

SUB: Alonzo Williams

INT: "Button Project"

PLACE: Apopka

JF

NOV. 12, 1980

B: What year were you, did you first register to vote?

W: What year I registered to vote, probably about in 1968.

B: And what year were you, you were eligible when you were (21) then, right?

W: Right.

B: Did the local registrars ever turn you down when you went?

W: No.

B: Have voter registration drives ever been held in your district?

W: Yes.

B: Do you remember the group that, that put this on, that uh?

W: Well I would say ^{it was} the NAACP, I couldn't say definitely. I never was involved with it.

B: Do you remember ^{W:} let's see uh ^{B:} do you remember about when these drives were held?

W: Uh . . .

B: Like before ^{'60} ~~1960~~ between ^{'60} 1960 and ^{'64} 1964, just a rough . . .

W: I can't remember back in there, I don't guess so. 'Bout six years ago I would ^{now} say [^] That's as far back as I can remember _____ . I'm talking about six or seven years ago.

B: Do you remember how successful these were?

W: Yeah, they registered quite a few people. In fact, they registered more people ^{and} then, ^{than there} they had more people to turn out to vote that year ^{than} ever was.

B: You don't remember any numbers?

W: No, don't remember any numbers.

B: Are there any things which prevent blacks from registering to vote in your district?

W: No.

B: Look at these six items here and rank them in importance which you think they've had in preventing blacks to register. I'll just say these for the record; Economic dependence on whites, would you say that played any significance? Try to get it in two time spans; one, when you were first elected, or let's say five years ago, and then now, you know, so we can see if there's any type of a gain.

W: You're losing me right here, now you're trying, you're asking me . . .

B: Two times, okay one, when were you first elected? I'm, I was . . .

3rd voice: W: ~~1970~~. Nineteen-seventy.

W: Nineteen-seventy.

B: Okay, so how did economic dependence on whites affect voter registration in 1970, and ^{then} how do you see it as affecting them now?

[long pause]

W: Really I don't um, here it doesn't play a ~~big role~~ ^{... B: A big role?} didn't play a big role, no huh uh. _{W: It}

B: Okay, great. That's all we want is just your judgement. It doesn't, these don't have to be significant.

W: ~~~~~~~~~ ^{Let's see,} I was trying because I, here it didn't really play a big role.

B: And fear of physical violence from whites?

W: No.

B: That didn't play a big role?

W: No, no.

B: Complicated registration forms?

W: Um, complicated registration... ~~forms~~ now there were some of those. wait a minute, complicated registration forms . . . I guess that's what it was because they threw out some, and uh

B: This was back in like ⁷⁰ ~~1970~~ then, or so?

W: Right, something back in like ^{that,} ⁷⁰ ~~about~~ 1970.

B: But you wouldn't say it plays any part right now?

W: ~~No,~~ Huh, uh.

B: Okay, how about poor registration hours?

W: No, because they're opening at, even much, half a day on Saturdays for the ones that didn't come in through the week, and uh . . .

B: Is that, was that in ^{'70}1970?

W: That was in ^{'70}it's doors are open from you know eight to five daily, and on Saturdays in case you wanted, you could come in.

B: Okay, ^{and so} ~~then~~ what you're saying is registration was held often enough, ^{then,} ~~and~~ for number five.

W: Right. B: And indifference of black voters, did you, did that play a significant role?

W: Indifference?

B: Were blacks apathetic, did they ~~want~~ want to go and register, or did they see this not as affecting them?

W: That's very hard to answer. Uh, well in, ^{I would say, I'd say in '70} ~~okay in 1970~~ they did because the administration before ^{'70}1970 was somewhat corrupted, and they came back in ^{'70}1970 to try to make a change, and you know you got quite a few blacks out ^{for uh,} ~~well~~ we don't have a big percentage of blacks registered in the city limit of Apopka because the city limit of Apopka don't consist of many blacks. And really my, in my election I had ninety-five percent white votes.

B: I will be asking you that question further on.

W: So it doesn't play a big difference, you know the, a big difference in black voters here would have to be just a bout 100 percent blacks to get out and vote.

B: Okay, I see. Were you able to campaign freely, or was there, was there any threat from whites, were any _____?

W: No.

B: Okay, um how often is registration required here?

W: Only one time that I can recall.

