us. We're paying county taxes, they would come out and do this for us. ^{They} ~~We~~ didn't have laws as such for, that they followed to the T. They felt that we were a part of the Orange County community and they would come in and assist us. I've gone to county commissioners meetings up there. And uh, they, when I walk in the meeting they have even stopped, ^{e 2} ~~having~~ adjournment. They did not deal with me in the open, they dealt me in the back room. Which means that ^{Eatonville} ~~even then~~, actually, I profited by that because they usually didn't let me come out with nothing in the paper that they were helping Eatonville, but they always did it in the background. This type of thing has been able...

I: Do they still continue to help Eatonville?

V: No, no, no, we get very little help from...

I: But all the help that you did get years ago when you first came in office was gotten through back room conferences.

V: Right, uh huh, and they were democrats. And the republicans got in, but the republicans didn't get too many votes from out here and as results of that they always threw, throw this up in my face, and they still do.

I: What about the lack of cooper, do you notice a lack of cooperation from state officials?

V: Uh, no I do not, uh, now we get real good cooperation from the, from state officials. The community affairs department in the state of Florida has been real helpful to us in providing information and providing us with answers [?] and things that we inquire about. The League of Cities, ~~state of Florida~~ they'd come right in there and do what we asked them to do in any type of technical assistance we asked for. Since recently they've organized the community affairs department, ^{and} ^{the} As results of that they've been able to provide us with some technical assistance and also some studies. They did a study they provided funds to do a study of Eatonville. Uh, which we, the study itself was good. We don't think that we needed a study as such. They did not consult us of whether or not we needed this type of study or not.

I: What was the studies on basically?

V: Uh, it was based on uh, basic problems and some type of approaches, recommendations for improvement. In fact we don't have the, we don't have a written copy of the report as yet, but we hope to get it.

I: What about the federal officials? Have you had any problems, have they, has lack of cooperation from federal officials hindered you in doing your job?

V: Uh, well it's ^{with} the federal government you're tied up with too much bureaucracy. In times of things they always have it so tied up there that you won't even qualify to fit some of the programs that they did have. Uh, for an example, uh, we went to them for, in '67, we went to them for assistance for sewer program here in the town. And it took them from '67 to 1973 to, uh, '72, to really consummate a project that we were so ^{desperately} ~~deathly~~ in need of. That was a sewer program. And uh, and they have it so written that by a community of this size, you always fall in between some programs there that you, you either qualify for or you don't or you over-qualify for 'em. One way, you don't qualify in such as you don't come up to the standard or you go over the standard. And this has always been our problem.

I: I see. Do you think that white officials treat you differently from other officials from, do they treat you differently because you're a black when you're dealing with federal officials, [^] state officials, county officials. Uh, do you find that they take you as a spokesman for the blacks in Eatonville or just for blacks [^] in general and

you're not able to raise other issues. Do you have any of these problems?

V: I've, uh, I have found this a lot of time, uh, in some instances the hand of help has been genuine and maybe in some cases it's been somewhat superficial, hasn't been the genuine type thing. A lot of 'em think that well, we talk, you know, bill a sale of goods ^{everything} about and then when you get down to the meat of the thing a lot of times, and especially with the federal government, they somewhat told you one thing, then come time to deliver then it's another ballgame. I find this to be true in a number, in a number of instances.

I: What services do you think, uh, what services have you provided the people in your district that they didn't have before you took office? Uh, some, just a few examples of these if you would.

V: Well, let's start with the police department. When I took office, uh, the police department, ^{I mean,} the police officers were wearing anything the wanted to on duty. They did not have a uniform as such. Uh, did not have around the clock communications. We, uh, brought the police department up from 2 percent to 90 percent.

I: 2 percent to 90 percent being on what scale, percent of...?

V: In terms of, uh, efficiency.

I: Okay.

V: On a scale in other words.

I: Any other areas do you think have...

V: Oh yes.

I: The sewer system is one of them.

V: The sewer system we have had a, we have a 100 percent sewer system in the town which we can boast of, so many cities can't say that. Although they may have, uh, it available there, but so far as them actually hooked up or anything like that I don't think so, ^{be} cause there's very few cities can say that. Uh, we have brought the fire department up from volunteer firemen to a full time fire department. We've been able to get a rating to nine in the fire department. Been able to get some, uh, up-to-date police station there. We've been able to provide a librarian, we've been able to provide a recreational department. This is our second year in providing a food program for underprivileged in the community. And uh, we have that tied in with the recreational department. And uh, we have one of the best programs we think in the entire state so far as the recreation and for the program going on and involving, involving kids. We've been able to pave some streets since we've been in office. We've been able to organize an efficient record keeping system and staff, qualified staff, _____ we have staff. When I first took office we had no full time employees up until now we have a staff of forty-one. These are basically ~~some~~ areas that we have been able to make some improvements.

