

sub: Eddie L. Martin

FB60A  
Side 1

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- B: ...you're registering to voting and so on. First of all, we'd like to ask you, what year you first registered to vote?
- M: I think I must have registered in '4...I believe it was '49 or '50, I just remembered, but I think, I believe it was '49.
- B: Was that the year you were first eligible to vote, that's the year you turned 21?
- M: Um hum.
- B: Were you ever turned down when you applied to register?
- M: No, never have.
- B: Where did you register, was it here?
- M: I was first registered in Lake City, Columbia County.
- B: When did you move to Hawthorne?
- M: Well, re<sup>al</sup>ly Hawthorne was always my home. I was born and raised here, but at the time I was living with my uncle up there when I became eligible to register, so he's the one that carried me down and I registered then. So when I came back here I just had it transferred back to Alachua County, and had it transferred back here in '54.
- B: Have voter registration drives been held in the Hawthorne area in the last ten years or so?
- M: Yeah, we had one here, I think it was last year. To me, it wasn't as successful as I would have loved it to have been, but it was better than, you know, what it was before. But, the thing wrong with that, something like 124 at the time. Up until that time, we didn't have a great many blacks in the Hawthorne registered.
- B: Who sponsored that registration drive?
- M: Reverend Henderson and myself. We talked with Miss Rosa Williams in Gainesville and she along with \_\_\_\_\_. Some of the ladies in the office came over here after working hours and they volunteered here just to help us. Because Reverend Henderson always was pushing it and <sup>had</sup> this is free will after the inaugural to help us do this. And we was hoping that we could do this again this year because we found out that there's

quite a few of us still unregistered, and this among the old and some of the other people too, ~~just~~ not registered to vote.

B: Were there any other voter registration drives prior to that time?

M: Not to my knowing. And well as even as far as ~~and~~ I don't remember any being since I've been in office, this is another thing that I really push for, because until that time I didn't know that there wasn't as many blacks registered as well.

B: What percent of the blacks are registered to vote? Do you have any idea?

M: No, well, for, speaking of \_\_\_\_\_ I think we have something like 7-800. That's not direct for within the city limits of Hawthorne. This includes the outlying areas, but within the city limits several things have something like 3 something. Around 320, 350, something like that.

B: 350?

M: I would say not over that, anyway.

B: You're not sure what percentage of eligible blacks that would be?

M: No, I don't.

B: Yeah, OK, all right.

M: Reverend Henderson gave me the figure like 40 percent, approximately.

B: 40 percent approximately? OK, You said you thought that the voter registration was not too successful, though, the one that was held.

M: Um um.

B: OK, Are there any things that you know of that prevent blacks from registering to vote in this area?

M: Legally, no. I think it's just number 1; especially among the elder people, they've always, the two that I've talked with, something about years ago that they couldn't vote or something, and I think some of them still have this feeling, now even though you explain it to them, that, you know, they can vote. I mean, it's nothing that nobody can do to any member from voting. And each of them got the same idea well, there's no use of me voting. No use of me registering to vote, even if a vote <sup>if</sup> wouldn't count,

it's hard to get the older folks to get out of that groove that they've been in for years, but this last drive we've had, we've gotten more of the young people than there's ever been. I think, somehow or another, they're realizing now that they need to register to vote. It's beneficial to them. It's just hard...another thing, too, that I feel that, I hadn't talked with him today, but Reverend Henderson said he was that we was going to try to get the book to come out here because, you know, taking time out, the few that are really interested, and carrying everybody over to Gainesville to register to vote and like that is hard to get somebody to really take the time and a whole day's work making three or four trips over there for nothing.

B: I see, to register they have to go all the way to Gainesville to register.

M: That's right.

B: I see.

M: Unless that she advertise like this drive that we had. By using her employees on their off-time, they were already deputized so they came over here on their own time, free of charge.

B: Like at night and on weekends?

M: Um hum. This was on Friday evening when they'd knocked off, they came over here. So I feel that if we can get the book over here or maybe have a full day of it, and <sup>knowing</sup> ~~non-~~in advance, we can get more people to register to vote.

B: We have a list of a few items which in some cases have prevented blacks from registering to vote, here in Florida and other states as well. If you could, we'd like to have you look over these items and rate whether you think these items today are very important, fairly important, or not important at all in terms of preventing blacks from registering to vote <sup>here</sup> in Hawthorne. And if you would, comment just briefly on each one. First of all, economic dependence on whites.

M: Economic dependence on whites. You want me to put the...

B: Yeah, if you could, please check and then comment, you know, do you think that's very important, fairly important or ~~not~~ <sup>+</sup>important in terms of preventing blacks from regis-

tering to vote here. Economic dependence in the sense of...

M: Their jobs.

B: ...their jobs, job security, not having time off to go register, or something of that sort.

M: Well, I don't think this is a having any baring on the people that are voting in Hawthorne, period. The economic dependence on whites for number one is I don't think within the city limits of Hawthorne that they ain't hardly all the 70 people that works here among the blacks. Everybody transfer to Gainesville. And another thing, the white here in Hawthorne have always tried to encourage the black to vote. So that is no, depend<sup>ence</sup> on it.

B: OK, OK, undecided. I guess you're saying then that's not important.

M: Well, that's the one I would check. There have been very good trying to get, get them to vote.