B: Does redistricting serve to hinder black participation, ^{Um,} ~~okay~~ uh . . .

W: District voting, right?

B: Yeah. Okay.

W: Well we don't vote in districts here, we just have ^{...let's see.} ~~al~~ what you call it, but it's

W: not districts, everybody ^{just} does vote, you know ^{black} wide, city-wide.

B: Okay, were you handicapped by a lack of money to campaign with?

W: I could say yes, that I was, but I guess you never have enough money to do what you want to do, but I had enough money to take care of my needs at that time.

If I had had more money I could have campaigned more widely, but I did have enough money to take care of what I had to do.

B: How much money did you spend, and where did you get it from?

W: Well I spent approximately ^{twenty-one hundred,} ~~\$2100~~, well something close to ^{two thousand dollars.} ~~\$2000~~. I got it from various organizations, various donations from friends, this type of thing, and plus I put my own money in, the majority of it.

B: Do you remember what any of the ~~off~~ organizations were, were they local organizations or . . . ?

W: Well I had gotten from church groups, mostly I got a lot of the church groups, ^{mostly, and uh,} ~~solicited~~ ^{solicited}, you know we formed into so many people, and we weren't really organization, ^{it was} ~~of~~ something like five or six people, and we solicited here, solicited there. Again I put a lot of my money.

B: Okay, that's probably how it usually works out, you know. Why did you decide to run for office?

W: Well really I didn't decide. I had a group of people come to me, ask me to uh, and I ^{considered} ~~consider~~ it, told them that I would. I don't know whether that comes from because, well really the guy that came was a NAACP member. But I don't think it was from them, I think he was just interested in trying to get a black on the council, and ^{you know} felt that I could do the job.

B: ^{Right. To} Which party or organization do you belong?

W: Democrats.

B: Did you get very much support from the Democratic party?

W: I would say yeah.

B: Okay. What were two or three of the major issues which you campaigned on?

W: Unity.

B: Do you think these issues were the main problems facing black or blacks in your community?

W: Not really.

B: This was more or less a general problem of the uh If not, what were the main problems for the blacks in the community?

W: Personally, I don't see any problems that can't be solved among the blacks. problems ^{that are,} ~~there,~~ ^{any problem} A lot of problems are caused, ^{You cause them yourselves.} ~~because of themselves.~~ And here it hasn't really been in ~~that process,~~ ^{no more than the usual,} the low job ^{opportunity} ~~and the~~ uh, ^{you} ~~we~~ have a lot of uneducated people, and you know that causes problems. But you know other than that everything . . .

B: You didn't see any one significant problem.

W: No, I didn't see any one significant problem.

B: I see, okay.

W: ^{They} ~~We~~ always had freedom for, you know, whatever ^{they} ~~we~~ wanted, after the change.

B: Right yeah, okay. How were you elected, at large or by district, [?] you've already answered, ~~that~~.

W: Yeah, at large.

B: Okay. How many people are in your district?

W: How many registered voters do we have ^{here?} ~~?~~ I don't have a correct figure, ^{I don't believe,} ~~on~~ the number of registered voters, ~~here~~.

B: Okay. What percentage of the population in your district is black?

W: I would say about five.

B: About five per cent, [?] about what percentage of the blacks of voting age in your district are registered?

W: Let me put it this way, as close as I can remember in the neighborhood there was two hundred and some registered black voters. That's as close as I can remember, you know I don't do a lot of figures, ^{well} ~~but~~ I hear ^{em,} ~~and~~ this is what I've heard, it was something like 200 registered voters was black, ^{in the community.}

B: About what was the percentage of blacks who were registered to vote do you estimate actually voted when you were elected?

W: Again, I guess I'd go to that five percent, I guess about five percent of them voted. Of course there was a bigger turnout of blacks that year, but ^{uh, uh, I guess,} I don't know whether you're talking about me personal or the elections for that year. Because of these five per cent that voted, you know, I didn't get, I wouldn't say that I got a majority of those votes . . .

B: But that's basically what we're asking, is for you.

W: Yeah, because I know that uh the lady that I was running against, she got a lot of those ^{uh, lot of those} votes _____.

I see.

B: A Did you think you got any votes from whites?

W: ~~That's where we got them.~~ *I've already talked on it.*

B: Right, and what percentage of the total came from these whites?

