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The subject interviewed is Karl Weaver. The interviewer is with the "Button Project." No introduction was given.

I: What year did you first register to vote?

W: In 1958--'59. 1959.

I: Okay. And when were you first eligible to vote?

W: In 1959.

I: And eligible to register also in 1959?

W: Yes.

I: Okay. How did the local registration--did the local registrars ever turn you down when you applied to register?

W: No. I never had any problem with that. I never had to.

I: Uh, have voter registration drives been held in the district in which you hold office? Could you name a few for me? Of any groups of citizens or--they'd put on a registration drive or?

W: Uh, the first registration drive that I was familiar with is one I conducted myself in 1960 possibly. I think / was the year. In which the \_\_\_\_\_ our local newspaper carried an advertisement in there where we were actively participating in getting registered to vote. That was under the auspices of the North Broward Democratic Club. That was the name of our group. The Northwest Voter's League has always put on a registration drive pretty much yearly--ever since I've been in Pompano.

I: Hmmm. Were there any national organizations?

W: Not to my knowledge. I think on occasions, the NAACP may have asked that, you know, people go out and register to vote, you know, through announcements to church, but I don't--I'm not aware of any active organization in the community.

I: Okay. So you say it's from about 1960 on where there's been a pretty good

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W: Yes. Uh huh.

I: How successful were these drives?

W: In my terminology successful would be--a successful voter registration would be 100 percent of the occupants in a city to register to vote. I could say that; in a sense, it was successful that you got a number of people registered whereby that it made the politicians in the city--both city and local government take notice of the community. And I think, really, this is when some of the changes began, too.

I: Are there any things which prevent blacks from registering to vote here in Pompano?

W: At the present, no. I don't think there's anything that prohibits blacks from registering. There's nothing to discourage them from registering. In the past, I'd say there were some handicaps in registering, simply because all of the polling places were located in Ft. Lauderdale. Many of them was located completely out of the black community, and they was held at an hour in which the black people really couldn't get out to register to vote. It was during these voter registration campaigns that, you know, we were able to get the booths into the community or get them to hold open the registrar's office on Saturdays so the working people could come in and register.

I: Do they have night registration here in Pompano now? No?

W: Not to my knowledge. No. It's--I think it's pretty much a 9-5 proposition.

I: Okay. I just want you to check--some of these questions may not apply to Pompano, but just put not important at the end. I want you to rate how important you think each of the following items are in preventing blacks to register to vote here in Pompano or in your district.

W: Will you repeat that question again?

I: Okay. How important do you think each of the following items are in

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preventing blacks from registering to vote here in Pompano, uh, economical?

W: Oh, I see what you mean. Okay.

I: Economic dependence on whites?

W: From preventing blacks to register--that's unbelievable. I'd say the first one would probably be fairly important. Uh, so you don't want me to check them off?

I: Yes.

W: Just put a check by it. Okay.

I: That's right. What about pure physical violence?

W: I'd say it's not important.

I: Is complicated registration forms--is that--

W: I could say that's, uh--

I: You know, people have trouble reading the forms.

W: Yeah, I know. I really don't think that that's--I'd say--I wouldn't want to rate it not important. I would say fairly important simply because a lot of them still feel that, you know, you got to go take the literacy test, and so forth. They're not really knowledgeable that all you have to do is go down there and really mainly just almost write your name. That's all.

I: Do they have people here to help you?

W: Yes they do. Uh huh.

I: You've already commented on the poor \_\_\_\_\_.

W: Yeah. I think this is a--I'd say this is a--but uh, I'd say very important. This has an effect in it.

I: What about registration not held often enough?

W: Well, I'd say that's not important because, you know, you register just about any day that you want to other than when elections is in the process.

I: Do they take your name off the polls here if you don't vote after two years?

W: Uh, they purge them regular, but not after two years. There's many people

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who've been on the books for years that didn't register, you know, didn't vote at all, but they still maintained their residency. And even if they-- your name was purged from the books, all you had to do is go down and prove that you had maintained your residence at that location even though you didn't vote. And you were allowed to vote. Because I found people being able to register and vote during my elections who had never voted, both blacks and whites, you know, under the same category.

I: What about indifference of blacks to voting?

W: I think that's a very important because it's just that blacks don't vote like they should. You know, and this is what's really keeping them, as far as--well, I don't say that's not keeping them from registering to vote, but this is one of the factors of them not being able to elect people to the, you know, elected officials.

I: Do they have districting here in Pompano?

W: They have districting.

I: They do.

W: And this is used primarily against the black vote, yeah.

I: Sometimes they do--they can change it?

W: Yeah.

I: Okay.

W: They gerrymandered around and uh, if the population of blacks grows, they may add white districts into that particular district in order to pretty much what you--have a neutralizing effect on the black vote.

I: That's pretty strange for this far down.

W: It has an effect, but then the way that the system of districting is set up in Pompano whereby you only voting--you really voting citywide. So if you get out and campaign even in other communities, you can really beat them.

I: Okay. The following questions are asked to gather information on the

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elected campaigns of black elected officials in Florida. Were you able to campaign freely, that is, were you threatened in any way--your family?

W: No, I was pretty much free to campaign, you know, in--well, a couple of times I knew a few things, I could--you could be interpreted as gestures that you should stay here or there, but uh, you know, a few threats, you know, \_\_\_\_\_ a black cat on the door or something like that. But this didn't bother me.

I: Nothing serious?

W: Nothing. No. No. No physical violence whatever.

I: Okay. Were you handicapped by lack of campaign money?

W: I wouldn't say that I was handicapped by a lack of money. More so by than a lack of--you know, the presence of restrictive type legislations which allows you not to be able to do things until you had the money. Actually, what I'm saying, I guess, is that I could have campaigned much freer. Like you get your literature out quicker 'cause I could have gotten it credited to me and put it in later, but, you know, the way they have it set up, you've got to have your money in in a certain time. And that you name people who've given you money. And this, I guess, was restrictive.