B: How about fear of physical violence <sup>from</sup> of whites.

M: That's not important.

B: OK. <sup>ay</sup> Complicated registration forms.

M: I think this is varying among the elders.

B: Difficult to read, maybe.

M: Um hum. It's hard to, there are so many people that they don't want you to know their endless handicap areas that they can't understand, and they're kind of reluctant of telling you their pain, and they don't understand the problem themselves. Even though if they goes to the office then they can, you know, one of them deputies will go over it with them, but it's kind of hard to get the older people to simply pull out of their role. So, let's see...

B: ~~~~~ salary? How would you rate...

M: I would put that very important.

B: Very important?

M: Um hum.

B: OK.<sup>24</sup>  
^ Poor registration hours?

M: Well, this is another thing, too, about taking them and going all the way into Gainesville. During with a lot of them jobs, by the time they get off than it was the time for the booth to close, so the area that I know that most people's work, there's only 30 minutes of noon hour, but then you don't have time to come from maybe <sup>le</sup> university and this is the majority where they work. Thirty minutes is not long enough for them to run up there and then get back to work. The hours extended...the only time the hours extended is just before, maybe a day or two before, major elections, and then they're extended to maybe 6 or 7 o'clock. Everybody get off at 5. This is my understanding of talking with quite a few of the, why they hadn't registered, and I feel that if it was open on some Saturday when they're off, then they would still have to drive all the way back into Gainesville.

B: Registration not held often enough during the year.

M: That's very important because usually it's just once a year and that's just before election.

B: OK.<sup>24</sup>  
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M: Indifference of blacks to vote.

B: Yeah, indifference of blacks?

M: I don't know which way I want to comment on this. Will you go through this for

\_\_\_\_\_...

B: OK,<sup>24</sup> well...

?: Do they seem to, do they seem like the vote's helping them, <sup>you know</sup> now? Would it be important, do they feel it's important to vote? Or do they feel...

M: When it comes down to election, no, most of them feel that it's not important whether they vote or not.

?: OK, so that one, according to you?

B: Yeah, I guess you're saying it's very important then that...

?: Yeah, it's very important because they are indifferent about it.

M: Um hum.

- B: OK.<sup>24</sup> How about, there's one additional one; it's not listed there. How about, in some cases the purging of names, you know, from the registration roles because people haven't voted in a certain period, like a two-year period. Has that been a problem, do you know?
- M: Yes, because these people are under the impression that they is eligible to vote until they go to the poll, and then they find out their names have been purged from the registration and they wasn't aware of it, so I feel that it should be a change in there somewhere, that maybe it's just \_\_\_\_\_ the election for it. Maybe to me, I feel that there ought to be a notice sent out ahead of time that, you know, they have been purged because they didn't vote. I think for every two years or the next two elections, I think, and I feel that if, you know, sometime people swear to forget that I didn't vote, and if it's not a very important issue, then they're not going to vote. So if it's two straight years that it's not important issue, then when one comes up really that they feel is important, well, then they're not eligible to vote because their name's been purged and they didn't know to go into the city to go up there to vote.
- B: OK.<sup>24</sup> Then they just strike it off without everybody ... \_\_\_\_\_.
- M: Um hum.
- B: OK.<sup>24</sup> I'd like to ask you a few questions now about your campaign when you ran for the council in Hawthorne. First of all, were you able to campaign freely? That is, were you threatened in any way during your campaign?
- M: No, I wasn't threatened and really I didn't have a, didn't even do any campaigning.
- ?: That's what I heard yesterday, too.
- M: Well, with being a small community and you go up there and collect a form and then the word get out that you're running, that you ~~was~~<sup>is</sup> a candidate. If everybody, well, I'll put it this way, with me, not knowing the past that have been, well, take with Reverend Henderson. I don't think he's campaigned but, among the white candidates, usually five or six of them run at the same time and then they campaign. But Reverend

Henderson had more experience than I have because this is just my second two-year term, and each time I didn't have to campaign, because, as I said, black and white both know me, and when word got out that I was a candidate, that was all. I didn't have no ad in the paper, no ad on the radio, nothing. Didn't even put up a poster nowhere.

B: Did you meet to talk to some body or anything?

M: Nobody. As I said, I don't know if the clubhouse is involved in community affairs already, with black and white and just black, and then, sometimes, \_\_\_\_\_ black among the white. See, everybody knew me when they found out. In other words the majority of the white encouraged me ~~to~~<sup>to</sup> to run.

B: Did you ever receive any threatening phone calls of any sort?

M: Never have.

B: At all? OK? Were you handicapped by lack of campaign money? I guess you're saying that, that wasn't important.

M: No, it wasn't.

B: Did you have to spend any of your own money at all?

M: Not any at all.

B: Why did you decide to run?

M: Well, number one, I didn't really decide. I heard several white to ask me would I from some of the things that I was trying to do for the city of Hawthorne on a voluntary basis in community organizations and working through the school system. Voluntary. They felt that I should be a candidate, be a city official. They felt that some of the things that I have tried to get the city to do--they felt that if I got them to do it then I would be able to help get it done, and I'd be in a better position of getting some of the things done that I've went up there and tried to get other councilmen to do. And, so far, even though that I've had three or four meetings, paid my registration fee for county, and these things--well, not all of them, but, out of the

four, were gone all four years, just about everything I've tried to get them to do ahead that they didn't do, I've been successful getting the majority of them done.