W: Ninety-five.

B: I've just got to re-ask the question. In the election of which ^{you've won} ~~you were in~~ office, how many opponents did you have?

W: One.

B: One?

W: Take that back, two. But one of them was eliminated the first round, and then the next round I ^{won the runoff.} ~~went ahead and won.~~

B: Were they both black women?

W: Both white.

B: Both white. About what percentage of the total vote did you get?

W: Hmm, the total vote, you lost me, I got 413 votes, and I think that's something like uh, 600 voted uh . . .

B: So you probably got about sixty-six percent, roughly? ^{W: Yeah.} In what ways do you think you have helped blacks in your district by holding office?

W: Well, I would say the main thing is respect. And when I say respect it's where

W: maybe a lot of things that come up a lot, in meetings, come up a lot ^{with} ~~in the~~ black community, where when there wasn't any blacks on the council, they would pass over, going to shun it some way or another. But now if it come up they will act on it, one way or another, whether they ~~will~~ do anything about it or not, it will ~~not~~ ^{it} will be acted on at just ~~as~~ in other problems that arise, so uh, I was instrumental in helping the recreation department get off to a good start. That was the first thing I was put on when I got to be a councilman. And now I'm in the sanitation department, and we have helped it accumulate good relationship between our employees and our city officials. ^{And we have, I don't,} ~~We~~ don't uh, I don't have all this stuff together. Forget I reflected it back to respect.

B: Okay, what if anything has prevented you from doing a better job, especially in regard to benefiting blacks?

W: Non-cooperation from the blacks.

B: From the blacks?

W: From the blacks.

B: I see. Can you elaborate on this just a little?

W: Well really . . .

B: Is it just that they don't care or they are just not interested, or they, they just don't see politics as a good way of ^{getting} their needs expressed?

W: ^{Well,} I don't know which one of those to really elaborate on. Really they haven't shown any interest, they don't attend the council meetings when something come up ^{they} ~~we~~ want to squawk about. They don't, I don't get any calls from them regarding one thing or another. If something happens they don't like, they talk about it among themselves, and they let the other officials know that they're not really together. And it's hard to say but ^{um,} ~~we~~ feel as if we have been left out so long that things are supposed to be done for us regardless of, you know, what the situation is, feel that it's supposed to be handed to us on a silver platter. I'm a little different, I'm human, and I believe in humans, I like a ll humans,

W: and I work for the betterment of the community and people. And if anybody sees my views different you know, then they're not for the same thing that I am. And if I make a vote that they don't like, and yet they haven't consulted ^{me} with why they don't like it, or why I made this vote you know to get the understanding after I have put my study into it, and you know all these things go against you _____ and this has been the situation here, really no support, non-support. I feel that, you know, I try to figure and ^{it'd} have been hard to figure. I don't know what they want ^{or} what they look for out of a black elected official.

B: Okay. Could you look at these listings again and try to rank them in importance in preventing you from doing a better job, benefiting blacks. Number one is office has no real authority.

W: ^{Well,} My office has real authority ^{because} I am in charge of the sanitation and trash department here. I mean, I guess this is what you're talking about when you said . . . That's one of the top priorities of the city, your garbage and your trash, because this has got to go. And I feel that we have a real good program going because the complaints have dropped down to minus zero, ^{so} I think that _____.

B: You don't have to answer it like I'm saying like these have to apply, you can say like you just did ^{"No, it doesn't apply,"} and give me why it doesn't apply, exactly like you did. Overvoted by white officials?

W: I have that. ~~(chuckle)~~
(chuckle)

B: Would you say this is a major prevention?

W: No, I wouldn't say it was a major prevention, no I wouldn't say that because this doesn't happen that often, just once in a blue moon.

B: Fairly important or not important, right around there?

W: Really is not important.

B: Okay. Not enough ^{uh revenue--} revenue available? (chuckle)

W: That's from, oh, there's not enough revenue available for some of the things that we really need. For instance, we need a lot of streets here, ~~we~~ we need a lot of

W: drainage, we got a lot of drainage problems. And really the city don't have the revenue to do this. But then again, I think we could put this on a long range plan and set aside so much each year for these type projects and get them done. Well I added that into it, this is in the makings. But right now, that's all I'm speaking of, right now there's not enough revenue.

