

Interview with **Albert Johnson**

Date: June 2, 1989

Interviewer: Madison Davis Lacy, Jr.

Camera Rolls: 1106

Sound Rolls: 148

Team: A

Interview gathered as part of *Eyes on the Prize II: America at the Racial Crossroads, 1965-mid 1980s*. Produced by Blackside, Inc. Housed at the Washington University Film and Media Archive, Henry Hampton Collection.

Preferred Citation

Interview with Albert Johnson, conducted by Blackside, Inc. on June 2, 1989 for *Eyes on the Prize II: America at the Racial Crossroads, 1965-mid 1980s*. Washington University Libraries, Film and Media Archive, Henry Hampton Collection.

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*.

[camera roll #1106]

[sound roll #148]

00:00:11:00

Camera crew member #1:

Marker.

[slate]

00:00:15:00

Interviewer:

So, you were telling me your parent, your, your—you'd be outside playing ball with your, your, your, your, your buddies, and your parents be inside talking politics, and you'd go in and—tell me about that, go ahead.

00:00:26:00

Albert Johnson:

Well, my mother and father, and sisters, and brothers, they'd be inside, and the news media'd cover Harold Washington on television, going out campaigning at the time and stuff, in different environments and communities. And I'd sit there and watch and they'd be discussing, Yeah, that'll be our first Black Mayor, that's gonna be our Mayor there, Harold

Washington, stuff like that. I'd just sit there and observe and listen, and I'd say to my mother, Ma, I was out helping some of the peoples out there, putting up signs and posters, and stuff like that. She'd say, Yes? and I'd say, Yeah, and I'm gonna continue on until he win, and stuff like that, so, I was out, you know, two o'clock in the morning, putting up signs on light poles, and buildings, and stuff like that, it was fun, you know, and—

00:01:11:00

Interviewer:

Well, what did she think about you being out late, man, doing that kinda thing?

00:01:14:00

Albert Johnson:

Well, my brother was a precinct captain at the time, so, you know, he was out then, too, so she figured he was, had a watch on me and stuff like that. And then again, she trusted me. I guess she was so, you know, into it about Harold Washington, I guess she didn't mind, so, you know.

00:01:29:00

Interviewer:

What did it mean to you personally to be involved?

00:01:31:00

Albert Johnson:

It meant history. Harold Washington gonna be the first Black Mayor of the City of Chicago, so I was gonna be a part of history at that time, [laughs]—

Interviewer:

I heard that.

Albert Johnson:

—so, you know.

00:01:40:00

Interviewer:

On election day, you know, what did you, what did you do? Did your buddies come out?

00:01:47:00

Albert Johnson:

I encouraged some of my bu-buddies, come on out and help us be a, a runner. We participated in the caravan that has the bullhorn on it, going around. I got a chance to talk on that, so that was fun, I was like, Come on out and vote, and punch, you know, Harold Washington's number, at the time which I forgot. But, you know, it was fun and we'd get out and help senior citizens come out to the poll and stuff like that. So I was, you know, really involved in it at the time.

00:02:15:00

Interviewer:

OK. Do that for me again, and this time, tell me you—that when you were posting up things, that you wanted to paint the town blue.

Albert Johnson:

OK.

Interviewer:

OK. So what, what, what, what—they, they're never gonna hear my questions, so don't worry about it. So, what would you do on election day? What happened on election day?

00:02:29:00

Albert Johnson:

We just went out and we wanted to post the whole, a whole city, just about in every ward, that we seen Harold had a heavy support of voters, we just posted up signs and made the whole area blue with Harold Washington posters.

00:02:44:00

Interviewer:

Stop down.

[cut]

00:02:46:00

Interviewer:

Good. Excellent, my man! OK. Thank you very, very much!

[cut]

[end of interview]

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