B: You're saying they paid your fee, your filing fee when you ran?

M: Yeah.

B: How much was that?

M: Just three dollars.

B: Three dollars.

M: Um hum. That was the first year and the second.

B: Had there been a black on the city council here before, before you ran?

M: The Reverend Henderson <sup>as</sup> were.

B: He was the only one before...

M: I think he had something like nine years, I believe it is.

B: Yeah. Had there been blacks on the city council before that?

M: No, never have.

B: What, what political party do you belong to?

M: Democrat.

B: Did they help you in any way, through organization and one year, anything of that sort?

M: The only money that was spent was filing fee.

B: What were the two or three most important issues that you may have mentioned or that became issues when you ran?

M: Number one was, and I still haven't gotten it, and that was sewage system for Hawthorne. We still haven't gotten it and right now it don't seem like they're going to get it in the next few years unless the government forces it in. The others were, one of the things they started on before I became a candidate, and that was improving streets. And they began adding, we have improved further and did more paving since I've been on it. And the other was light, street light<sup>s</sup>, and this is something we really needed very bad. And we have improved that, I guess, 90 percent.

B: OK.<sup>27</sup> You feel these were some of the main problems facing the blacks in Hawthorne?

M: Yes. Maybe I should have put this one first. This was to have a recreation for black and white. I felt that this was, would kinda bring them closer together, even though, you know, they're going to school together, but once they leave school then it was altogether different. I felt that if we had the recreation facilities, which we don't have, but working through the school system, we was able to share some finance and you know giant recreation facility for after school hours together with a lot of \_\_\_\_\_, and I think this have been able to even pull us closer together among the adults too because of the night programs. And we have never had any problem, even before then, but I just wanted to try to get them even more closer. And I think this was another thing that even brought the adults and the young people together, having this after school hour recreation program.

B: This is through the school? You do it at the school, or...

M: Yeah, because <sup>you</sup> see the city <sup>itself don't have anything</sup> ~~hepped on having it there~~, so we kinda have, it's a joint program between the city and the school board. We'll have an after-hour and weekend recreation program for adults and teenagers. So, I think this has really helped even though we've never had racial problems in Hawthorne. We've had two or three at the school a couple of years ago, but it wasn't the people of Hawthorne. It was the ones that coming out of Hawthorne into Hawthorne--like Putman County and Gainesville, they come over here. Other than that, the people of Hawthorne accept that it's really hurting, and with this after hour recreation program, it has even drawn the black and white even closer together than they were before then. I wish to say they could get a recreation program at, but we don't have land to do it.

B: Yeah. We have just a few questions we'd like to ask you about the election in which you ran and won office. Did you run at-large in the city?

M: Yes. Ran at-large.

B: OK.<sup>27</sup> All the councilmen are elected at-large?

M: At-large.

B: How many people are in the city? Well, how many people are in the city, approximately?

M: <sup>Oh</sup> I would say in the neighborhood of 1600.

B: What percent of that population is black?

M: I would say somewhere in the neighborhood of 60 percent is black.

B: A majority?

M: Um hum.

B: I've asked you this before, I know it's difficult, the percent of blacks of voting age who are registered. You're not sure on this issue.

M: No, I'm not.

B: You said, what, 40 percent?

?: Something like that. I can look back on my other...

B: OK.<sup>27</sup> Of those blacks who are registered to vote, what percent, do you think, actually voted when you were elected?

M: The first election, I feel that, you said about 40 percent black, I feel that about 20 percent voted. This last election I would estimate I got about 10 percent.

?: That's about what Reverend Henderson said.

B: OK.<sup>27</sup> 20 percent of those who were eligible voted, is that what you're saying?

M: Yeah, the first, when I first ran.

B: OK.<sup>27</sup> OK.<sup>27</sup> You ran twice. Did you win both times?

M: That's right.

B: When were you first elected?

M: Must have been <sup>now</sup> ~~'79~~...it's every two years, must have been '73.

B: '73? Then you ran again?

M: '75.

B: I see. Do you think you got any votes from whites?

M: Oh, yeah. If it hadn't been for them, I wouldn't have never made it.

B: The turnout wasn't very good in the black community?

M: And see, another reason too, they even partially persuaded me to run the first time

and the last time I was undecided because it was more than I really thought it were, and I was undecided to run, so some of them persuaded me right at the last, but I think I only had just a few days before the deadline before I went and qualified for the last election. And I think both times it was the whites that really put me in, and especially the last election. Definitely, I believe if it hadn't have been for them I wouldn't have made it either time and especially the last time.

B: So, the majority of your gain then came from whites.

M: That's right.

B: Did you have any opponents when you ran?

M: Yeah, the first time I had, I believe it was three...well, with running at-large, I had five. And then the last time I had, I think I had about seven, eight the last time.

B: All for one position or did you just \_\_\_\_\_?

M: Well, the way, the way Hawthorne votes is the two highest out of all the candidates that run ~~usually~~ win. Because there's two seats each ~~in the~~ election, because we ~~only~~ rotate...well, there're three one year and two the next one.