B: Okay, but you said this if for the, the whole community experiences this, it doesn't affect you with blacks particularly, ^{just} ~~this is~~ for the whole community?

W: Right.

B: Okay. Unfamiliar with administrative duties?

W: Now who are you talking about?

B: I'm talking about you, I mean what are the, what, out of these that I'm listing, which do you feel has hindered you in helping blacks, do you believe that you were unfamiliar
~~unfamiliar with~~

W: Oh, no.

B: ~~No,~~ that hasn't played any importance?

W: That hasn't played any importance, I was pretty well up with it.

B: Lack of cooperation from whites?

W: That hasn't had any effect ~~_____~~

^{Okay.}
B: [^] Lack of cooperation from blacks?

W: Right.

B: Okay, I think you've answered that.

W: Yeah.

B: Okay, lack of cooperation from state officials?

W: I wouldn't put that ~~on~~ state official, because I ^{have} ~~was~~ had a lot of mail from them asking, you know, what they can do, and I've met a lot of them. But I haven't, I haven't, you know, give 'em a problem or anything so _____

B: Lack of cooperation from federal officials?

W: Through the city, I think federal officials have been pretty, pretty fair with us.

B: Mm hm, okay.

W: There's a lot of federal programs in town, a lot of federal programs going on, so, I think they have been pretty fair.

B: Has criticism or lack of support from the black community hindered you in holding office? that is, do some blacks not cooperate with you because they believe you're a token in the government and have no real authority?

W: Uh, yes.

B: Do they do that?

W: Uh huh.

B: Could you give an example of this ^{um, in} ~~and~~ how they've prevented you or this type of a situation has prevented you from doing a better job?

W: Well I might have to change it from preventing me from doing a better job. I have done a job regardless of their not cooperating. And due to the fact that I've had the cooperation from the other people I continue to do my job. Cause uh, criticisms that I've had, you know, they say that I was put there by the other man and I vote the way he wants me to vote, _____
_____ ^{you know,} and they all ~~say~~ that well, he got what he wanted, he doesn't care about us, but that's not the point. I care about people, and people in general as I've forestated. You know these are the criticisms that you get.

B: Okay, I believe you've touched on the next question here, do you feel that white officials treat you differently from other officials or not? that is, do they consider you the spokesman for the black and are you able to raise only certain issues? that means, do they just relegate you to blacks? ~~Do~~ you just speak for the blacks or for the community?

W: I speak for the community, not only blacks. As a matter of fact, I had this uh, you know, when I was elected in all my campaigning, and you know at all of my speeches, ^{and} whatever I have to say, I let 'em know that I, you know they say that I was a representative of the blacks -- Okay, I am from the black community, I'm the only black official there, and I'm going to look out, you know, for the

W: black when things come up for him, but again I have a position to play, and I got to play that position, and in order to play my position I got to look out for the whole community.

B: ^{Okay.} What services have you provided blacks in your district that they do not, that they did not have before you took office, and if there have been any, could you give an example?

W: Well there are more streetlights for one thing, that might be minor. There's not a whole lot of big things that have been done. In fact, there's not a whole lot of big things that have been done in the community, as a whole. we are, I guess, really just been keeping it together due to the fact that revenue has been awful short. But there, there are some services, little services that you don't really see that have been done. Then again, I can't begin to name them 'cause I don't ~~don't~~ have them documented down, myself.

B: Okay, we have a rating here. How would you rate these listings here in the way ~~that~~ you would feel that they . . . Well, how effective do you think you have been in each of the following areas of service?

W: Police protection, police protection is very effective here.

B: Okay, streets and roads?

W: That we don't have. So _____.
Housing . . .

B: How were streets related to, do, does the white part of your community have streets and blacks don't, or is it shared throughout . . .

W: No, well there are some streets in white communities not up to par, but they have, the majority of their streets are nice. But this has happened before . . .

B: You took office?

W: Yeah I took into office, in fact the street right in front of my house was paved the year just before I went in. They did this, this was a political move. ^{For} But what they did is came and put some blacktop out there ^{and} they didn't fix the drainage, they didn't ^{curb} ~~curve~~ it or nothing. And they assessed us all to pay our

W: part for an incomplete street. Okay, this is one of the first things that I kicked on when I took office, and well the city, they dropped it ~~so~~ so we didn't have to pay, the street wasn't completed and blah, blah, blah. And, but the rest of them, we haven't paved any streets since I've been in. But they haven't got any pavement over there, and they haven't got any pavement over here. Did a little patchwork, but again, they you know, all this was, that part of town was fixed years ago.

