Interview with **John Hulett**
Date: October 18, 1988
Interviewer: James A. DeVinney
Camera Rolls: 1005-1010
Sound Roll: 104
Team A

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Note: These transcripts contain material that did not appear in the final program. Only text appearing in ***bold italics*** was used in the final version of *Eyes on the Prize II*.

[slate]

00:00:00:00

John Hulett:

OK.

00:00:12:00

Crew Member 1:

Can you just [unintelligible]—

00:00:14:00

Interviewer:

How long you been sheriff?

00:00:14:00

John Hulett:

Seventeen— will be 18 years. January the 19th, it will be 18 years.

00:00:19:00

Interviewer:

That’s a long time.

00:00:20:00

John Hulett:

That is a pretty good little while.

00:00:21:00

Interviewer:

When was the first time you ran for sheriff?

00:00:23:00

John Hulett:

I ran for sheriff in 19—

[pause]

00:00:27:00

Crew Member 1:

OK. Are you [unintelligible]?

00:00:30:00

Crew Member 2:

Yes. Camera roll 1009, sound 104, take 5.

00:00:42:00

Crew Member 1:

OK.

00:00:43:00

Interviewer:

All right, Sheriff Hulett, to begin, what role did the Selma-to-Montgomery march play in organizing you in Lowndes County?

00:00:53:00

John Hulett:

One of the thing that happened during this time— SCLC— peoples who worked there for them— Stokely Carmichael, Bob Mants— Excuse me, was one of the—

00:01:03:00

Interviewer:

Why don't you start over again?

00:01:04:00

John Hulett:

I'll just start back over.

00:01:07:00

Interviewer:

[unintelligible] that.

00:01:08:00

John Hulett:

OK. Some of the thing that happened during that time— we had people, we had two organizations coming into our area: SCLC, which had peoples working here; SNCC, which was Stokely Carmichael, Bob Mants, Courtland Cox, and others, who also came in. We, durin' that time, had a meeting, and we decided ourselves what group we was gonna work with, and the people of this county chose to work with Stokely Carmichael and his group, and that organization that we were working with— they helped us to organize and gave us the kind of leadership and encouragement that we needed to go through with.

00:01:45:00

Interviewer:

All right. Why did you decide to go with SNCC rather than SCLC?

00:01:50:00

John Hulett:

Number one, this county— the history of Lowndes County was--there was a name called Bloody Lowndes County because of the crucial way peoples had been treated in this area for a long time. We felt strongly if SCLC were the person who was going to lead us through this struggle, we would not have accomplished the things that we've accomplished with Stokely Carmichael and that group simply because they were a nonviolent group, but they did not talk about nonviolence like SCLC group did. They realized that some— there were some things that we had to do. We had to work hard, and we had to push to accomplish some of our goals. That's why we chose Stokely Carmichael and their group. The kind of language that they spoke, we thought, would maybe— would help us to move a little bit faster.

00:02:37:00

Interviewer:

I may have stepped on that line. Will you just give me that last sentence again?

00:02:41:00

John Hulett:

They— the type of language that Stokely Carmichael talked about and the things that we had to do in this county kind of helped this county to move a little bit faster than would if we were talking about nonviolence because— at that time.

00:02:53:00

Interviewer:

OK. Let's just stop down for a quick second, make sure everything's—

[pause]

00:02:58:00

Crew Member 2:

Mark it, please.

00:02:59:00

Crew Member 1:

Take six.

00:03:03:00

Interviewer:

Let me go back just a little bit. You know, you were talking to— you— both SNCC and SCLC. Why was it necessary to get outside intervention?

00:03:11:00

John Hulett:

Why was outside— Well, let me say this. People in this county, most of them have never worked into a movement— you know, an organizational structure where they really get out to struggle to do something for themselves, and having the people with the know-how, like the— both SCLC and SNCC— it would help to have those kind of people into our area, and that's one reason why we chose them. I had worked in with the movement, and I doubt if we ever had maybe five or six other peoples who had been involved in some type of struggle of this kind, and that's why it was necessary to bring in some outside sources who had the encouragement— who had some resources to go along with it to help us get where we were going.

00:03:48:00

Interviewer:

You made reference to the fact that Lowndes County is sometimes referred to as Bloody. How dangerous was Lowndes County?

00:03:54:00

John Hulett:

It was real bad—

00:03:57:00

Interviewer:

Start— start again. Give me Lowndes County.