I: Okay. Why did you decide to run for office?

W: I don't think I answered that question probably like I should have.

I: No. WELL, that's fine.

W: If it's okay.

I: Why did you decide to run for office? Was it your own decision, selected by a political party, group of concerned citizens or other?

W: I think it's pretty much my own decision. I've refrained from any kind of party politics. I've identified myself with the democratic party, but really, when it comes down to it, I'm pretty much my own man. I don't follow the dictates of the republican or the democrats or anybody else.

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And I just decided that I wanted to serve the people of this community. I felt that, you know, I could bridge the gap between the black and the white community because I had pretty good relations with the white community as well as the black community. And I feel like I could amplify or pretty much clarify the black people's positions and their desires in city hall. And this is why I decided to run along with many of the people in the black community urging me. They say, well, you should run, after I decided I want to run, they encouraged me to run.

I: You did get a lot of support then?

W: Oh yeah. I had the citywide \_\_\_\_.

I: Did you receive any support from the democratic party in your campaign or--

W: No. No. I had--after I was elected, I had all kinds of democratic people and so forth come by who say, you know, we really helped you. We pushed you this and we got you to passing \_\_\_\_\_. But when you sit down and really analyze the votes you got, and analyze where they come from, you could just about account for all of them. So, you know.

I: So they really didn't give you financial support?

W: No. No, and I've never received any money from, you know, per se democratic party or you know, any party period, really.

I: What are the two or three most important issues on which you campaigned?

W: Three of the most important issues that I--

I: Oh, two or three.

W: Two or three, okay. I'll make it three.

I: Okay.

W: The main issue that I campaigned on was annexation--to annex particularly areas west of Pompano city limits. This is the area which included, I'd say, the majority of the black people. Because, actually, there's only a

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small minority of black people that live within the city limits of Pompano Beach. And I felt, number one, annexing these areas into the city would entitle us to a much larger black vote. It would entitle us to a better bargaining position, you know, from a political standpoint.

I: Where did these people belong to--these people you wanted to annex within Pompano?

W: The unincorporated areas surrounding Pompano Beach, and so didn't belong to anybody. They was out in no man's land. And the main issue was that

I: the--now the reason that I wanted annexation--that I could, through municipal services, provide a lot of the services to those areas which they needed--fire protection, police protection, water, sewage. All of these things you can only get through a municipality but they didn't have this, see. And they didn't have any voice and so this is my main reason. And secondarily, I'd guess you'd say that it was so that we could<sup>get</sup>/political strength so that we could really get in there and bargain for some of these things.

I: Was there other important issues?

W: I'd say the most second important issue was getting municipal services to the black community which was presently in the city of Pompano Beach. I don't remember exact figures as to what they were spending in the northwest area, but it was peanuts compared to what they were spending in the other areas of the city. And the black people were contributing a sizable sum of money to the city's \_\_\_\_\_, and were receiving absolutely no service, and that's what it amounted to. And actually, we went so far as to ask the federal investigation as well as the justice department to look into the discriminatory practices of the city in trying to get monies and services to the black community.

I: So these issues were also the main problems that were facing the blacks?

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W: These are the problems that were facing black people. And then I'd say the most, and the third issue would have been zoning, uh, housing and zoning. This is, uh, \_\_\_\_\_ in the black community we just had a multiplicity of zoning--industry lumped in with residential. A guy build a house today and tomorrow a guy come and build a tar factory right next to him and there's nothing said about it and nothing done. So we managed to get, you know, density control, land set aside for single family homes rather than just apartments all the time. It was a lots involved into that, you know, zoning and that land use plan that we got adopted.

I: So it was adopted?

W: It was adopted. All--mostly all these things was accomplished, excepting the annexation, and I almost won that annexation, but they had a help from the state legislators and even the governor and some of the other people.

I: I got a couple good questions about that you may want to answer.

W: Yeah. Boy would I love to.

I: Okay. These questions are asked to determine some of the conditions which have enabled blacks to win office in Florida. How were you elected, at large or by a district?

W: At large. It was--you run from a district, but you was voted up on as at large. And this \_\_\_\_\_ to the district then. The only thing that, you know, like our--it's divided up into three districts. You must belong within--live within--reside within that district.

I: Uh huh.

W: But then you're voted upon citywide. This is why I say, as far as districting, it doesn't have any effect on voting. Just a matter that you got to live where you running from. And I don't mind that 'cause I don't want to live anywhere else but in my district anyway.

I: How many people are here in your district?

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W: I have no knowledge how many are in the district because that thing changes, you know, almost every time the wind blows. \_\_\_\_\_ adds on a new condominium then district three grows and this thing. So I wouldn't really have any idea.

I: You don't have any idea. Okay.

W: I wouldn't even want to guesstimate at this point.

I: Okay. Do you know what percentage of the population in your district is black?

W: I'd say about 17 percent.

I: Seventeen?

W: Uh huh.

I: Okay. About what percentage of blacks are voting age in your district-- are registered to vote?

W: What percentage of blacks are--

I: Of voting age.

W: Of voting age? I'd venture to guess about, I'd say about 60 percent 'cause there's really not a lot of, you know, it's not a young--this is not a young community. Most of these are my age and older, you know. We're considered, you know, some of the younger groups of this, you know, the city. And I'm well over the voting age and my kids are almost at voting age. And there's not too many young ones coming on.

I: What percentage would you guess blacks are registered to vote, do you estimate, actually voted when you were elected?

W: Let's see. It's a little bit easier to go find the documents and find out than it is guessing, but I would guess--I'd say about 15-25 percent. I'd say 25, you know, that's--

I: Do you think you got any votes from whites?

W: Oh yeah. I'd never got elected otherwise.

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I: Okay. About what percentage from whites?

W: What percentage of my votes were from whites? I'd say probably about 60 percent.

I: Sixty percent? Okay. In the election in which you won office, how many opponents did you have?