B: Housing?

W: Well that's a nasty issue here. It was with me anyway because I just made a vote, ^{to} I turned ~~it~~ down some housing, a housing plan that the county brought to our commissioner meeting which is really, I didn't see it being beneficial to the residents of Apopka. ^{Okay,} I voted against it, and a lot of people thought that was one of the ridiculous that, you know, you could do. They said they need housing. But, they didn't look into the groundwork of this program. Like I told them, I'll grant you we need housing. There are houses here, a lot of rentals, they tear 'em up, don't keep 'em first class, well that's beside the point. And then we took a survey to find fifteen vacant nice houses in Apopka that ^{uh, there were--} ~~were~~, I take it back, fifteen nice in one area, and uh, that was unoccupied at this time. So houses are, ~~many~~ I think if they wanted a better house, they could find a better house. but what they say that they can't afford it, they need a free house.

B: ~~I think~~ Uh huh. I see. I see you got . How about welfare?

W: Welfare. I'm not, I'm not, what phrase of welfare are you talking about?

B: Well, just looking for how effective you think you've been in establishing any of these since you've held office. Do you think you've made gains in any of these areas, or ^{if} ~~do~~ you just want to tell what the situation is now in any of these areas?

W: Welfare, I don't ~~get that~~ I didn't play any part involved in welfare.

B: Parks and recreation?

W: Well we missed employment.

B: Oh, okay employment?

W: Employment, I think that I have played a very effective part in employment. ^{I've} had a lot of employees hired in the police department. I've tried to get them to go to the fire department. I've had ^{'em} to go into administrative at city hall. Don't have any there now due to the fact that they don't stay. Got a mast of ^{'em} ~~them~~ in ~~there~~ at the recreation department. And I've had 'em to get promotions in the sanitation department. So employment has been very effective.

B: Okay, and parks and recreation?

W: I think I hit on that before, but uh . . .

B: Yeah, I do too.

W: Here I've played a, I think I played a very effective part in that.

B: Water, sewage, and garbage, I think that's right up your . . .

W: Yeah, again, yeah, that's very effective. I can't say too much more than that. I'll say that we handled that situation pretty well.

B: Health and hospitals?

W: I don't have anything to do with that, that's not connected with the city.

B: Okay, and education?

W: No, I wouldn't . . .

B: You wouldn't say that's come up in, since you've been in office, ^{as} this part of your job, you haven't effected any change in this area? *okay.*

W: No.

B: Fire protection?

W: Well, I don't ^{suppose} ~~see where~~ I could say that I did anything there ^{that--} ~~to~~ vote to keep the fire department ^{with} first class equipment, and vote to send 'em to school to get ^{their} the necessary training, and you know ^{toward} vote ^{and} for the higher budget, you know ^{and} which has made our fire department one of the finest in the state of Florida.

B: So I'd say you helped in making it very effective. ^{W: Yeah} ^{AB: Why ~~did~~ would} you say, maybe I should have asked this where you ^{would} ~~could~~ discuss it all the way down but, why do you think you've been effective or ineffective in these areas, is there any key reason?

W: I wouldn't say there was a key reason, but I have made these effective. I think that any thinking person would have done the same thing to help make these effective. All they do is take a little brains, and see things the right way, and make the right vote on a lot of these. And some of them have been personally motivated, like employment, like, ^{well, I've seen it here in the streets,} ~~while I was staying up here in the straights,~~ and so that would make me feel that I have played a small part in ^{making it} ~~being~~ effective.

B: Okay, that's pretty good. Have you gotten federal funds for your district?

W: We have federal funds, yes.

B: Could you list some of ~~the~~ types of federal funds which you're getting now?

W: Not really, I think we get ERA, and . . .

B: And if it's possible could you list maybe the amount that your getting from them, if it's possible? No?

W: No, I don't have those figures.

B: ^{Okay,} Well then just list, could you list what type of federal funding that you're getting?