00:03:59:00

John Hulett:

Lowndes County were bad. In many instance, we've had young people killed and road-running in the cars of the sheriff departments. We've had people beaten out of their homes or going to the house and drug out from their families and beaten and killed in this county in the past, and we've had people who comes into Hayneville— was found side the road dead because of just some of the little things that they would do, and because of that, most Black people in this county were afraid. Hayneville was one of the places. Many time, if I was going home and was coming out of Montgomery, instead of coming through Hayneville, I would drive US 80 and go out the way about 12 or 15 miles myself to get home instead of coming through Hayneville because of some of the things that existed in this county.

00:04:47:00

Interviewer:

Hmm. Well, OK, when you tried to get people registered to vote, what were some of the difficulties in getting Black people to want to register?

00:04:55:00

John Hulett:

One of the things— when we first started registering people, we came here to the courthouse, and I believe this was some time in the first part of March. The registration days in this county during that time was two days a month: first Monday, I believe, and third Monday of each month that you could get registered. We came to the courthouse on the first Monday in March— attempted to get registered. The registrars failed to show up, all except one. Because of the Blacks coming here to register, they changed the registration place and took us to an old jail at the— which was not being used at that time, and that's where most of us registered, at that old jail, and they didn't want Blacks to come to the courthouse and get registered. That was one of the things they done. There was other intimidation. For example, while sitting out there waiting for people to go in and take the testses, many of the White men would ride by in pickup trucks with shotguns. It was just intimidation to people, and that was some of the things that they— other things we had— when the weather got cool or cold— except during the summertime when it was hot, they cut the water off so we couldn't get water to drink, and they made peoples come over and over and over again, and they would turn them down, so this kind of stirred things up, and later, the federal registers came into our county and started registering peoples, so most people went to the federal registers and where they could get registered. But those are just some of the conditions that existed during that time. Peoples who lived on plantations and on farms and sharecroppers and did not own their own land, they were told they'd better not go over and get registered. If they registered, they could not live on the plantation any longer, and many of the families had to leave during the summer months and especially around in August— had to leave their crops and go to other places to— to try to make a living.

00:06:42:00

Interviewer:

That sort of brings us around to Tent City. Why don't you tell us how Tent City came about?

00:06:46:00

John Hulett:

Tent City became about because they were—

00:06:47:00

Interviewer:

Start— start from the beginning with Tent City. He was making a change there. That wasn't you— [unintelligible]

00:06:53:00

John Hulett:

Tent City became about— we had people who lived— share— sharecroppers, and they was told not to get registered. If they got registered, then they could not live on their property. Many of them got registered to vote, and when they got registered to vote, they were going— put off of the plantations. They had no place to go and had no jobs, and we got together and, along with Stokely Carmichael and others, bought some property for Tent City— which Tent City— named it Tent City, and we put tents out there. Bought lumber to make the flooring and whatnot, and we moved about six or seven families on the— in— at the Tent City area, and they stayed there for a year or better— almost two years, some of them did, until they was able to find land and build their own houses.

00:07:38:00

Interviewer:

What was the effect of that? Did other people begin to come out to register knowing that you would take care of them or— ?

00:07:44:00

John Hulett:

This was— actually, it was a turning point. When people found out that we provided places for those of Tent City, there was other families we helped secure land, found peoples who owned the land, who would allow them to move on their property, and people then began to

rally around whatever we was doing. If an individual owned their land and could sell lots, we went to those people and said, Look, share with these peoples who are being evicted, and they did. They sold them lots at a reasonable price where they could build houses on them themselves or move trailers on it.

00:08:17:00

Interviewer:

So, this was really Black people beginning to stand up and take care of business themselves.

00:08:20:00

John Hulett:

For themselves, this is true.

00:08:22:00

Interviewer:

OK. Can you talk about that just a little bit more?

00:08:24:00

John Hulett:

Yes, I— I could. That was the other thing that encouraged us a lot when we had meetings and things of this type— for a family that didn't have jobs. Most people, during those days, especially if he was a tractor driver and worked on a plantation— they was paying him $4 to $6 in a day, and $8 for the best tractor drivers. We'd start looking for jobs in Montgomery, Selma, and other places to provide them with jobs so they could— would have a job— they wouldn't have to go on these farms and work for little nothing.

00:08:52:00

Interviewer:

Well, I know last night, Carroll asked you a question, you know, What did Black Power mean in Lowndes County? and I don't necessarily want you to use the phrase Black Power, but you gave a very nice answer in terms of what it really meant to you.