W: Well, you see, you're always eliminated—you eliminate them until one.

I: Right, but when you started out.

W: When you first start. Okay, the first time I ran, there must have been about thirteen. I think I was the thirteenth candidate who filed. And I was, you know, it boiled down to myself and my opponent who eventually won, who was a previous mayor and also he was a, oh, hard line politician from his heart.

I: Uh huh.

W: I mean, you know, he was a pretty tough guy to beat. He had all the organized structures behind him. And at that time, I knew nothing about, you know, really politics or political strategies, the terminology.

I: How many were white of the original thirteen?

W: All of them. I was the only black.

I: You were the only black?

W: The second time there was only two guys, me and my opponent. And that time I was able to beat him because I didn't have to divide up my votes among all of the other candidates. Second, there is no chance for them to see my strength until the final day, you know, because, you know, in the previous election where I run against William Aserdoff and he won and beat me. We had a primary so they saw how strong I was. And they went back and really went to work and got the party together. And I think the party really got involved because there was a lot of literature running around with the republican stamps and prominent republican figures writing

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and endorsing it. But uh, and the second time around, it's me and George Fiveck. And see, there was no primary.

I: Uh huh.

W: And I had worked real hard to try to lay the groundwork to see that, you know, we got the black votes out much more heavily than we did the first time, see. And we won. We concentrated much heavily, see.

I: Little more effort.

W: Yeah.

I: Okay. Do you know what percentage of the total vote you received when you were finally in office?

W: What percentage of the total vote that I received?

I: When it was down to the two.

W: I beat him more than two to one. I must have had about 60 or 70 percent of the votes.

I: Okay. These questions are asked to determine how well black officials in Florida have been able to benefit those they represent. In what ways do you think you have helped blacks in your district by holding office? Would you discuss a few of those?

W: Yeah. I think I've been able to help to them tremendously in, uh, number one is establishing a line of communication between the community and city hall. Whereas before, there was no line of communication at all. And, you know, and the black people were just in the community pulverized almost each year. And then almost inevitable there was always a riot. See, and this is one of the things I was trying to ward against is to open up these lines of communication whereby these people can express themselves to the proper authority rather than having to take it out, you know, on the guy on the street. This was a major accomplishment. There is ears open down in city hall, even now, you know, even without

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me being down there. There's a lot of improvements that was gotten during my administration which was never thought and even gotten, you know, prior. Improvements like sidewalks in the community, beautification, the water pressure was upgraded, areas that was never had water at all finally got in the water. Like some of these unincorporated areas that I was talking about. These people had been drinking contaminated water, and we even went as far as Rogers in Washington, but finally we got water through. Many of the people<sup>that</sup>/are talking about annexation, they see the advantages of annexation of these outlying areas. The businessmen are thinking toward the community now. And this-- a lot of it was even started before I, you know, got on the commission, simply because, you know, through business and my own self I was showing them that black people could produce and that they were able and capable of, you know, doing these type things. And so, you know, some of the businessmen were beginning to look toward the community. These type of improvements were--they were able to benefit from.

I: Were you the first black man elected in Pompano.

W: Yes. Uh huh. The first one.

I: Okay. What, if anything, has prevented you from doing a better job, especially in regard to benefiting blacks in your district?

W: Communication is the--has been the most, to me, the most difficult thing to try to accomplish. And there's a number of reasons for that. As a rule, most black people don't read the paper. They won't pick it up. They will not read it, and then they reads it, and half the time they don't understand. And that's just not unique with the black community.

I: Right.

W: It's also with the white community, but I'm saying that this is the problem. You know, and it's not really a black problem, but it is a

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problem that confronts the black also--more so than others. I just can't even hardly think of anything else that's--

I: What about money, funding?

W: Well, money--your money itself is, you know, like economics. It will always be a problem as far as this community is concerned. It's just about the, like they say, root of all evils. If you don't have the money, you know, what can you do. But I do think that, you know, a lot of the monies that were sent down through the way of federal revenue sharing and other federal monies--that they weren't getting their share of it which would enable them to do a much better job. Because I really feel that, you know, if the city would just put forth some of the efforts that they could have with some of the federal money they have, it would have helped these people over the hump enough whereby they could have become much better in producing citizens which the city would have then benefited from in the long run. See, and uh, but they couldn't see that.

I: Okay. Here's another check list.

W: Okay.

I: Please rate how important you think the following items are in preventing you from doing a better job benefiting blacks. How about the office has no real authority. By that we mean not much power in getting things done.

W: Well, I think this is a--okay, I think this is really uh, I'd say it's very important because with the type of set up that we have, a city manager form of government, the commissioners really don't have that much power. You can tell that city manager what to do, but you know, you have to almost threaten with a recall or something--not a recall but a--something to terminate his wages in order to be able to--

I: What about out voted by white officials? Do you find that the whites were cooperating with you on the commission?

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W: I'd say that's very important because I was outvoted most of the time by that.

I: What about, well, we've already mentioned not enough revenue. You thought that was important also.

W: Yes, uh huh.

I: What about unfamiliar with administrative duties when you took office?

W: I don't think that was important 'cause, I mean, you know, I was pretty much familiar with, you know, with the procedures 'cause I've always attended city commission meetings and sit in and watch. And I observed so I knew what they were doing and what they had to do. I just wasn't familiar with the back room deals, you know. I didn't know how, you know, I didn't know they were pulling the wool over my eyes then, see so.

I: Right.

W: I mean, as far as what they kept above board, I knew what, you know, I was familiar. So I'd say that was really fairly important because I learned my lessons that, you know, all it is wasn't really made up on that podium.

I: What about lack of cooperation from whites?

W: I think there is more of a lack of cooperation from blacks than there was a lack of cooperation of whites. So I'd have to rate that not important.

I: Okay. You say the next question--lack of cooperation from blacks was important.

W: Okay. So I'd say very important.