I: Okay, I have a, another check list here. If you would just very briefly check how you, how uh, how effective you have been in each

of those areas, if you'll just a pencil and quickly go down the columns there.

V: Oh yeah.

I: The catagories are self-explanitory. We've talked about most of them.

V: In the police protection I think I've been very effective. Uh, streets and roads, somewhat. Housing, uh, I don't think we deal, dealt with that. Employment: somewhat effective. Uh, and here again as long as I felt that we have some people that need jobs then, then I, uh, I could not give them no more than that. Parks and recreation: somewhat. Water, sewer and garbage, very effective. Uh, Somewhat water and sewer and garbage very effective there in terms of that. Now I have to seperate the sewer and garbage in being very effective and the water I have to say we're somewhat in the water department there. In education we don't feel that we get into that, but I think that even in the field of education, this being my profession, uh, I think I've even been somewhat effective in education, encouraging boys and girls to go to school and this kind of thing. They have a school in the community that I worked, cooperative^{ed} with the school programs and whatever I could do. From that point of view then we think that we have been. But so far as the structure of the taxes and the way that they are so structured, this is a county function, a district function and not a local function there if you take it from a financial point of view. Uh, health and

hospitals, this is more or less another county function. The cities do not, do not deal in, although we try to work with agencies that do do this, and trying to get them to come into our community. For example sickle cell anemia, uh, sickle cell anemia program there, we, we're trying to get a testing program out here. These are basically it.

I ♯: Okay, finally on the bottom there is fire protection.

V ♯: Oh yeah, fire prtotection there. We have been somewhat effective in that because of our rating, that we've been able to get a full time fire department from that. It's not as well as we would like to do. But under circumstances it has been somewhat effective there.

I ♯: Now, you mentioned that you've been able to federal funds and federal grants and revenue sharing and things of this nature and, uh, could you mention just a few specific grants and amounts of those grants?

V ♯: Oh yeah, well we, under the sewer program we got, we were able to get, uh, ⁴⁰⁰ ~~four hundred~~ and, or \$350 grant under the sewer program, \$350,000. I meant. Sewer program we got 60... are you talking about federal?

I ♯: Yeah, it's...

V ♯: Federal trade...

I ♯: ...^{ee} federal.

V ♯: Federal then we've been able to do that. We've been able to get revenue sharing comes to about \$40,000 each year.

I ♯: Okay.

V ♯: So including the five year thing it would be about \$200,000 for the

entire period of the present appropriations.

I: Have you as an elected, is there another major grant you wanted to mention?

V: Well I think that's basically, so far as the federal government is concerned; *it.*

I: Okay. Have you as an elected official or as part of the city government league or anything in that area been able to bring industry or retail stores into the area, into Eatonville particularly?

V: No, no.

I: No, okay. Uh, has there been any growth in terms of industry or business over the last ten years.

V: Yeah, I would, uh, basically you got to understand Eatonville in terms of the type of community. This is basically a residential community. Due to the structure of the community I don't think we gonna ever get too many industries into the community. As it is so organized and so structured now, the orange county school board owns about ^{43 percent} ~~forty three~~% of the taxable land within the town of Eatonville.

I: What about the total land area, how much do they have?

V: Uh, about 550 acres, I believe.

I: And so that's what percentage of all land taxable and non-taxable what percentage would you say they own?

V: Well, what I'm saying is that I think our overall taxable land runs right about \$ 3,000,000 taxable, run about ⁵⁰ ~~fifty~~ percent. Because

you got about ⁴³~~forty-three~~ percent owned by the school board and then you got the school board, other non-profit organizations which comes up to about ⁵⁰~~fifty~~ percent. So you have less than \$6,000,000 in all about \$3,000,000 ^{able.} taxes.

I: So how, how much does the city get a year in tax?

V: In tax we get about \$40,000.

I: Okay you mentioned that there is a \$400,000 city budget now, general revenue?

V: Right.