00:09:02:00

John Hulett:

Well, when you talk about Black Power, Black Power mean that when people can provide a job for their own peoples and they can— they can assist them in whatever the problem might be, and we had many of them during that time, and some of our problem was about education. We moved to try to get people into the best schools they had, which was predominant White during that time. We had problems. We was able to get a few of 'em in for the first year, then later, the White moved out and went into private schools. Those are just some of the minor things that we was doing; you know, getting jobs for peoples, seeing that peoples get a better education, and then seeing that peoples being able to own their own land in this area.

00:09:42:00

Interviewer:

OK, let me just stop down a little bit. I want to see where you are here—

00:09:46:00

Crew Member 2:

This is cut? OK.

00:09:47:00

Interviewer:

Yeah.

[pause]

00:09:48:00

Crew Member 1:

Take seven.

00:09:51:00

Crew Member 2: OK, [unintelligible].

00:09:52:00

Interviewer:

Let me just ask you— what was it like when the federal registrars finally came in in August of '65?

00:09:56:00

John Hulett:

When the federal registrar came in in August, we was able to get— go into the communities and notify people that the federal registrar were able, they would register them without having all the— going through all the red tape that they was goin' through with our county and state registrars, and we was able to carry peoples to the polls by the hundreds, especially on Saturdays. We started off on Saturdays, and we would have as many people— we could just have lines of peoples who were standing by waiting to get registered, and they finally start doing it maybe more than one day out of a week. That's why most of our peoples in this county, Black especially, registered under the federal registrar. The kind of questions and things that they was aksin'— the state registrar was aksin'— most people could not answer those questions. Even if they answered them, they would still get turned down, and— and this was one of our major problems, and we felt that this was a victory for us, having these federal registrars come into the— Lowndes County and register peoples here in our county.

00:10:52:00

Interviewer:

OK, and let's stop down there and [unintelligible].

00:10:54:00

Crew Member 2:

Mm-hmm.

[pause]

00:10:57:00

Crew Member 1:

Camera roll 1010, take 8.

00:11:07:00

Interviewer:

You opted to have SNCC come in and work with you. What made— You mentioned Stokely. What made Stokely Carmichael so appealing?

00:11:12:00

John Hulett:

The things that made Stokely Carmichael, I think, most appealin' to people— he was able to speak the kind of language that people. That gave encouragement to most of his people, especially old and young. You know, Stokely could stand up and entertain a congregation— that people just liked to hear him talk, and not only that, but Stokely had the ability to go into the communities and work with people of— from almost every level. That— that was one of the key things. Stokely had had a lot of experience with the civil rights movement in Mississippi and other places, and I think that was one of the things that— Everybody seemed to love Stokely. It was like having a son to come in, and which— he done so much, I think, to help the peoples in Lowndes County.

00:11:53:00

Interviewer:

How you doing, [unintelligible]?

00:11:55:00

Crew Member 2:

Fine. I just started something else [unintelligible].

00:11:56:00

Interviewer:

I heard that too, but are you picking it up?

00:11:59:00

Crew Member 2:

Yeah— [unintelligible].

00:12:00:00

Interviewer:

Is it clear enough? Do we have to go back?

[pause]

00:12:03:00

John Hulett:

No— no— no— no problem. Maybe a—

00:12:04:00

Crew Member 1:

Take nine.

00:12:05:00

John Hulett:

maybe a different answer.

00:12:06:00

Interviewer:

OK.

00:12:09:00

Crew Member 2:

OK.

00:12:11:00

Interviewer:

Got it?

00:12:11:00

Crew Member 2:

Yes. Go ahead.

00:12:12:00

Interviewer:

OK. Tell me again: what made Stokely so appealing?

00:12:15:00

John Hulett:

Well, it was several things that made him so appealing to the people of our county. Number one, peoples felt strongly— they'd learn about Stokely— that he was a person who related to the community real well. He lived in the community with the people, and he spoke the kind of language that most people like to hear him speak. He gave a lot of encouragement to those who had fear in— about getting registered to vote. Stokely was able to live in our community with us and work with us and trying to develop many of the things that we were trying to do, and— and peoples liked that— what he was doing, what he was saying, and the kind of message he would speak to you. He— specially in our mass meetings, Stokely could stand up and talk to us, and especially, one of the things was he talked about the system itself, how what we need to do is to tear this system down and put people in office— he's talking about Black people— that would relate to the people and that would do the kind of job that needed to be done, and we didn't— had— the people in our county— that we could take over the political aspects of our county and do what needed to be done, and then we needed to look at the economic problem and work in that— also in that direction.