W: I don't think I'm going to be able to do that. I know we get federal funds for the recreation department, we get federal funds to help ^{with} also many employees, and there's some kind of fund the police department gets, but again, I can't name 'em.

B: Name exact ones, okay. Have you as an elected official or part of the local ^{W: No. B: No. Um,} community been able to bring industry or retail stores into your area? [^] Has there been any growth of industry or business in your area since you've taken office?

W: Yes, there's been tremendous growth in the area since I took office. Well I don't know the reason for this but the first three, you know first three years we are growing by leaps and bounds, and you know when the economy fell everything dropped off. But there has been tremendous growth since I've taken office.

B: Could you list maybe like some of the areas that you see as being great, or is it pretty well spread?

W: Well it's pretty well spread. Well we got Earl Estate, we got Orange Travel North Shopping Center, we got Shelly North Mobile Home Park, and we got the Oaks, we got . . . ~~you know~~ no, that's out of our city.

B: But those, that gives me a pretty good idea what type of growth that you're talking about. Have you been able to see that blacks are fairly hired in local government?

W: Yes I have.

B: Could you explain how you've done this, any type of activity that you've had in this area?

W: I really wasn't, we didn't have any activites, just that I speak. . . but I better get this broke down, you said local , you said local government. Now when you say local government I speak of government as city hall and the surrounding, you know the police department, and the recreation, I call that local government. B: Right, okay.

W: That's what I'm talking about.

B: ^{Okay.} So you're saying that just your presence on the committee has made it easier for blacks to be hired fairly?

W: Well, ^{if} I say that we need a secretary, I will mention that we should put a black secretary, and we need a black secretary in city hall, and you know they will try to hire one. Again, I said we don't have one right now, but in fact ^{that} I don't know the reason why, guess I got to get back on it again.

B: But you see that um . . .

W: But I have had 'em, but I have had 'em there.

B: Oh, I see, okay. Has federal revenue sharing helped your district, or not?

W: Well I ^{think} ~~know~~ you're going to ask me where and I'm not going to be able to tell you, ^{uh huh,} but I will say [^] (chuckle) I think it has, yeah.

B: But you're not sure exactly where?

W: No I'm not sure exactly where it is.

B: Okay. Have there been there any protests, sit-ins, boycotts, riots in your city in the past ten years, and if so what were the issues involved?

W: There ^{haven't} ~~hasn't~~ been any.

B: Okay. We're really going fast here, you know. Briefly what, is your opinion of Gov. Reuben Askew? that is, do you think he has been favorable in his attitude and policy towards blacks in Florida or not, and what is your opinion of other state officials and representatives?

W: Well I hope I can answer this question fairly due to the fact that I'm ^{for} ~~part~~ of Gov. Reuben Askew. I think that he ^{has} ~~is~~ done a marvelous job in the state of Florida and for the blacks. I can't say _____ because I don't know personally some of the things that he may have done. But again I'm, ~~part of~~ ^{I'm for} the ^{Governor} ~~government of~~ Reuben Askew, I think he's a good governor, and I would support him ^{in whatever} ~~whenever~~ he tries to ^{do.} ~~attempt~~ ^{And} whatever he has done for the blacks or didn't do, I don't think he ^{looked} ~~looks~~ over us because we were black. It was that he didn't see fit for the program or some nature of that.

B: And how would you feel about the rest of the state officials? Did you feel that they are as fair as Gov. Askew?

W: Hmm. (sigh) I don't want to comment ^{on it. B: Okay.} Really I don't, you know I haven't really thought too much of the rest of them. I guess I'm behind Gov. Askew and the rest of them I, you know, kind of fall in line with him. But you know maybe there are some that's not and some that is, but I, ~~see~~ I don't have them picked out.

B: Do you think that winning and holding office in Florida has been worth the effort, and can you go into it a little bit whatever your answer is?

W: Yes I think it has been worth my effort. I've had a lot of experience. I've gathered a lot of knowledge that I wouldn't have had due to the fact that I undertook a lot of study into government, due to the fact that I went in not knowing

W: anything so I've studied awful hard, and I've learned a lot, ~~And~~ the experience has been marvelous. ^{I've} ~~A~~ gained a lot of respect from both sides. It puts you in the know of what's going on, what's about to happen before it get out to the other people. So it really keeps you abreast, and keeps you . . .