I: Besides taxes and the federal grants which you mentioned, what makes up then the rest of it, what, what say are the major components, the major sources of the city's budget?

V: Uh, I was trying to put out one of my budgets so I could actually give it to you _____. I have a copy here. there were three budgets. Okay now, we had, uh, we had revenue sharing from the state, the revenues here are federal,

I: How much do you get from each of those?

V: In uh, in '73 we got, uh, state about 137,000. Now this was, I would think it would be about the same thing, there wouldn't be too much difference in this.

I: Okay.

V: In, uh, federal revenue sharing we got 76,000, state grants we got 86,000, profit taxes equal 32,000, licences and permits were 9,000, fines and costs at 41,000, other taxes 32,000, and other revenues

33,000. That's basically I think now about it.

I: Okay.

V: Budget there about 450,000.

I: That covers it. Do you think that local government, city of Eatonville, hiring practices are fair, or is there any discrimination on the basis of either race or, uh, where you live, something of that nature?

V: Uh, it...

I: What, say, section of town you live or...

V: No, we don't have any restrictions so far as employment practices here, if they live in. We have a city planner's ^{hite}wife, financial directors ^{hite}wife, an engineer's ^{hite}wife, uh, we do use, uh, accounting firm, auditing firm is ^{white}quite, I think that even in all of these areas we have had applications from, from blacks to apply for this. Our prosecuting attorney for the town of Eatonville is white. We have one white dispatcher. We did have two white dispatchers, but one quit a couple weeks ago. But basically that's ^{our}all composition. And I don't know, uh, of course I've been charged with discrimination in my, in my methods of trying to do something. I don't, I don't in an all white, all black community I don't see how you, although they've charged us in terms of doing this.

I: I see.

V: But ^{that's}basically the general structure here.

I: Okay, uh, you, do you think that federal revenue sharing has helped

the district, or Eatonville, and that it's worthwhile?

V: Oh yes, no, no doubt about the revenue sharing. ^{we get} I think I said
we get an average of about \$40,000 a year and certainly it is
one of the ways of helping us survive.

I: Okay, have there been any, uh, black protests or sit ins or riots,
boycotts in Eatonville in the last ten years? Civil disturbances?

V: So far there hasn't been anything in Eatonville. We came close
to one in 1967 when they changed the name of the school over there,
this was the closest we did have to that type of order.

I: What did they change the name from?

V: ^hThey changed it from Hungerford High School to Wymore Tech. Hungerford
School, uh, did have so much meaning to so many boys and girls in
this area. We felt that Wymore Tech, Wymore wasn't tied into anything
it didn't have no meaning. This was the fact.

I: Is it now called Wymore Tech?

V: Yes, uh huh.

I: Noticed that someone had said it's over near, something was over
near the Hungerford School.

V: We uh, I exerted quite a bit of efforts to keep the plan from
coming, you know the boycott. Had I known what I know now I would
not have stopped it.

I: Well what changes it so that you would not stop it now that you
would stop it then? What do you think?

V: I found out that it's so difficult to sit down and talk to a group
of political figures that made up there mind to do something, thinking

you come out on a fair deal. They made up their mind, and you got to exert as much public interest. I think from this point of view, letting the political figures know how you feel about something rather than swallowing things as they come by, you have to do this.

I: I see. Okay the next group of questions are used just to enable an assesment of black politics in Florida in general. Uh, they don't need to be answered in depth except for the next one, not this coming one. Briefly what do you think of Governor Ruben Askew, do you think he's been favorably in attitude in policy toward black in Florida or not?

V: I think Askew has been very instrumental in setting up policies that effected blacks. Uh, for example, one are ^a ~~there~~ ^l on terms of the various boards, I don't how many of the various professional occupational department, uh, I think they have about pretty close, about twenty-seven different boards. I think that one of his policies was to have a black on every one of those boards. I think that this is one area where the blacks have been able to get into where the decisions are made. And unless the blacks get down to where the decisions are made, then they can help determine policies. They may not necessarily help blacks per se, ^{but certainly} ~~per se~~ they won't be against blacks, 'cause they don't want to be a, be somewhat of a backset for them, ^{ies} ~~_____~~ policy that would not be too much in their favor. I think this has been one area that

I do hope that... and in philosophy in terms of speaking out for people, I think it's been one of the strongest since Leroy Collins was governor before. I thought Leroy Collins when he said that it was unfair, he didn't think it was morally wrong for people to take your money over the counter and not, still deny you a public facility as a bathroom, was very strong back in the ^{60s} ~~sixties~~. And I heard Leroy, I mean Askew say some things right here in Orange County in terms of busing and in terms of equality of people that it would take a strong government to get in Orange County now, Orange County is ultra-conservative.