I: What about lack of cooperation from the state officials?

W: I'd say that's very important.

I: And what about lack of cooperation from the federal officials?

W: And that's--I can't go beyond very important, but I'll put very important.

I: Do you want to comment on that a little bit?

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W: I'll comment on it because, you know, the state and federal officials, they're the next step higher than our local government. And if you finding the local government is not complying with the law--the constitution, number one, which they supposedly swore to uphold and follow as well as the guidelines sent down by federal government and by state government. And they fail to make them comply, then where do you have to turn to. Then that starts undermining the whole concept of a democracy of having government, you know, by the people, you know. And I just--I was furious with the lack of federal government and the state government in taking proper actions in order to help, you know, rectify<sup>a</sup>/situation in which I felt was badly in need of rectifying.

I: Okay. 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 feel you're only a token in government and have no real authority?

W: No, I don't find many of them with that attitude. I've found that, you know, it's just a lack of being unaware. You know, people who just didn't really know what to do and how to do it, and you didn't know how to get to them to communicate 'cause they wouldn't get involved. You'd try to send out leaflets and you'd talk on radio shows, and there was just no way of communicating with them. So consequently, they didn't know how to support or, you know, to cooperate with you. And their lack of cooperation hinders you from getting much of the services that they would have gotten because, you know, if they'd have showed support for things like annexation, you know, or fluoridation to the water. That was one that really infuriated me because of the fact that I was the only one on the whole commission fighting to have the water--have fluoride. And because I felt that it would basically help, particularly our poverty children who couldn't afford to

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go to dentists and have their teeth treated with fluoride and so forth. So they had the most benefit from it, and I don't think ten of the people went to the polls to vote it, and then they just—you know, they just went down the drain. And I fought the thing, you know, tooth and nail. It's the same way with the, you know, that candidates who were running and running on an anti-annexation platform, they should have automatically, without a doubt, without question, voted these people—against these people, but they didn't. They voted for one guy who swore that he would not go for annexation. I don't say they voted for him, but they sure didn't vote for the other candidates so, you know, silence gives consent.

I: Are there any other examples you think of offhand that were—

W: Whereby the lack of support from the black community?

I: Lack of support. Uh huh.

W: Well again, during election time, you know, my re-election. I could have been easily re-elected had the black people went out and voted because, you know, during the primary I was something like almost 2,000 votes more than the other candidates which astounded most of them 'cause they had felt I would be defeated because of you know, an issue—a stand I took on a controversial hotel issue. But then I showed strong even in the area where they were expecting me to get defeated. But the black people didn't go to the polls. And see, and that was my strength, you know. This is where I had to rely on my base, and then, you know, I think organized labor had an effect, you know, had a part in it.

I: Against you?

W: Against me, yes. A lot of the black—this is why I'm making the economic, uh, it's pretty much, you know, I'd say very important. Because many of those guy's jobs was depending on, you know, they told them that, you know, Weaver was anti-builders and anti-this. And the only thing I was

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anti was the fact that these builders who were just really littering up the earth, and no place to stay. And just building a bunch of slums and taking off somewhere else, and leaving you to suffer with it. And this I didn't like. I didn't care whether they was building it over here in the black community or they was building it over in the beach. And I just took a stand and they didn't like that. You know, not being informed and knowing what my real stand and my real stand motive was cost me an election because, you know, they didn't know.

I: Do you feel that white officials treat you differently from other officials?

W: They do. Yeah. More ways than one. I don't say they treat me in a hostile \_\_\_\_\_ . And then many times I could go to stuff like League of Cities, you know, they were real friendly. And they all spoke, and we talked issues, just like, you know, you and I would sit down and talk any issues. But then, you know, they'd try to make exceptions. I don't like to be treated any different. I don't want you to say, well, gee, that's a black commissioner. Or that's commissioner, the first black of Pompano. You know, Karl is just a commissioner. He's a guy on the commission just like I am. And if he's a problem there, you know, we got a problem, not Karl's problem. And I didn't like the idea of the commissioners always saying, well, okay, it's in the black community, Karl, what should we do. Look, that's what should we do, you know.

I: Well, do they consider you a spokesman for the blacks?

W: Yes. Uh huh.

I: What services did you provide for the blacks in your district that they did not have before you took office?

W: Voting in the voting places in your own district. Because before they'd would never put a polling place in the black community. And that was held--that was worked against us, see.

I: Right.

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W: We always had to cross Dixie Highway, and then the most--they didn't see the pattern of the black vote. They had to either vote early in the morning or late in the afternoon after they got off of work 'cause during the day, you ain't going to hardly get any voters. So late in the afternoon, Dixie Highway, which is a northwest, uh, a north-south artery. Then the polling place was located on the east side of that artery which makes it highly difficult for a person to get across that track and vote. So we either had a long lines, and we got <sup>to</sup> that long line and they're already tired from a hard days work. It discouraged them so they went back home. So managed to get polling places located within the black community whereby the people can go right out early in the mornings and vote in the mornings conveniently. And as when they come back in in the afternoon, they can vote, see. So that's something that they didn't have which I thought was a very important thing that they didn't have.

I: Yeah. Mostly--

W: As well as, you know, some of the other things that they're getting now.

I: Would you give me a couple examples of those things?

W: Well, I don't say that they didn't have them exclusively, but--

I: No, \_\_\_\_\_ better if we could say also.

W: Well, yeah, one community, which is Carver's home, is a black community which didn't have drinking water. And now they have city drinking water which kind of guarantees them they won't have to be drinking hepatitis for breakfast, see. So this was good for them. I think we have better police protection now than we have had before. It was always a pretty bad atmosphere between the police community and the black community. And there was constant friction, and every time, you know, this is always a point for violence.

I: Uh huh.

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W: So I think I kind of built somewhat of respect for the black community from the police department as well as trying to get black people to respect law and--as they--that they should. You know, and respected their authority. Although the authority shouldn't abuse it, see.