B: OK.<sup>21</sup>

M: And the two highest ones, or the three highest ones, like this year was three running; next year it will be two, and the three highest ones out of eight is the one that wins the election.

B: Yeah. OK.<sup>21</sup> OK.<sup>21</sup> How many of your opponents were white?

M: All white. Each time.

B: All white? OK.<sup>21</sup> Can you remember the percent of the total vote that you got each time?

M: No, I can't right now I don't, because I think I was so overjoyed with winning that I didn't even look at it.

B: But you were one of the two highest.

M: Um hum.

B: The last part of the questionnaire deals with how well you've been able to benefit

those you represent. We'd like to ask you, first of all, in what ways you think you've helped blacks in Hawthorne by holding office.

M: Number one, I think I've been able to enlighten them on governmental procedures. I don't believe hardly <sup>5</sup> ~~five~~ percent of the people, of the blacks really knew at first. So many things that they would call me at the house or meet me on the street and ask me concerning city, you know, city government. But then, I don't think that they ever really <sup>anything</sup> ~~interested~~ to know ever before. And people think that I've explained it to them but they would tell me, "well, I didn't know that." They feel that when they ask me something, just because I'm up there, I can do it. I have to explain to them that I got four others up there and I try to encourage them to come to meetings and they can learn first-hand rather than me tell them over the phone or on the street. There's so many things, well, according to the city charter, that we can't do that they didn't know. So many things that the government \_\_\_\_\_ that we can't do that we would love to do. \_\_\_\_\_ pave the road that we can't do. All of this, such as it is, they really didn't know themselves. But the main thing that I have gotten over to the blacks is they feel because you're a councilman or you're an official, you can do this just because you're up there, but you can't. The majority of them didn't know this before. But the impression I've gotten from after is puzzling me. They told me "but I didn't know this, I just sooner believe it."

B: There's been a much greater interest in what you told them.

M: Yeah, because, see, where they would talk to me they wouldn't any of the other \_\_\_\_\_ . I don't know what it is. You take even Reverend Henderson. He's black too and got much more experience than I have because he's been up there longer. But the majority of them won't even go to him. I don't know if it's because he's a preacher or what. They won't ask him . \_\_\_\_\_ called and ask me or meet me on the street and ask me, and the night I'd see him I'd say, "Did you ever get a phone call on such and such a question?" Very seldom I would tell him who did it, but I'd just tell him what they asked about. He <sup>tells me</sup> ~~said~~, "No." And

even, well, since I was getting so many of them the first year, I thought they were just trying to try me out because it was my first <sup>erm</sup> ~~time~~. But this year it has even improved more, so I've gotten to the point that I think some of the first council had, that they've <sup>always</sup> ~~been~~ approached. The minute the blacks liked certain things, they told me no. Had no blacks ever asked for nothing. And one of them is up there; he's twelve years, and he told me no blacks never approach him. So, I feel that with this, <sup>we</sup> ~~me~~ enlightening them on the things they didn't know, some of the things that they can and can't do that they didn't know, I feel I've been a big help to them. I know one thing I've encouraged--I've gotten more of them to come to meetings with some of the things that I tell them that we can't do and I assume that they come up there to really find out whether we can or whether we can't. Or that encourages them to go read the city charter. This way they will know that I'm not lying to them when we say that we can't do it. There are some things that I would like for us to do, but because of the city charter, I can't.

B: Is there anything that you feel has prevented you from doing a better job in regard to benefitting blacks?

M: No, I don't.

B: OK. <sup>at</sup> We have a list of items which in some cases they can have prevented some black officials from doing a better job. We'd like to have you, if you could, just look at these and comment briefly on each one. Check whether you think the item has been very important, fairly important or not important, in preventing you from doing a better job. The first is "Office has no real authority <sup>v.</sup>" Do you feel that the office really, say a councilman, has no real power to change things? Have you had that feeling and has it prevented you from doing a better job?

M: No, it hasn't.

B: OK. So, it's been non-important?

M: Um hum.

B: How about being out-voted by white officials?

M: Never have.

B: ~~OK.~~ Do you feel on most votes they've gone along...

M: Um hum. We've never had any...

B: Not enough revenue available?

M: That's very important.

B: ~~OK.~~ It usually is. Were there particular things...well, we'll get to it in a second. Pretty good ending. Which revenue is really \_\_\_\_\_. Unfamiliar with administrative duties?

M: No, that's not important.

B: Lack of cooperation from whites?

M: No, we get along real good.

B: Not important?

M: Uh hum.

B: Lack of cooperation from blacks?

M: Very important.

B: Very important?

M: Um hum.

B: In what sense?

M: Really don't even know how to go about...just, you know, we have different committees and various others we try to get the community interested in, and you just can't get the black to participate. Well, there're several things that, not only myself, even the other white and the other managers, we've tried to get the black to take interest in toward city government ~~in~~ <sup>or</sup> community affairs; it's just hard to get the black to take a part in it. Sometimes they tell you they don't understand. If you try to explain it to them or get them to come among the other white council, <sup>or</sup> we'll get together and explain it to them and it's just still hard to get them to feel part of it. They seem like they have a likely interest in city government, and I don't do what I knew how or when I suppose I knew how to try to get them interested, and it just hasn't been no

help. I've even got some of the other white council<sup>10's</sup> to try to help me to encourage them to. Still hasn't been successful. So I think it's just one of those things that they're not interested in. I think they have the idea that they feel because you're a city official, everything is left up to you. And they leave it all up to you, and whether it's to get done it's all right, and if it don't get done, then they fault you for it.