I: What is your opinion of, I'm not familiar with who all the state representatives and senators are here, but what is your opinion of the representatives and senators to the state legislature from this area?

V: In this area I think it has been very, very conservative.

I: Do you think they've been fair to blacks or favorable or unfavorable, or...?

V: I would think maybe in summing it up all the way, may have been probably, they may have tilt the scale towards more unfavorable than favorable in terms of overall action because they, I think ^{blacks} have not, we don't have enough blacks registered, and they run state wide, their not just here, and county wide as results the whites have always out numbered the blacks in their district. If we could all more blacks registered so that they could, fairly think we could have the ears of these people.

- I: Do you think that winning, this is the big question, I suppose, do you think that winning and holding office in Florida has been worth the effort? Do you think that it, that it has paid off for you to get and hold an elected office here?
- V: Uh, I think so. Uh, see when I took office there was a lot of things going on in Eatonville that were not considered as desirable as a community where you would be proud to live. A community where everything that was in the news was somewhat of a backlash to you or somewhat of an anti to you and this is the way that the paper normally did it, anything favorable in fact they still do it. I'm on them about it everyday by trying to do some of the good things in part, publishing the good of Eatonville rather than just the bad part. But uh, I think I've been able and instrumental in providing a leadership in Eatonville where in that the people that ^{are} living here are not ashamed to say that they live here. They're proud that they live in Eatonville. And up until the time we had this investigation, of course everything came out ¹/₁ all right, except that little bit. But even at that I think that it was worth it to me. I think I've become a much stronger candidate, a person as a mayor and as an individual. Spiritually, morally, everything but financial. And uh, ^{from} that point of view I think the people are proud of Eatonville.
- I: Okay, the uh, last group of questions here is just used to compile a general composite of black elected officials. You were first elected in 1958 to councilman and then in 1963 you became mayor, correct?

V: Yes.

I: And you took office in '63. Uh, you've run for office seven times? ~~AAAAAAAAAAAA~~ Now, you've run for office seven times right? Uh, do you mind my asking how old are you?

V: No, fifty-one.

I: You certainly don't look it. What is your occupation, what was your occupation, you were a teacher when you were first elected and then the volunteer fire department.

V: Yes.

I: What is your occupation now?

V: Well, I am a business man carrying on a business of a cabinet shop and a general contractor.

I: Do you, general contracting as a, general contracting building houses and... all?

V: Yes, right.

I: Okay. Uh, do you have any other occupation or source of income aside from your contracting, cabinet making and political office?

V: No.

I: Okay, what is the salary that you get from your elected position?

V: Well, I would say during the bulk of the time that I've been in office, uh, I would think that I was, they started paying me \$40 a month.

I: What do they pay you now?

V: Uh, then it went up to \$100 and it's been off and on, and it was up

until last month \$200 per month for an administrator, for the amount of time that's necessary to put in office areas. And I would think that I spend at least two to three hours per day with the town government. And up until, uh, the last, the third tuesday in last month I recommended to the council that we do not get any salary at all because of the financial condition of our general fund. So we're not getting anything now. ^{Neither} ^ the council and even the mayor get anything.

I: Okay, what is...

V: Let, let me give you my philosophy on this. I don't think, I think that, I think the political offices are paid a little bit too much for their services. Uh, I think that political offices, I think that this is the way the forefathers, uh, somewhat organized and somewhat structured it, because I think there should be some sacrifice on the part of an individual serving his country. You been paying for everying then you got professional people getting into office that, and this is why you have so many lawyers I think in political office. I think there should be some kind of sacrifice made on an individual who holds a public office. Now there's some such as your governor maybe he should, take all of his time and thing, you take the state legislature. They, with the salary that they're getting, I think that's too, too much money. Now see right here in Eatonville, ^[sic, remuneration] Eatonville's a small community and I think some remuneration could be, should be made, but I don't think it should be commensury with

what a person get out there, not unless it is full time, full time then.

I: Okay, I see the point. Okay what is the level of your education, what's the farthest you've gone then, you've...

V: Well...

I: Would, would you say what, what year did you get through equivalency and all added together. You would say... well I'd say you've had the equivalent of a high school education or would you say you've had the equivalent of, uh, junior college, or where would you say?