00:13:18:00

Interviewer:

You mentioned the mass meetings. What was— what were those mass meetings like? Can you describe them for me?

00:13:24:00

John Hulett:

When we first started off in our mass meetings, people were fearful of coming to mass meetings. We would— especially because they thought maybe the White would come out there and try to break them up with [unintelligible], so what we got— we got our own bodyguards and placed them outside of the buildings, and we didn't have a church in this county that would hold the people. Every Sunday night, they would go to these mass meetings. They went by the hundreds. These churches, and then we would have singing, praying, and thing of that type and have several guys who would speak. We started off with Stokely Carmichael may speak tonight and Bob Mants, then we started our own local people to speaking, which gave a lot of encouragement to people, and I think that's really— was a key to the whole thing, and when they started moving out of our county, our own people was able to take over and do what needed to be done to continue the movement.

00:14:08:00

Interviewer:

We heard about a mass meeting where a number of state troopers came and gathered outside the church. Do you remember that particular evening?

00:14:13:00

John Hulett:

I do. On several occasions, they've done this.

00:14:15:00

Interviewer:

There was one night when, I guess, a woman named Mary Jane Jackson came out with her rifle. Can you— were you there that night?

00:14:20:00

John Hulett:

Yes, I was.

00:14:22:00

Interviewer:

Can you describe that for us?

00:14:23:00

John Hulett:

Well, what they would do— it was just a form of intimidations. We was at the Mount Gilead Church in Trickem, where we was meeting. The troopers came and gathered on the outside and around the highway where you hadta come in— where the highway's at, and when people would start coming out, they would stop 'em or start writin' tickets, and we would kinda go together in a carpool. It didn't disencourage our people because we kept movin' on together, you know, and they never threatened us or said anythin', but they just come out and start stopping a lot of peoples, checkin' driver license, and thing of that type, but it gave a lot of encouragement to us, and we got even more people started coming out to counteract what they was doing to us.

00:14:59:00

Interviewer:

I'd like to continue to go, and go up to the part where Mary Jane Jackson decided that she had to go out.

00:15:05:00

John Hulett:

I don't remember exactly the time that she had to go out, but with— we'd know that during that time, most of the time, I would be on the inside, but when Mrs. Jackson would go out, she would— if people was out there who would try to hinder people, she was real strong, and one of the strongest person we almost had in this county, and she would just tell them to their face, You all can go home because we're going to have our movement, and we're going to do what needs to be done to survive, and that's the kind of— her husband was a strong person. He was kind of one of those bodyguards for us, and there were other neighbors in the same area who would do that.

00:15:34:00

Interviewer:

When did you make the decision to form an independent political party? How did that come about?

00:15:40:00

John Hulett:

It was sometime— we decided to form the independent political party because ***Stokely Carmichael and Courtland Cox and others who got together and told us according to the Alabama law, if we didn't like what the Democratic Party was doing in our county, or the Republican Party, we could— we could form our own political organization, and it could become a political party.*** We looked into the aspects of it, we aksed them to do it, and then we came up with a symbol, and during the time we was trying to come up with a symbol, we had aksed Stokely Carmichael, I believe Courtland Cox, and some other peoples from our county to look at some type of symbol, and when the group came back, they came back with the panther as their symbol. Then we began to start putting an organization structure together. During that time, I was the ch— president of our— the Lowndes County Christian Movement for Human Rights. This was our original organization we ha— had had for about a year, and then I— I accepted that. You know, they aksed me would I take over the political aspects of it and resign from this Lowndes County Christian Movement, and I did, and we were able to pull our people together in both organizations and work together to form our own political organization.

00:16:46:00

Interviewer:

What did the Black Panther mean?

00:16:48:00

John Hulett:

Well, the Black Panther meant to— maybe to the peoples of Lowndes County a little bit different from what it did in California, but it meant—

00:16:55:00

Interviewer:

That— I don't want you to refer to the one in California because that won't have happened [unintelligible].

00:16:59:00

John Hulett:

Oh, OK, OK, OK.

00:17:00:00

Interviewer:

Let's go ahead and start again.