B: OK.<sup>ay</sup> How about lack of cooperation from state officials?

M: We haven't had very much problem. I would say this is kind of fairly...

B: Have you had any particular problems?

M: Only think that I can remember and still is in a hassle is State Road 20 over there. That remains a problem over at the state official.

B: Trying to get them to...

M: Improve State Road 20.

B: \_\_\_\_\_ you were working on that.

M: Well, they're supposedly going with it. Tried to, well, on many \_\_\_\_\_, tried to get them to bring it on through. And we've even had Putnam County official to join in with us and meet him, and it hasn't been successful. We had one hassle now been going on for three years, and I think the city of Hawthorne will wind up have to do it, <sup>to</sup> Even those flasher lights. See, when children<sup>gather</sup> all the buses used to go out from<sup>there</sup>, now that they've got the new high school and all the buses goes out to this road here. Now all of the flashers is down here, so the buses and the children, where the children cross to go to their subdivision, both lights are beyond where the children cross the road and where the buses go out. So this is the only thing State Road 20 work period. That's the only thing that we've had problems with. Other than that, we've been \_\_\_\_\_ pretty good.

B: I guess you're saying that, that was what, fairly important?

M: Uh huh.

B: How about lack of cooperation from federal officials?

- M: We haven't had no problem, like, everything, since I've been up here, that we've had federal dealings with we've always gotten along good on it.
- B: OK? Has, have you received criticism from the black community since holding office, that is, do some blacks not cooperate because they think of you sometimes as only a token in government? That ever been a problem?
- M: Well, no, but I have gotten the idea among myself, you know, as far as actually having...well, some, you know, you hear people say in the streets that they weren't going to vote for you because you're black. And then most of this is some of the age group that maybe have youth to associate with or, \_\_\_\_\_. You know, some people feel that just because you're up a little bit that you're better than they are, but my attitude toward them hasn't changed, but their's toward me have changed. Other than that, no.
- B: In what sense? How has their attitude toward you changed?
- M: I think they feel that I'm going to be above them just because I'm a councilman and they're not. They feel that they don't want to, what I would say, associate with me. I mean, I don't, not the type that goes after \_\_\_\_\_ other activities that I've been with, a lot of them, just because I've been elected a councilman, they think that we have drifted apart. This is one of the things that kind of doubted me in running the last time because I felt like I was using, losing friends because of this, and I still have that feeling.
- B: I see.
- M: I have noticed this, too, talking with other blacks in the city. Right quick to get this attitude because you are elevated a little bit, <sup>the</sup> they feel that you are above them and not going to be with them and what like that. I don't know if it's like this in the white race, but a majority of the blacks have the idea because you are trying to improve yourself, then they don't want to have anything to do with you. Anytime a black, not only in city, you know, government, city officials...anytime a black tries to improve himself period, the other blacks kind of resents it, and this is

the way it is among blacks \_\_\_\_\_, you know, \_\_\_\_\_ me standing this. It's not because I'm a council, <sup>10/</sup> but I'm just using it for other blacks. It's not in any type of thing. You taking it they try to improve their living conditions. And other blacks want to resent them. So this is, I mean, this is something that just hasn't started among blacks. This has always been down through the years, and I've heard this even when I was much younger, even before I ever thought of going into politics. But, listen to a black, anytime one tries to improve himself, the others seem like they resent it. Maybe you've heard this among blacks/ that one try to get out/  
kind of like a <sup>one</sup> tried to get \_\_\_\_\_, and it's still like that, right on. And, somehow or another, to me, it has gotten worse among blacks because of other blacks, not only here in Florida but other blacks in, well I met a few in <sup>Georgia</sup> ~~GA~~ And I think they have the same problem. But just black hate to see black try to improve himself, regardless of how it is.

B: So you feel there has been a fair amount of resentment?

M: Um hum. Sure do.

B: How about the white officials, say, on the council. Do you feel that they treat you differently from other officials or not?

M: No, I don't.

B: Do they perceive you as sort of a spokesman for the black community? Do you think that's true?

M: Really, the way that I have been treated on this council up here, they receive me as speaking for Hawthorne period. Not just for the black itself, even though they rely on me a lot of things concerning the black <sup>city</sup> here, but when it come down to really see it, anything concerning the city as a whole, just speaking for the city as a whole, not just blacks.

B: OK. <sup>24</sup> We'd like to have you do a list of, try to list service areas in which in some areas blacks have tried to effect some changes when they came into office. If you would, we'd like to have you check again, this is the last check form, whether you think you've



I don't much blame a black deputy. White be able to have a better chance of parking in a black area than a black. Again, I say, the black resent, but this is one of the things that I hope to be improved ~~is~~ police protection.

B: Has the council tried to do anything in this area since you came in?

M: No more than writing letters or calling to the chief, so right now were in the process of trying to go on our own so that the government...

B: Develop your own police force?

M: Um hum. Yes. Other than that, it's just hard to get.

B: How about streets and roads?

M: Very effective since I've been in office.

B: In terms of paving roads?

M: Um hum. Paving and the few that we don't have we're even keeping graded fairly nice.