V: The equivalent of a Ph.D. (chuckle). Well, I, uh, I, I didn't finish high school.

I: Right.

V: But I did finish college.

I: You did finish college?

V: Yeah, I did finish college and also I finished, uh, I finished, uh, my master's degree.

I: Where'd you get your master's degree?

V: Peoria, Illinois.

I: I see, that's impressive. What church do you belong to?

V: I belong to a protestant Baptist church.

I: Is that the AME, or...

V: No, this is the Baptist. I don't belong to a church in Eatonville.

I: Oh.

V: I, uh, I belong to a church in my hometown that I grew up, still have

my membership there. It's a little community about three miles from here, uh, that I, that's always maintained my membership there. Of course people have asked me why don't I belong to Eatonville. I think still owe something or other to my hometown. I, so often people get up and the first thing they do is try to affiliate themselves with a larger church, larger community, and uh, I maintain my membership there. I think we have about a membership of about 30 maybe at the most.

I: Are you an official in your church?

V: Uh, yes, uh, I, I served as Sunday school teacher up until a few years ago. They're trying to get me back, and which I'm considering seriously taking that back. And also I serve on the trustee board, and chairman of the building committee.

I: Are there any other, besides the city government league and being mayor, are there any other community organizations or activities that you're involved in?

V: Yes.

I: Uh, could you give us a brief summary please?

V: Well, uh, I'm a member of the southern conference of black mayors, which I'm the representative for the blacks through this organization. I also serve as, on the chairman of the, on the advisor board for the vocational department at Seminole Junior College, I serve on the black advisory committee on the, uh, Valencia Junior College. I serve as the Board of director on the Minority Contractors

Association based in Tampa. Two or three little other things scattered around, I can hardly remember.

I: Okay. Uh, what did your father do?

V: My father was a farmer, truck farmer, that's how I came, I came up on the farm.

I: I see. Uh, are you married?

V: Yes.

I: And do you have children?

V: Yes, I have five children.

I: What effects then have running for and holding office over these years had on yourself and your family in terms of your social life?

V: Yeah, I think that my family has, uh, really suffered as results of me holding a political office because I have spent so little time with my family. They understand that, they have to have, I look at it in terms of them having a happy community in which that they'll be proud of. That they wouldn't mind coming back to. And uh, and they've been very cooperative with me. And uh, I think that from this point of view they have been the ones that suffer because I won't spend that much time with them.

I: Okay. What, uh, what do you feel is the key, you've been a successful man in politics. You've held office now for fifteen years, longer than that I suppose. You started in 1958. What do you see as the key to your success. Why, why do you think that you have remained in office, that you're so popular with the voters, uh, what factors do

you think are important in this?

V: Well I think the, I think my success has been on my ability to, uh ,
work with people, and my ability to tell them the facts as I see it,
be truthful. I think this might be a contributive factor because
uh, I...

END OF TAPE A

I: Personally, who^y do you like, or dislike your job? You've been here for a long time so I would assume that you like the job.

Q Right?

Q So personally why do you like it, uh, what does it...

V: Well I think maybe I was born with the, uh, innate drive there to probably to help people. And I always desire in helping and doing things for people. And being the mayor of Eatonville has provided me with the position of trying, of being where I can help the most people. And uh, I often think of, you know, some, so many people have used the local office and then they have a desire to move into other areas, uh, I think that being here as the mayor of Eatonville has somewhat wore me out to the extent that I, uh, I have no other political ambition other than trying to do this and trying to organize and help Eatonville. Put it in some position so that when I leave out of office that another person would come in and be able to take up where, to this point, and take it on, rather than trying to do away with what I have tried to accumulate.

I: Dr. Button.

B: Hi there Mr. Vereen.

V: How you doing sir. You didn't have no trouble finding us?

B: I'm Dr. Jim Button.

V: I'm Nat Vereen, how do you do.

B: Yeah, I was at your house and then I was wondering around here, I didn't know exactly where you were.

I: I do have, uh, just a couple more questions to wrap it up. First

off, how long have blacks, how long has it been since whites left Eatonville and it became an all black town?