I: Right.

W: And this is where, you know, this is one of the big problems that we had in the city. And I was asking for state investigations and I was also asking for federal investigations.

I: Was there police brutality reports?

W: I had many reports of police brutality, both in the black and white community.

I: And harassments?

W: And harassments and actions which I felt was unbecoming of police officers, and that got to be one heck of a controversy in Pompano for a while.

I: Here's the last of our little check boxes.

W: Okay.

I: Okay. Could you please rate how effective you think you have been in each of the following services in terms of benefiting blacks. Police protection. We just--

W: I'll say somewhat effective because I still--I'm still not satisfied that we have the type of protection that I love to see.

I: Okay. What about streets and roads? Do you have any problems?

W: I'll say somewhat effective because there's many streets that we had prior to my election was nothing but dirt. At least now we have tar and gravel, and we've been able to get street lighting and something. They all go in there.

I: Okay. Are they--are the streets up to par with the white streets or main streets or--

W: In general, yes. There are still a lot of areas whereby that the area

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still needs--

I: Do they have sidewalks on the street?

W: Some--well, I would say school routes have sidewalks. There's still other areas that doesn't have sidewalks. They could have them, and we wished that they did.

I: What about housing?

W: Oh, let's see. I better check these off. Our streets and roads, we put somewhat effective. Housing--I'll say somewhat effective because of the fact that at least now we have zoning whereby that person can build a house which they want to, and they are building some houses. It's public housing are poor. We doesn't have any. Welfare--I'll have to put not effective because the welfare is terrible. The city constantly refuses to set up a department of community affairs whereby that they could advise citizens as to what they were entitled to, how they go about getting aid and assistance for employed and assisting the elderly and so forth. And they'll just tax it. Even this year, when the budget, you know, when I wasn't down there, they turned down hot lunches for the old people. And this is something I've always fought for. They cut it out one year, but, you know, by me being there, I was able to get a hold of Nan Hutchinson and some of the others who were in the Division of Family Services to come up and speak on the issue. And then they put it back in the budget. But this year, you know, with nobody there, the watchdog and so forth, they cut it out of the budget.

I: So there is a welfare problem.

W: There is definitely a welfare problem in the city of Pompano Beach. And it really needs something drastically done and fast. Now I'd say that's one of the most critical areas right now facing Pompano Beach's black community.

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I: What about employment?

W: This is basically the same. I'll have to say somewhat effective. I won't say not effective. I'll say somewhat effective for the simple reason that we were able to get them to adopt affirmative action program through the city whereby they would put on paper that they would not discriminate or that they would, you know, give equal opportunity as far as trying to hire. They did put forth some efforts to try to go out and recruit some blacks for certain jobs and so forth, but how it really honestly was, I don't know. But at least they went through the motions, and so I can't say that they didn't do it honestly so I'd have to say effective, but they're still no blacks in the fire department. There's very few in the police department. And practically none in administrative positions and so forth.

I: Do you think the police, because they're black, their promotions come slower, from let's say, a white officer?

W: Well, I had one complaint to that effect while I was in office. Now, whether or not that's, uh, there hasn't been that many black officers down there. So I mean, you know, it's kind of hard to answer a question like that. I know Officer Chriswell, who was a member of police force for a number of years, claimed that, you know, and he did. He had quite an educational background and the degrees to prove it, and he's never gotten promotions.

I: Well, we could say, then, it would be fair that it could use a little more equalization in the police department.

W: Well, I think the somewhat whitewash of an investigation that the justice department did that was one of the errors that they did point out—that the city of Pompano Beach should correct or look into something. That, you know, it was ridiculous.

I: What about parks and recreation?

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W: Parks and recreation—I'll say that we were somewhat effective because of the fact that they did put in the budget's monies to develop Apollo Park. We improved Westside Park. We got a recreation program started in the northwest area which we'd never had before, you know. So there were some improvements made during the, you know, my administration.

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

W: I'd say that was somewhat effective. One of the complaints that the black community have often had was the fact that poor garbage pick up. The fact that there were many areas which were allowed to litter. You know, like, you know, some people, you know, even in the black community, they just throw out old refrigerators and garbage around the house. And didn't put it in proper containers. We felt that the city's—it was the city's responsibility to enforce the law. The law says that you're not allowed to litter, and allow your property to be littered like that. They would enforce that in the white community. We were wanting them to enforce it in the black community whereby that we could upgrade our community. And this is something that's till lacking in this community. You ride around in this community and you'll see people are allowed to spill piles and piles of litter and trash along the side of the streets. We should prohibit it. Old junk cars—this was something was allowed to do. And many of the things that I've fought for while I was in there are now beginning to appear back on the scenes, see, and which is disheartening.

I: Right. What about health and hospitalization? Did the city commission have anything to do with that?

W: No, not really 'cause, see, we have a hospital district which in \_\_\_\_\_ our hospital district is set up to handle this under a county fund. The city has nothing to do with it. And the others are just private hospitals in the areas so the city doesn't have any--

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I: What about health clinics?

W: They did, uh, well, they had--they did add on to our fire department's paramedic program at extra cost to the citizens which I opposed.

I: Yes.

W: You know this is an emergency medical service. They could have gotten the same service through the Broward County medical service at no extra cost to the taxpayers, and that's what I was looking for. The same service at no cost.

I: Why didn't they want the no cost?

W: Well, they wanted to maintain control, and I think this is a--see, under the Broward County, they would have had to extend that service to areas such as Christhaven, which is an elderly white neighborhood north of us, Kendall Green, which is an area that's white, north of us. Even west to black community, and I think this was more of a hinder than you was these other two because they have entered into mutual agreement pacts with these other communities whereby they won't enter into mutual agreement pacts with the black communities. So I feel that, you know, this is basically their reason. They didn't want to have to afford these services to the black community.

I: How about education?

W: They have nothing to do with education. I don't know. I should check this one off first, then maybe health and hospital. I have to put not effective because we don't have a program under this one.