B: Housing?

M: Well, our housing is, hasn't been very effective since I've been in. Number one is land is really not <sup>available</sup> ~~affordable~~. We do have this subdivision which is, was in effect just before I got in office. It is run by the county, and the way they do things, the guidelines, which I think they're going to have a lot of combining into houses. And then, this is something, ~~too~~, that the city as a whole, through myself, has been trying to see what we can work out with the county, because, as I say, the city don't have the land and we don't even have say so <sup>to how it goes</sup> ~~in the house of~~.

B: ~~or~~ So you said, what, not effective?

M: Not effective.

B: Not effective. Welfare? I know welfare may be not in, sort of your jurisdiction.

M: No. All I need know, wouldn't want to comment on that.

B: ~~or~~ How about employment?

M: It's kind of hard to do that because they say the, there's not very people in Hawthorne is employed. I mean, not is employed in Hawthorne. We got about maybe half a dozen do maid work. See, the city itself only has about six employees, and other than that, only three of those is black. And the other blacks that work from the city of Hawthorne

I think as long as something like three to five, not over five.

B: How about blacks who work in, for city hall or city government. Are there many there?

M: In Hawthorne?

B: Yeah. <sup>vt</sup> ~~By~~ just a few.

M: Just only have two people that works there, both of them is white.

B: OK.<sup>24</sup>

M: And the only three that I, like I said, there's only six--there's a whole work for Hawthorne and one of those is part-time. So there are three full-time black and two full-time white.

B: Have you made any attempt or has a group made any attempt to bring in industry or stores or things of this sort to Hawthorne?

M: Yeah. We've tried this. It hasn't been successful for one reason and sewage, getting right back to the sewage system. That's the only that will turn it down on either thing. Last year we felt we had a small shopping center, but when they found out--in fact, the land had been purchased and everything had been worked out, until they found out there wasn't no sewage, and what it would have cost them for their own sewage system. And this killed the whole deal. As I say, I'm told we get, my main concern is the sewage. That's number one priority. Until we can get that in Hawthorne, we'll be in just one big nutshell.

B: I can see it's really important. Parks and recreation? You did say earlier that you got this special recreation accomplished.

M: Yeah, and we do have one of the \_\_\_\_\_, it's not the city's, but it's within the city limits. There's something between the state and the county that they worked out.

B: So, how effective do you feel you've been in that area?

M: I've been very...you want me to speak of myself?

B: Yeah, right.

M: On the welfare and employment, I'd like to leave that undone.

B: Yeah. It doesn't really matter.

M: But the recreation, I would say, very effective.

B: OK. <sup>at</sup> Water and sewage?

M: Sewage is something that's very important that we <sup>need-</sup> the water is obviously something that was already here when I got in. ~~Is that~~ <sup>do</sup> what you want me to....?

B: Yeah. I guess you're saying is that you're still having problems getting these kinds of things changed.

M: Yeah, it's true.

END OF SIDE 1A

M: A very good <sup>health</sup> ~~past~~ program, even though, as I say, now this is already a \_\_\_\_\_, because we have a clinic that operates through a joint program with the county. Just the city, now the city itself has it's own medical facility over there, you know, I think <sup>that</sup> Dr. Dennis <sup>and</sup> ~~son~~, whatnot, over there, <sup>the</sup> That's the city building itself. And then they have another clinic right up here that operates through, through the county, and this was something that was in operation before the city got its own facility, and it still operates separate like that.

B: So you haven't really tried to make any changes in that area?

M: No.

B: At all? <sup>M: No.</sup> <sup>OK?</sup> Education? Now I know that may not apply to you.

M: No.

B: That's a county function. Fire protection?

M: Very, very...I've been very effective on it. Well, you see, it's a volunteer thing, it's not a paid...so I've been very effective in one way, and then not effective in others. Which I am a part of, and out of forty some-odd volunteers, I'm the only black. So I haven't, even though I've encouraged our former fire chief and we've had a couple of classes, forty-hour classes and the new chief has just ended <sup>another</sup> ~~an~~ forty-hour class last Friday, and I've been in all three of them. Wind up being the only black. We have seven, eight started. They were the first, <sup>two</sup>. This time we had them to come to three, then they just dropped out. We have a good fire protection. Our fire organization, as I say, is volunteer.

B: Are you trying to get more blacks in the, in the ...

M: In this last course that we had, as I said, now, I've taken three in order <sup>try to</sup> ~~to~~ encourage other blacks to be a part of it, in which I didn't need the three courses, but I've taken them all because I didn't want to try to persuade them to be a part of it and I wasn't there after trying to persuade them, so I done went to three courses and haven't been able to get any of them to complete it.

B: Why is that, do you feel?

M: Lack of interest, because as far as the instructor, the other whites that's involved in it, their attitude didn't show no partiality just because they were black. There are just like answers among the black themselves. The white have nothing to do with them not being a part of it. I have did all I could and tried to even talk, but back when I tried, I had other white people try to help me to get...they even went out there where they tried to encourage blacks themselves, because I said that a while back, you know, that when a black try to improve himself, other, some blacks resent it, and I think it's more resent than it is glad that he's improving himself. So I felt that within myself that they thought because I was connected with other organizations with white the only councilmen that they didn't want to be a part of it. So then, some of the whites they went out their way to try to encourage black. Even with this last fire class, all of those that I've talked to ~~didn't~~ any of them attend. The few that went for the first—we had some to come to one, some to the second and then some to go to at least three meetings, was the one that the whites talked with them.