End Side 1A

B: Okay uh, these questions are asked to compile an overall group profile of black elected officials and again I'll say that all these answers, um, any answer that you give will not be with your name, it'll just be that so many people fall into this category so we get some type of idea of what type of person is being elected, so anything that you ~~offer~~^{offer} is, you answer^{here} is strictly confidential. Your type of office that you've held?

W: Commissioner.

B: Date first elected?

W: December something 1970.

B: Okay, date that you took office?

W: January 1.

B: Number of times run for office?

W: Two.

B: Okay, your age between eighteen and twenty-nine, thirty and forty-nine, and fifty and over?

W: Thirty, thirty and forty-nine.

B: Okay, occupation before you were elected?

W: Managed a grocery store.

B: Your educational background?

W: I finished high school at uh city schooling.

B: The salary you receive from your elected post?

W: ~~\$150 a month~~. A hundred and fifty dollars a month.

B: Were you active in civil rights movements between ~~1960~~^{'60} and ~~1966~~^{'66}? No?

~~W: No.~~

B: Church to which you belong?

W: North Baptist Church of Apopka.

B: Are you an official in your church?

W: Deacon.

B: Are there are other community organizations or activities to which you are involved in?

W: No.

B: Do you know of any other black elected officials in this area who have been in office since ~~1974~~¹⁷⁴?

W: No.

B: What is your fathers occupation?

W: Custodian.

B: What effect has, what effect has running for office had upon you and your family?

W: None.

B: Socially or anything?

W: Nothing.

B: How long have blacks been elected in this area?

W: I was the first.

B: Okay. what^{what does,} ~~does~~ what do you think has been primarily the key to your success? I believe I've asked this before.

W: Respect, you know, all I can say.

B: ^{Okay.} Besides office, do you have any other ^{Source} ~~sorts~~ of income?

W: I own a grocery store.

B: Okay. What do you think is the biggest detriment to blacks being elected, I mean what keeps them from being elected?

W: Revenue, really ~~they~~ don't have enough money to campaign.

B: I see. Do you see this both on, in the local areas and in the . . .

W: Uh huh. That's my first object, they don't have enough money to, and you have to have enough money to get out there and let the people know who you are and what you represent. if not, if ~~the~~ people don't know you, they can't vote for you. ^{B: Right, uh huh.} ~~W:~~ Okay, what happened to me I was known because I had uh been at this place fourteen years downtown, and they had known me from you know a boy to my adulthood, and really it didn't take a whole lot to be known. ~~man~~ ^{So,} I felt if I had to go county-wide, I would have to have enough money to get out there. Okay just like last election,

W: we had another black to run. He would have done good, but he didn't have enough support in his campaign financial-wise to let the people know about him. And a lot of them have got to change their campaign style in order to be elected. You can be, it's possible you can be elected where there's fifty-fifty, you know people, or either you have, ^fthe black had a majority of the voters. But where it's not this situation, you have got to change your campaign style somewhat. I see a lot of blacks campaigning black, and when you campaign black ^{you're} ~~you~~ really not going to get many more votes besides blacks, and if you don't have a majority of those you can't get elected. I'm not saying all of them, but I have seen ^{some} ~~the~~ campaigns that run this way.

B: How ^{um} ~~do~~, when a person does run, ^{as} primarily just going after the black vote, do the blacks respond to this, do they turn out in greater numbers or is it pretty much the same people who vote? ^{um}

W: I haven't seen where they turn out in greater numbers. I can't say that this don't happen, but I haven't seen ~~it~~.

B: Okay, well I think that's all the questions I've got to ask you. I've mentioned that this will go into the Oral History Project, and this is not for public use in that this tape will be transcribed and sent to you, ^{and} ~~in~~ that you can edit it in every, in any way, tell them what parts you want used, you don't want used, or that you don't want the whole thing used. If you don't want this used it will be just used for, to collect the data that you've given us, and that, we'll erase it, and nobody will ever know that you ever spoke to us. And do we have your agreement to use this in our oral history project for use?

W: Yes.

B: Okay. You'll still be sent all this material, and you can edit it.

W: I think what I'll say today, I can say at any, well I'm pretty outspoken so I don't um . . .

B: Okay. [break in tape] This has been an interview with Alfonzo Williams.

~~End of Side 2A~~

[END OF INTERVIEW]