00:17:01:00

John Hulett:

The Black Panther Party in L— well, the black panther itself, as a symbol to the organization, was similar to the same thing that the rooster was to the Democratic Party. It was a symbol that we felt that was a vicious animal and— who, if we was attacked, it would not back up, but we would fight back if we had to do it. We would move back if we had to move, but we wasn't going to go back into a corner and just stay, and that's why we chose that symbol as a black panther. We knew that the White people in this county feared the panther also. They didn't want people to fight back. As long as a political organization— as long as people would not fight back, they felt that they could just do them like they wanted to, but if we decided to fight back, people would take their hands off of us ***and that when we chose that symbol as a black panther, then many of the peoples in our county started sayin' we were violent during that time. You know, Now you got a violent group in Lowndes County who is turned out— who is gonna start killin' Black pe— White folks,***

but it wasn't that. It was a political— just a symbol to our organization that we was here to stay here, and we were going to do whatever needed to be done to survive, and that's what the symbol— that symbol meant to us.

00:18:07:00

Interviewer:

Well, even though SNCC was a nonviolent organization, during this time, many of you did start carrying guns and things. How did that work?

00:18:14:00

John Hulett:

We carried guns for our own protection, those of us who carried guns. Many of us who was by ourselves or would travel by ourselves and those of us who carried guns not to bother other peoples but in case we were attacted by other peoples to protect ourselves. That's what the purpose of that idea was— to carry a gun. White peoples carry guns in this county, and they were— the law didn't do anything to them about it, so we started to takin' up our pickup trucks, putting our guns in it and carried it too, and I think they felt that we was ready to— for war, and they decided not to bother us anymore.

00:18:43:00

Interviewer:

But you didn't see yourself as violent. I mean—

00:18:46:00

John Hulett:

No, we wasn't— we wasn't violent. We wasn't violent people, but we were just the peoples who was going to protect ourselves in case we were attacted by individuals.

00:18:55:00

Interviewer:

I-- I'm going to ask this question one more time because yesterday you were kind of talking about the fact that just because you carried guns didn't mean you were against SNCC's nonviolent thing. That wasn't quite the same time. I'd just like to give you another chance to kind of restate that a little bit along those lines, if you could. Do you know what I'm saying?

00:19:09:00

John Hulett:

SNCCs were not about— nonviolence organization. I don't think it was ever violence. You know, they was arrested; they never fought back. On one occasion I can remember there— there were some things happening where they had to shoot back, but it was not a violent organization, but they was a group— an organization who would stand up and look a person in the eyes and tell them what they thought and how they felt about what was going on. They know— they knew that what was happenin' to us was wrong, and they would come to a courthouse and be able to tell the system that you was treating peoples wrong and that it should not— that should not exist in our counties. This was just some of the little minor thing that went on in this area.

00:19:46:00

Interviewer:

How we doing, Bob?

00:19:50:00

Crew Member 2:

Did you cut?

00:19:51:00

Interviewer:

No.

00:19:52:00

Crew Member 2:

We— I can't tell.

00:19:54:00

Interviewer:

Stop down then.

00:19:55:00

Crew Member 2:

Mark it, please.

00:19:55:00

Crew Member 1:

Take 10.

00:20:02:00

Interviewer:

That primary day at First Baptist Church— yesterday, when you showed it to us, you described it as the best day of your life. Can you tell me what was so great about that day?

00:20:09:00

Interviewer:

It was great ***because this was the first time that the Black peoples in this county had came together to make choice of their own candidates for public office,*** and that's why it was important. ***It was important also because the numbers of peoples that turned out to that election on that day and— and voted for their candidates and felt that they had done something for themselves to start making changes, the kind of changes they wanted to see happen in the system,*** even though in the general election we were unable to elect our peoples to office, but it gave the kind of incentives to our people that they was, they ought to turn out to the poll on election day and vote.

00:20:46:00

Interviewer:

What are some of your outstanding memories that day? Any particular things happen that day that you kind of felt—

00:20:51:00

John Hulett:

Well, there was— there was two things happened. There was peoples who, especially the elder people, older peoples who were 70 and 80 years old came out and voted. That's the most encouraging thing to me. To see peoples come out to— for the first time in the history of their lives to vote for the candidates that they— could do something for them. A second thing: there were a— other peoples there to try to stop us. It was put there by the White community to try to stop us from having it. People would block the roads, would block the

streets, and try to create a problem for us, and these were the other Black folks who didn't like what we were doin', but those things existed on that around that primary, and after we finished with our primary, we came into Hayneville and back up here to see what the White was doing with their primary, along with a few Blacks. But we felt real good about it because we had an opportunity that day to pick our own county sheriff— person to run for sheriff— without having the problems to deal with the system…and other offices that we were seeking during that time.