B: ~~He~~ So I guess you said you felt you were very effective in some cases, but not so effective in other cases dealing with fire protection.

M: I would put somewhat...

B: Somewhat effective.

M: ...uh huh.

B: OK. <sup>a</sup> Have you been able to get federal funds for Hawthorne in certain areas, like for water and sewage, things of that sort?

M: No. The water itself was a whole thing, I say, to central Florida. Been up before I got on council. And this is something even the, when Hawthorne first got water itself, I don't think, from what I can understand, they didn't apply for federal funds. It's something on their own tax basis that they used. Since I've been up there, we haven't discussed federal funds, for this reason: practically everything the city of Hawthorne have done, they tried to do it on their own without messing with the government.

B: There's been no attempt to try to get a federal grant for sewage?

M: No, no attempt.

B: For drain ~~and~~ sewage? OK.<sup>21</sup>

M: Even though I mentioned it last, in my last term, of going this route, because I felt like sooner or later the government is going to make us put it in and then it's going to be a bigger financial burden on us then than it is now, but they wasn't for it-- they put it to a vote among the citizens and they voted against it. So we haven't discussed it no more.

B: They just don't want to get federal...

?: They could be against sewage...

M: The citizens of Hawthorne voted against it. I think they got the wrong idea among some people. We had some people trying to explain what the benefits sewage would be for Hawthorne, and some were saying what effect it would be on them financially. And you know, when you're talking of spending money, people is not for it.

B: Yeah. Yeah. Especially right now. OK.<sup>21</sup> Has there been any attempt to look into the idea of getting federal money, federal grants for say, sewage? Has the council looked into it at all?

M: No, no, ~~we~~<sup>they</sup> haven't.

B: How about revenue sharing, federal revenue sharing money? How is that used in Hawthorne?

M: Now, this was done before I became a councilman. See, each year you have to fill out a form, an affidavit, of what this money is being spent for. And the official before I was a part of it had already pledged this money to the street department, and this is a part of the paving program that we're using now. So even now the other thing that we would love to do, we can't use that money because it's already pledged...

B: All that goes for streets?

M: Um hum.

B: ~~Oh~~ Have there been any black protests or sit-ins or even riots here in Hawthorne in the last ten years?

M: No, no, never have.

B: You said there was some incident at the school a few years ago, but that, maybe, is the only thing?

M: This was the only thing, and as I said, it wasn't a citizen of Hawthorne that started it.

~~B: OK.~~

M: Each time, well, both times it was either from Gainesville or down in Putnam County. They were kind of coming and getting something started and quite naturally, you know, when somebody else from home comes, you're going to try to protect your own. It might have been a black and white thing, because the black and white themselves among, you know, here in Hawthorne, we haven't had anything. I don't even think we even had any problem among the black and white themselves at school, less in the community before this integration thing came up.

B: OK? There are no sit-ins or anything of that sort?

M: No.

B: OK? Have facilities been integrated in Hawthorne? Say restaurants, movie theaters, things like that? Have they been integrated for some time now or what?

M: Yeah. We don't have a theater here, but the restaurant we have, it's, blacks can go in it, sit down like that. No problem.

B: OK? Has that always been the case?

M: No. Well, it's, years back, you know, blacks have always had a restaurant and whites have had a restaurant, and blacks just never...and the time or two that I think some of the younger blacks, you know, just wanted to test their...just to see whether they'd be served, I don't think they'd have had no problem. And this is an incident that happened before integration. I don't think they've ever had any problem in Hawthorne. You know, somebody want to get real heavy and say, "Well, I'm going to see what they serve me." And they were served with no problem. They didn't have to go to the back \_\_\_\_\_. Can say that the black just never pursued it until recently when the black

restaurant was closed and then everybody go to the white and still haven't had nothing. They go up there and sit right next to the white at the table or eat at the counter. There's no problem.

B: Just a couple <sup>of</sup> last questions. Wanted to ask you a little bit about state politics in Florida. First of all, what's your opinion of Governor Askew? That is, do you think he's been favorable <sup>in attitude</sup> and policy toward blacks in Florida or not?

M: Well, you mean in certain cases he was just doing things for blacks just because he's a <sup>white</sup> black?

B: Well, do you think generally he has been...

M: Generally speaking, I think he has been a fair governor of both...I don't think he just, <sup>now</sup> this is my feeling, I think just he's just been a good governor and just treated both the same, in my opinion, even though maybe other people have different attitudes. And I guess this is in all politicians that everybody going to do certain things that others dislike and others do. And I think that's the same instance here.

B: Do you think that he has done some things to help blacks that you might not have anticipated? Some things that you didn't expect that he might do, or not?

M: To be honest with you, I haven't given that very much thought because with me just being new in politics, there's a lot of things that when it comes down to, you know, really politician side of it, that I haven't paid that much, even though that I think, that, well, in some instances I think he helped blacks quite a bit towards working conditions and putting them in jobs that normally blacks haven't had. Yeah, I think he's helped quite a bit in some instances.