I: Okay.

W: In education, again, the city has nothing to do with it, as far as the education procedures. Although they have shown willingness and cooperation to work with the school board in trying to make situations around school areas, you know, safer. Or one instance of Pompano Beach High School had

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a problem with water on one of the streets. They did say that, you know, they'd come in there and grade it, possibly put in some type of a drainage system.

I: Uh huh.

W: They tried to cooperate as much with school officials as they could as commissioners. I think even went so far as to give city funds to the school to go on band trips, which is really illegal, in my opinion. And I voted against it again, too. 'Cause Avin plays. Some school officials sent my nephew over to--in one of the groups that solicit the funds, and I still said no because, you know, again, it was wrong. It's--you're not to take tax-supported money to support things like that.

I: What about fire protection? Is the fire protection--

W: Fire protection--I'm going to have to put not effective for the simple reason that we fought, and this is one of the main issues that I rallied behind and fought for during my campaign was a fire station located west of Dixie Highway, which I was referring to basically the black community. But then they went west of Dixie Highway, but they went clear west out into a white neighborhood. I don't know. It was so far west it's almost not in the city.

I: Could you tell me about how far away that is from the black community that we are in now?

W: It's roughly around three miles.

I: I didn't see fire hydrants.

W: There is some fire hydrants in the black community. They're located fairly good. I mean as far as the fire hydrants are concerned. They are here. But the fire apparatus you need is not here. And you got two railroad tracks which would prohibit along with I-95, they would prohibit adequate service to the black community. And this is one of the things that I

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feel is going to happen in the future. That we're just going to be trapped in here if a real disaster happens--getting emergency medical service as well as fire protection in here. And this is your more fire prone area, too, by the way.

I: Would you say that it looks good in the near future for getting a fire house or it doesn't look good or--

W: I'd say it doesn't look good for the simple reason that, you know, they claim that the money is getting tight and there's no question about it. And before they went so far out west, I thought they just should have build that fire house on the city of \_\_\_\_\_ property up near Copence Road, which would have been much more centrally located. And they'd have been able to respond to even the areas out south of here, you know, where they put the fire house.

I: Right.

W: But the way it is now, we won't get one, and they even attempted to cut out the closest one to us then. So you--so then you going to have one furthest west that you can get and one furthest east as you can get, and we sitting in the middle where all the fires are. And no fire protection.

I: That's another good come back for that. Maybe even a good question. I guess the obvious one is why? 'Cause it's the black community? They feel they can get away with it or--

W: Well, there was one statement made by the fire chief. I think 'cause I read it, and the fire chief said, you know, once you locate a fire department in the black community that you are subject to political pressures of the black community and so forth, which I doubt very seriously. There isn't any black political pressures. I'd love the black people to get involved politically, and I think they could really see a change made. But that's hogwash. I think he's just, you know, that's just pretty much a racist

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type group of people, and they just don't intend to have any blacks in it.

And I don't think they would have felt safe to have a total white operation in the black community. It's as simple as that.

I: Well, you'd think they'd had a black fire department in the black community.

W: They could very well have one if they'd give them the money to do it because I'm sure there's blacks who could easily qualify and try and, you know, do it. But for some reason or another, blacks can't even pass their examinations. And a lot of them were college trained and so forth who took it intentionally and couldn't pass it so.

End of Side 1--FB 50A

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W: Well by surprised because I just couldn't imagine that anything like that could even happen.

I: Do you think that possibly the applications or the tests that they give could be different between the blacks and the whites?

W: I don't have any knowledge as to whether or not they were using double standards or two different types, you know, type tests, but I do know that there's many people who took the test and was unable to pass who I thought should have been able to really pass the test. I would have loved to go in there and asked the, you know, personnel director as to what are the questions--what are some of the questions, and what type of information that he is looking for, the qualification he was looking for in a person to serve on the fire department. But I never did go that far. I had so many other problems that I felt that it was--

I: Have you gotten any federal funds for your district?

W: Yes, we've gotten quite a few federal funds. Mainly revenue sharing funds. We have gotten an EPA grant to build a transmission line which amounted to something like about three million dollars. We've gotten, uh, we've authorized the county to utilize the city as a party in application for a block grant which you would apply to the city, and you get monies for that. Then I've gotten quite a bit of federal and state monies in the way of parks and recreation, and beach erosion. I think the city's gotten its share of federal and state money.

I: Did this help the black community? Did money come in?

W: It helped the black community some. I don't say it helped them tremendously because actually, this is one of the complaints that we had with the justice department--that the revenue shared monies that were being received by the city was spent to unequalize the services rendered to the black community and the white community because every budget, every fund that

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was earmarked was a project that was in the white community. There was none in the black. And so, uh, and we set out to prove it, and nobody has disproved us yet. And the federal government hasn't said anything. I think they're giving the city directions and plenty of time to comply or to give some kind of excuse for not complying so.

I: Have you as an elected official been able to bring industrial retail stores into the area?

W: Industrial retail stores?

I: Industrial or retail stores.

W: Oh.

I: Is that applicable to--

W: No, because industrial I got out of the community because of the fact that they were in one stifling. I think--I can't personally claim credit for any industry nor retail stores come into the community. I do feel that many of them come in the community since my election mainly because of the attitude of the people in the community. And they felt that, you know, it was profitable to go into that community. But per se to say that I went out and solicited and got John X industry to come and locate within the black community, no, I didn't.

I: Have you been able to see that blacks were hired fairly in local government while you were in office?

W: Well, we tried. You know I tried to get to do that. Now whether or not-- and I think them that were hired were hired fairly. They're trying. It's kind of hard. They get a lot of them down there who consider themselves, I guess, die hards and--but they're changing slowly.

I: Okay. Just a couple more questions here. Has the federal revenue sharing helped your district--your district right here in the black community?