V: Well, basically, uh, go back to the history of Eatonville. The history of Eatonville has been a, been an all-black town. It was incorporated by all blacks. And the reason for this, even Maitland before Eatonville was incorporate, blacks ran for office in Maitland, a neighboring town. And blacks were elected to office in Eatonville, and the black, first chief of police in Maitland was black. And so after blacks were being successful in politics in Maitland, Maitland's answer to that was why don't you organize your own town? So that you can have these positions and then you won't have to be coming over here running for our offices. And uh, as a result of that, Eatonville was organized back^{then} and incorporated. I think they had twenty-seven registered voters at that time.

I: Eatonville, the census tells us that Eatonville has more than doubled in size between the period 1960 and 1970. Has this phenomenal growth rate continued over the last few years, or has it slowed down some?

V: It has slowed down tremendously. Uh, we worked hard for a sewer program so that we could the type of building permits, issue permits that caused Eatonville to grow, to get some multi-family units, such as apartments, condos, and the like. When we got our sewer program, we applied for some permits for a nursery home down there, they say that we can't give you a permit for that because you got

to have a sewer to get a nursery in town. We were able to get around those regulations and we were able to get a nursery built through special conditions there. A fellow applied for a motel and they told him that they would not issue him a permit to put in septic tank, although we issue our permits, the health department does issue permits for septic tanks.

I: Right.

V: So we saw then that there was a need to get our sewer program so that we could get this type of structure. So after the, uh, after the after we got our sewer program going we got it completed then a moritorium was issued by the state of Florida because we entered into agreement with the city of Altamonte to treat our sewers. And then their plant was found inadequate to continue on, with continued adding on customers. So they placed a moritorium since '72 we have had a moritorium on all building permits on the town of Eatonville up until two weeks ago we did get a letter releasing fifty permits to be issued to connect on to the sewer plant. And since the two weeks we've had applications for 1, 2, 3, 4, we've used five of those fifty so far.

I: Okay. What is the average income in Eatonville?

V: Uh, I think that, uh...

I: And then as well, what is the range, the low to the high?

V: Okay let me give it to you factual. Uh, we have a general development comprehensive plan for the town of Eatonville that was done by Associates out of Sarasota, Florida. ^{This} ~~X~~ was done in

1973 and they documented all of the number of areas here in terms of finances and so forth, so let me find the figures that they came up with and I can give it to you factual. They did a study on the, uh, they did four areas, the existing land using inventory analysis, population analysis, ~~projection~~ projection, economics and tax base analysis and general development plan. Okay now I got it here. Income range, this is 1972.

I: Okay.

V: Uh, they came up with nearly 15% of the population was under 3,000. 3,000 and under. 19% 3,000 - 4,999. 33% between the range of 5,000 - 7,499. 19% between the range of 7,500 - 9,999. 8% 10,000 - 11,000. And 6% 12,000 and over. And this is a, although this is documented by them in terms of the state, I think this is maybe very conservative approach there. I think it was...

I: Okay.

V: ...much higher than that. Because, well, this is one area that in the black community they're very conservative about giving you what you make, what they make. And uh, I would say that these are, this under that philosophy that you're not going, it'd be difficult to define these ranges in the black community. Now that's one thing that is figured that white's want to know the businesses, consequently whites take the population and take the census, they look real conservative at it.

I: Okay. Finally we just, that concludes the interview thank you very much.

Uh, before I turn the tape off there's one other thing I'd like to ask you about. At the University of Florida we have what's called the Oral History Project in which they collect tapes and transcripts of tapes of elected officials and important people and save them for scholars to use. They're not a matter of public record, it's strictly for scholarly use in the University libraries. Uh, what will happen is, if you give us a tentative agreement now, they'll take the tape and transcribe it. And they'll send you sometime between now and I guess a year from now, how ever long it takes them to get around to doing these things, a copy of the transcript which you will have the right to edit and ^edelete parts and change parts, or if you wish, reject the whole thing and say they can't use it. And they'll send you a release form along with this so that you can release the tape or the edited transcript. Would you be interested or would you have any objections against having, let, having us let the Oral History Project have this tape after we're done with it?

V: Uh, I would have no objection to letting them have it.

I: And transcribe it.

V: And transcribe it, but here again I would like to look at what I have said...

I: Yes.

V: ...before I...

I: Before they release it they will send you a transcript.

B: And you can decide not to release it if you look it over and decide

not to.

V: Right, yeah. Just off hand I don't think I've said anything that
I wouldn't mind being made public.

B: You can leave off portions too.

V: Yeah, uh huh.

I: Okay, thank you very much sir.

END OF TAPE B