00:21:46:00

Interviewer: OK, let's just stop down now. I don't want to take a chance [unintelligible].

00:21:49:00

Crew Member 2: [unintelligible]

00:21:51:00

Interviewer:

How much time is that?

00:21:52:00

Crew Member 3:

One-fifty.

00:21:53:00

Interviewer:

One-fifty?

[pause]

00:21:53:00

Crew Member 1:

Camera roll 1011, take 11.

00:22:02:00

Crew Member 2:

[unintelligible]

00:22:03:00

Interviewer:

Sheriff, I'd like to go back just a little bit in time, even before SNCC came in, even before you started forming Lowndes County Freedom Organization. Just gimme kind of a picture of what Lowndes County was like. What was it like to live here and to try to--

00:22:16:00

John Hulett:

Lowndes County was considered as a total rural county, real— very poor, bad roads. You know, the school system was very bad, about the worst, almost, in the nation. There were no jobs available here in this area except farming and sharecropping. Most of the young peoples who finished school— went to school, once they came out of school, they immediately left the South and went st— went north to try to live and to even to survive and help take care of their families during that time. So, the— the Lowndes County was not a good place for young people to live in. Most of the adults who lived here, you know, were kind of— lived under fear most of their lives because of the— some type of treatment— treatment that was given them. There were certain areas you just didn't go into if you live here, and there were just a few people in the county who cause many of our problems, but because of those people were not stopped by other people, it cause— most Black peoples had to live in fear. We had a sheriff durin' that time. I can never forget that at nighttime, when young men would walk the road at night, if you see a car light coming, everybody would just run in the bushes and hide until they come by. If it was raining, whatever it was, you stayed out then, waited until that car passed. They thought the sheriff was coming by and maybe would do something to them. There were peoples who had been beaten on a numbers of occasions and— because of this type thing.

00:23:35:00

Interviewer:

When— when SNCC came in, I asked you before what it was like to have Stokely here, and you gave me a very vivid portrait, but what about SNCC, the organization? What was it like to have all those people from SNCC here?

00:23:44:00

John Hulett:

It— it was good to have them here because we had peoples from almost every walks of life who had different talents and who could do a lotta things of to help. You know, some was

tutoring and teached— teaching classes, where others were— speakers like Stokely Carmichael, Bob Mants; you had Courtland Cox and others who would do a little different way. It was good to have 'em here because it gave a lot of incentives to people— young peoples all over would have a chance to sit down with these people, see what they were doin', and make them wanted to be like most of those young men and women.

00:24:17:00

Interviewer:

We hope to put this out so that a national audience will see these shows and learn about Lowndes County. Is there some story that you've never had a chance to tell, that most people don't know, about Lowndes County that you could tell us right now? About something that was really special about that time or Lowndes County Freedom Organization or the—

00:24:33:00

Interviewer:

Well, let me say this. Number one, to have a Black—

00:24:41:00

Crew Member 2:

You want to cut? Cut. This OK? [unintelligible]

00:24:45:00

John Hulett:

OK. There were— there were no Black registered voters in this county in 1965, in February—not a single Black registered voter— and to have them to come in and to start registerin' folks to vote; that's really helpful. You know, that's one of the key things. Number two, our kids, Black kids, went to the worst schools that we had, and they was given the worst treatments, and they were not allowed to have the kind of equipment in our schools that the White schools had. They rode buses, and our kids had to walk to school. That was something else that made a lotta changes into it, and not only that, but things began to change all the way around with us. Black kids who would finish school would be able to get jobs in this area, where they could not do it before. Teachers who taught school here in this area— many of them had to— if they bought it from an automobile, they had to buy it from a certain dealer. One of the men was on the school board here who had a car lot, and most people had to buy their cars from that individual if you worked in the school system. Well, these were just some of the things that started changing when— when we— we was able to get our peoples in the school system, and today, we— and since that time, we were able to have our

own school board people who would look out for our kids, and it's made a lotta changes since that time.

00:25:56:00

Interviewer:

And during that time, what did John Hulett do that he's most proud of?

00:26:00:00

John Hulett:

Well, I— I'm glad I was a part of the movement and a part of the progress that was made here in that county. You know, I— I never thought about running for public office. I was drafted into it by the members of the Lowndes County Freedom Organization, and now, since I've been elected, I— I feel good about it. I think I've been helpful in some way to our young people.

00:26:21:00

Interviewer:

OK. Let's stop down. I think we may be done. Any b—

[cut]

[end of interview]