W: Yes, it's helped it. Like I said, we've gotten, through federal revenue

sharing money at no cost to the tax payers, uh, school sidewalks which we didn't have any before and the kids had to walk to school in the middle of the street along with all the trucks and cars and everything else. And we've gotten some street improvements through federal revenue sharing money I think, I'm not sure. Yeah, \_\_\_\_\_ right, (chuckle), I have to think about things cause sometime, you know, they usually do a road improvement it's always through special assessments, you know, the \_\_\_\_\_ property owner pays 100% of assessments so you really ain't giving them nothing.

I: Has there been any black protests, sit-ins, boycotts, or riots in the city in the last ten years?

W: Oh my gosh yes.

I: (Laughter). Could you tell me maybe a couple of the major ones and what were the issues, and after thing settled did it help the blacks?

W: Uh, One was my year in, the first year in elected, uh, the issue was again police brutality, which is the same thing with the major issue in, uh, in the previous riot which claimed national, which I didn't think they should have ever gotten coverage even in the local newspaper. Uh, one of the policemen shot and killed a guy, a black guy here at a local bar and they rioted behind that and they claimed during the riot that the city was not providing recreation, they wasn't providing street light, and they wasn't giving 'em police protection and that they were being harrassed and beaten by the policemen, uh, they didn't have fire protection, and mainly some of them just, pretty

much the usual gripes that you here in a black community, which many of them I think was founded.

I: And did the, uh, did, after the riots did the effects...

W: Uh, the riots had some effect, uh, it kinda woke up a little bit of the white community to the fact that, you know, sooner or later we won't be able to survive unless'n something is done over there in order to try to make the conditions livable for them people, you know, that they don't become so hostile, see. Cause there were many white owned and merchants who had stores and businesses in the black community who was pretty much forced out behind those riots and so they were the target of fire bombings and harrassments and boycotts and this type thing.

I: So it did have some effect and it helped.

W: Definite, no question about it. I don't say it helped, but it had an effect on...

I: Kinda waking process.

W: Yes, it had awakening, no question about it. And them that did stay and relocated they, they built much more decent type business establishments. I think they kind of treated people more like human beings more so than somebody out there that they, they make me a dollar off of, and so forth.

I: Okay, what is your opinion of Governor Ruben Askew? And, well, does, do you think that he has favorable attitude, policy towards blacks in Florida?

W: I tell ya, I got kinda of turned off of him, and uh, I don't even read about him, no, you know, uh, lately. Other than I did kinda read about, you know, what he was doing in this Pitts and uh...

I: Lee case.

W: ...and Lee case. But uh, I feel that Governor Ruben Askew let me down, uh, and many other people in this state when he dispelled to do anything for the black communities. I don't see anything his administration has done to help better the situation of the black community. In fact now I think it's worse, my own opinion.

I: What is your opinion of other state officials or state representatives?

W: Well, mainly for me are the ones in Broward County and I think they all stink.

I: (Chuckle). ..... Okay do you think that winning and holding office in Florida has been worth the effort? Or would you rather comment anymore on the other state officials or...

W: No, I uh, I don't want to comment on any other state official other than what I've already commented on, but they can be expanded upon.

Uh, now what was the second question, excuse me?

I: Do you think that winning and holding office in Florida has been worth the effort?

W: Yes, I say it was worth the efforts although I would never do it again. I think it was worth the efforts by the simple reason it taught me that a democracy is not what we taught in fifth grade that, this is how our government work, and this is how it should work, you know,

and I just, you know, I'm still getting over that and uh, you know, because, you know, I was a believer in the free enterprise system, I took the courses, I love it, I figure that, you know, this is what, you know, our country was all about. But then I got an inside look at least I felt the inside look, the piece that I saw I didn't like. And so, I say if this the way our government has to work and the way our free enterprise system really is all about, then I don't know. I don't want communism I don't think, I don't know that much about them other than what I've read and what I've seen and I've seen other countries that, you know, their system of government don't seem to be producing that much. I think this is the best type system that I know of, But I don't, I just don't feel like you should say that this is the utopia when you know that it's not no where near being what you say it is.

I: Okay, these questions are asked to complete an overall group profile of black elected officials in Florida. No individual answers will be reported. Uh, could you tell me the type of office that you held?

W: Uh, city commissioner.

I: What was the first elected?

W: What?

I: When were you first elected?

W: In 1973.

I: Do you remember the month?

W: February.

I: When did you first take office?

W: Um,...

I: February '73?

W: It was in February '73 later that month, but I think I was elected on the twenty-third and we took office about a week later.

I: Oh, you know sometimes there's a lag of a few months.

W: Yeah, no there wasn't.

I: Uh, number of times that you ran for the office.

W: Twice.

I: Okay, your age in one of these categories, 18-29, 30-49...

W: 30 to 49.

I: 30 to 49, occupation before election?

W: Self employed child care center.

I: And what was your father's occupation?

W: He was a carpenter, laborer, any where he could work to make a dollar to feed the kids.

I: Is this your school?

W: This is my school.

I: It's really nice.

W: Thank you.

I: They're gonna love that on the tape. Education, high school, completed college?

W: Yes.

I: Completed college?

W: Yes.

I: Okay, uh, salary recieved from your elected position when you were a city commissioner.

W: Salary recieved, uh, seemed like it was \$5,010, something like that.

I: Were you active in the civil rights movements of the sixties to '66.

W: Um, somewhat in college we did some protesting about, you know, sit-ins on restaurants and carried picket signs up in Daytona on Morrisons and one weekend up to Daytona, not to Daytona, but uh, St. Augustine there, but uh, that's about the extent. I was more less interested in trying to get the people registered to vote, now I took an active part in that because I felt that this is really where the key was, and I still feel that's where the key is.

I: Do you belong to the NAACP or the SCLC?

W: No, no.

I: Never have?

W: Yes, I have belonged to the NAACP.

I: Would you tell me when?