B: How about other state officials, like state representative or even a department head-- are there any in particular that you think are very helpful to blacks in this area?

M: To be honest with you, on this one, I hadn't really followed this up, as I say, now the first year in office I had my mind strictly set on what I was trying to learn. This year I have gotten interested in county, state, and federal, but I haven't put my mind to it enough to really see what it's worth.

B: OK.<sup>24</sup> When were you first elected?

M: '73.

B: You said '73, OK.<sup>24</sup> And you've been elected once since then.

M: ~~That's right.~~ Since then.

B: OK.<sup>24</sup> One last general question we'd like to ask you and that is do you think that winning and holding office has been worth the effort?

M: Has what ?

B: Do you think that winning and holding office has been worth the effort?

M: Winning and holding it for myself?

B: Yeah.

M: Yeah. It's a lot of headaches and problems and whatnot but, out of all that I've gone through, I think it has benefit myself and the people that I was trying to represent. So, there have been...it's one step that I've gone through.

B: Do you hope to run again?

M: I'm not sure. (chuckles)

B: Inevitable question.

?: We have reporters. (laughs)

M: Well, I'll say this, the first year I went in, as I said, because of what I, what I felt that the whites kind of half-way persuaded me to do it. This last year I, well, this past election, I felt that the headache that I've had with me being new that I know it was headache because I wasn't quite familiar with all of the routine <sup>of</sup> in city government and then the other red tape you'd have to go through, certain things that the "feds" say you can and you can't, like that, so, it's a big burden, and with the headache that I've had, I said that I wasn't going to. This is why I was ready to last for this one, before qualifying for the last one. But with the experience that I'm getting now, I'm undecided because \_\_\_\_\_ it depends how many more headaches I get between now and '76. But, really, now with the experience that I'm getting now of government, this and that, you can and you can't

and whatnot, I feel that I might run again.

B: You don't think that'd be unification work...

M: \_\_\_\_\_ . ...a thing I thought I never would \_\_\_\_\_. Well, in fact, I never gave an idea that I would live and learn. I've learned something, I guess, I thought I never would. And, see, maybe you've learned talking with me. See, I never went no further than the ninth grade, and the thing that I have learned since then in government is it could really help me much more than I think, even if I'd have went on through high school. I've learned a lot in these not quite three years yet that I probably never would have learned. As I say, there's not been any high school and my father never would have, even though I've decided now that I'm going back to night school, but with the assumption that I've never would attempt to finish high school. Just stayed on at work and never got into politics. I just never would have been nothing, just a plain, old anybody. As I say, I've gained a lot of knowledge and education<sup>a</sup> experience too; even though it's not high school experience, but it's still...I've learned things that I probably never would have learned in high school. So it has really been beneficial to me and it benefits me to help other blacks too that didn't finish high school.

B: We just have a few personal, sort of profile questions and that's it. Can I ask your age; if I might?

M: 40, well, I'll be 43 next week.

B: 43?

M: Um hum.

B: Your occupation?

M: Truck driver, city of Gainesville.

B: OK? The salary you receive from your elected position as councilman?

?: \$100 every six months, isn't it?

M: Um hum, that's right. See, this just went up this...

?: Yeah, they just gave them a raise.

M: We just got a raise. We hadn't...won't even draw that until December.

B: What was it before that?

M: I think it was, what, something like ten dollars a meeting.

B: Ten dollars.

M: And see, this is something that I didn't even...when I first run, I didn't even know they was getting that. And I lived there six months, and when they handed me a check, I asked them what this was for, and they said that was your salary, and I said, "Well, I didn't even know you was getting paid," because, I mean, I spoke with honesty, because I didn't.

B: Well, there are some areas where they get either nothing, or, one area gets a dollar a year, and he frames it each year.

M: Well, that's like, they changed this maybe a year or two before I went in that they started getting all the time a salary. I didn't think they was getting anything anyway. I think the man himself, I think he was getting something like, I don't know if it's a dollar or five dollars, something like that.

B: Do you get any expenses if you have to travel or anything of this sort?

M: No, no, no.

B: ~~Was~~ Were you active in the Civil Rights movement?

M: No.

B: At all in the early 60's? Are you a member of the NAACP?

M: No.

B: Or have you been?

M: I have been, but I'm not...

B: You used to be?

M: And that was because somebody was wanting me to be a part of it that paid...excuse me.

B: What church do you belong to?

M: \_\_\_\_\_ Baptist, right across the street.

(tape cuts off)

B: Are you an official in the church?

M: Trustee.

B: Trustee? What was your father's occupation or is your father's occupation?

M: He was a farmer before he passed, and I was very young when he passed. I don't know very much of him, but his farming.

B: Was he in this area, did he live in this area?

M: Lake City.

B: Lake City?

M: Um hum.

B: What other community organizations do you belong to, any organizations or activities?

M: I belong to the Lion's Club, Masonic, United \_\_\_\_\_ Club, those are the only a things of that type. Then with the PTA, I'm on the advisory council for the school.

So, \_\_\_\_\_ . Want me to go on down the line?

B: You're busy.

M: Well, I have enough to keep me going every night of the week, and three nights...well, actually six because three nights one week, and, two weeks later, three nights again; then I have three meetings the same night, and I act like a fool and try to get a little bit of all three meetings.

THE END OF TAPE INTERVIEW