W: Probably in the sixties. Probably all in the sixties because I, you know, once I become, you know, active I, that was about the only organization I think you could, you know, send them two dollars and you can become a year member. So I did that.

I: Uh, do you belong to a church?

W: Yes, I do.

I: Which church?

W: Bethelamy Church, it's an African Methodist Episcopal church.

I: Are you an official in your church?

W: Steward, yes, I'm a steward boy, steward.

I: I don't know what that is.

W: Well, it's a representative body of the church.

I: Oh, okay thank you. Are there any other community organization activities that you are involved in?

W: Well, actively not at the moment because, you know, I just ceased all activities until I get my faculties back together and, uh, feel like, you know, I can make some worthwhile contribution to the community, uh, but uh, I have in the past, you know, belonged to Kiwanias, uh, Jaycees, I belonged to North Broward Community Action Committee which is a committee compiled of both blacks and whites who are trying to solve problems, which was an outgrowth of a riot. Uh, I belonged to the Northwest Community Organization Council which was a group organized by myself and another guy, Pat Larken in order to give me support at City Hall that I needed, you know, in order to as a sounding board from the community so that I wouldn't have to be a spokesman from the community as well as trying to be commissioner, which was a hardship for me to try to do is to separate the two and not be a spokesman for the community and be a commissioner at the same time. I was forced on both ends to do them both. Forced by the commission as to be a spokesman for the community as well as by the commission was being a spokesman for the community.

I: What effects did running and holding office have on your family and on yourself?

W: It had a, I don't say a dramatic experience, but uh, it has, uh, it had an effect to the point where one point my wife was almost a nervous wreck from receiving calls and abuses and things on the telephones that, uh, which she actually knew nothing about, you know, and uh, for that reason I think that I wouldn't even, you know consider making a...

I: Another election

W: ...another attempt.

I: What about on yourself?

W: Uh, even on my children, they even to the point in school, one, on one instance, I have a son Keith who plays football, and he's an outstanding football player.

I: Yeah, I saw his trophies.

W: Now he in one game, now without a doubt was the outstanding player, then the officials said that we couldn't give it to your son because if we'd have give it to your son, you know, he would have, you know, they'd have thought, you know, he was being favored. But, you know, and that hurt him, you know, and it hurt me too. Because, you know, here I've denied him something of which he should be entitled to. Cause that's a big part of his, you know, could have, you know, could have had some effect on him, but, you know, he's, he bounced back beautiful from because we tried to play it off, play it down. And

there's a couple of, my oldest son who had a run in with one of his teachers who because of the fact that, he said, you know, you think, you're Carl Weaver's son, or something, you know, the commissioner's son, you know, he's always, apparently he must didn't like my style one commission because that's what he referred to that, you know, that I was down there trying to run city hall and this kind of stuff, and he better not come in his class trying to do that, which he felt that, you know, he didn't have no reason to say that. And there's me, I just, I don't know, it's done a lot to me. Cause it, from number one, I was a kind of a, much like a blind believer in anything you said about America that, you know, this is what we stood for and that, you know, we were people who were, was the champions of democracy and justice and then I found out what justice was like and what all was involved in trying to get justice and, because I got quite involved in prison reform and this kind of thing too while I was in there and from what I can read even in the papers now that, you know, I just don't, I don't have very good taste for it because I would have rather stayed ignorant to the fact then just believe in, I think I'd been more willing to kind of go along with some of it, but right now it's hard for somebody to convince me that, you know, this is the truth and this is what you're trying to say and what you don't. You know you always have to kind of, you know, you're wondering whether or not what their real motive as to why they're doing a thing because really on many instances I even refused to interview with people, you

know, particularly just before the last election because I would suspect, I was suspicious of one guy who was asking me a lot of questions as to my procedure as to what I went through and how successful in being elected and come to find out that I felt that many of the procedures and the thing that I did in that successful election when I ran this time, those ways were blocked, and I got, I don't say that that was the absolute truth, but then I was suspicious and I think much of that effect came from knowing how politics operate and the system operates, and I was, you know, I just refused to. But me, know I don't care, you know, I just, you know, I know that I don't intend to run again and I hope I'm not doing anything to hinder any other black official or white official or anybody from ever wanting to serve and, you know, and do a job, you know, for the American people. I have no intention of become a, somebody to overthrow the government, but I still don't want to be one to become a part of those officials anyway.

I: Okay, do you know any other black officials around this area?

W: Uh, Silvia Portier who is in Deerfield Beach is a commissioner there. She's the first black, no she's not the first black. She's the first black woman to be elected to that commission and uh, she was successful the year I lost. But she had been running quite a time too.

I: What about down south at all?

W: South, John Sanders is down in, uh,...

I: He says hello also by the way. I was him last night.

W: I can't think of anybody, Boise Waiter, who's no longer a city official, he was one at one time.

I: What's his name?

W: Boise Waiters.

I: And where was he from?

W: He was from Hallendale.

I: Boise Waiters?

W: Yeah, uh, Dania, excuse me, John is from Hallendale. Yeah, he was from Dania, right next door to here.

I: Okay, thank you that's all. There's just one more thing. There's an oral project at the University of Florida called Oral History, and we're thinking about having these tapes transcribed if you'd be interested in it. And what we're gonna do is we're gonna send a copy of this as it is, have somebody just take it right off the tape and send it down to you, and you'll be able to read it, your answers.

W: Hopefully. (Chuckle).

I: And then...

W: Little snurs and all?

I: Yeah, (chuckle). And they'll uh, we'll send it down and then you can okay it or not okay it depending on it. Uh, would you be interested in having that done?

I: I'd be interested in helping anyway that I can in order to help anybody understand the system.

I: Okay so...

W: What's it all about...

I: What is this, after it's documented we put in the library and, you know, people will be able to read it for research in ten, twenty years, and we'll see how it goes.

W: Okay.

I: Thank you Mr. Carl Weaver.

W: Alright thank you very much.

END OF TAPE