

This is an interview with Ray Boone , Editor of the Richmond Afro American, conducted on March 15, 1974 by Jack Bass.

Boone: You asked me how long I've been in Richmond. I came here from the Washington Afro-American where I was assigned as a White House reporter and before then I was a copy editor with the Baltimore Afro-American which is the home office and I had experience also with a few dailies including the Quincy Patriot Ledger. I don't know whether you've heard of that or not.

J.B.: In Massachusetts?

Boone: In Massachusetts. And also my hometown paper down in Suffolk, Virginia. I also worked there. That's been basically it.

J.B.: You were saying that in my Virginia election analysis that I was a little too kind when I referred to sophisticated.

Boone: Yeah... Well what I was saying... I think the last paragraph sort of was my reference. I think you referred to Mills Godwin and Bill Robinson who was hooked up with the Holton administration and you pointed out how Bill was doing things quietly and seemingly you put too much emphasis on the fact that he had some white teachers coming in so they get *[exposed to black culture and this was an]* accomplishment and whether in fact Godwin would continue this kind of thing. I don't consider this a major breakthrough just because you have some white teachers coming in. I consider, you know jobs with black people being very important, putting blacks in top positions wherein they can effect change that needs to come about. And of course, look on page one

of this paper this week and you will see what I mean. Look right down at the bottom. You see "Godwin again ignores Blacks an appointment. And, you know, it really indicates ... Well I never had any confidence that Godwin would continue the Holton program and I made that clear. And all Godwin has been doing is using a lot of high-sounding rhetoric. But he has not matched it with action and also reference in that article you wrote, you pointed out how Godwin perhaps had read the election returns and saw that Virginia was <sup>a</sup>/more open society than he anticipated and that this was the reason for his saying he was gonna be governor for all the people and that he was gonna treat blacks generously and, quote, fairly. And of course I have none of that <sup>kind of</sup>/optimism about Godwin. No, Holton -- I was a firm supporter of Holton from the beginning.

Boone: Poor, in terms of educating blacks is having blacks in principal shifts. As you know, up until about ten years ago, there were more than 140 black principals across the state of Virginia. Now today there are about 15 black principals, which means that blacks are becoming victimized in the desegregation push. It also means that this accounts largely for the high dropout or pushout-rate among blacks. You know, because they have no role models in this integration push, which might not be relevant. I think that's relevant to politics too, because if Godwin were concerned, you know he would address himself to these issues. But he has never done this, except for the moment he got his life scared out him-- that night when he barely won by 15,000 votes, you know. And, and he was saying: "Oh my God, I'm so glad I made it." And he would say anything. And I think that's what happened. But I was down at the mansion the other night

when he invited all the legislators and and his "close friends" and I was one of the "close friends" but, and I asked him, is this a part of treating blacks fairly and generously? And he said: "Oh sure, sure." And I pushed him even further and asked him: "Well when are you going to do something that's real concrete." And he said: "Well, "When I get around to it." This made me understand very well that he's no different than he was when he was in the governor's mansion before. He's not going to do a damned thing until he's forced to do it and blacks just don't have that kind of heart.<sup>1</sup>

J.B.: Somebody told me that what Holton did in so far as race relations in Virginia was significant, that Godwin would not undo it. To put it under Godwin there would be at best a period of four years of benign neglect.

Boone: Well, I don't question that.

J.B.: You would agree that that's the basic idea?

Boone: Well, no, I think there's been some stepping back. For instance,

*Earl Waidick?*

, he don't have a black in the governor's mansion. I mean you don't have a special assistant to the governor in Godwin's office as you did in Holton's office. In terms of philosophy, attitude, you've already stepped back because Godwin doesn't even conceive that blacks have been mistreated in the state. Now Holton's viewpoint was -- listen, let's undo these wrongs; let's correct the injustices. Godwin will not concede that there are any injustices. So I would say this, that there will not be a status quo thing, that we are here and it's a case of not going forward or backwards. I'll say this, that we've already retreated. And you know as I pointed out before that he's been in office for how long now? Three months? He hasn't done a damn thing for black

people. Or he hasn't in terms of strong positions. He hasn't done anything to give any confidence that he's going to continue the Holton program. So you tell me, do you know of anything he's done?

J.B.: *[reference to Bass article on Virginia politics in Winter, 1973 edition, New South]*  
I'm trying to find out what he's done.

Boone: You made a real keen observation in that piece. I read it twice and I said: "My God, I never looked at it in that way." It was about the Watergate situation and how you said that the Godwin Camp sought to capitalize on it through referring to the Watergate thing as a thing of having the country all in a flux situation and unstabalized and wherein Godwin would try to ~~translate~~ <sup>translate</sup> this to benefit himself by saying:

"Listen, I am a man of stability." And how he would push that aspect of it. I'd never viewed that. I could only <sup>see</sup> /Watergate being detrimental to Godwin and I think it would have been more so had Henry Howell jumped on it much more. We can always say these things in retrospect, after its happened, but I think the Watergate thing--if he had smashed in on that he could have done more to damage Mills but I guess he looked at it from the standpoint that many Virginians during that time probably still would have voted for Richard Nixon had they been given the opportunity. So you can't figure, things change from day to day. Analysts can always accurately, you know, say what is the cause of what happened.

J.B.: What do you find among blacks in Virginia--first of all do you have any circulation outside of Richmond?

Boone: Yes--statewide circulation.

J.B.: Is there growing interest or growing disinterest in politics among blacks in Virginia?



Boone: Well, I would say that there is a great degree of interest among blacks in politics. To answer your question I would say "Yes, the interest is growing." The reasons are, number one, it's still a novel for many blacks to participate. If you look at history you know blacks for a long time have been denied the right to participate in politics. The second point, and perhaps it might be equally important, is the fact that there have been some successes. Petersburg for instance. You have a black-controlled city council. You have the first black mayor there in the history of the state, in a major city. You go to Surry County, you have blacks in control of the Board of Supervisors. I don't care what anybody says, this is a cause for some pride and it give hopes to blacks that, you know, things are changing a bit. At the same time Watergate is not helping politics in the white or black community. Blacks are reacting to Watergate by saying, you know; "We always knew this was the case. This is no news to us." Corruption, and people treating people wrong, has always been the way the government has done us. And particularly on the local and state levels. I'll tell you the viewpoint of most blacks is that white Americans have been terribly stupid to think that a politician could be corrupt in dealing with human beings and be as straight as an arrow in dealing with finances or other areas. It doesn't make sense. It's inconsistent. In other words, if you're a crook when it comes to principles of human equality, when it comes to principles of money or finance, I would suspect that this kind of person would also be crooked in that area. So, to answer your question, number one, I think there

is growing enthusiasm among blacks, largely because there have been some successes. Also, the barriers are not there. Now enough other people could read it another way and say: "Well, you've got the barriers down, why don't you have greater black participation?" And my answer to this is that it does take some time to get a group of people which have not been in the practice of voting which has been counted out all the time to change their habits over night. Also, I think if you were to consider the proportion of black voters to the proportion of white voters who turn out, the blacks come up about the same, you know, in terms of percentages. So that you know what happens in most--what white analysts do in most cases, they say: Well hell, you've been oppressed more, you've been screaming for the right to vote so much but then you get the opportunity you don't take it." Well they don't take into consideration, take like this for instance, more black people--it's more difficult for them to get to the poles in many cases. They're working, and, you know, they will not ask a white boss, you know, "can I take off to go to the poles?" You know--or they're late that morning, you know, they've got that problem, where many white people, they have the liberty to just take off from work to go to the poles, you know. An economic factor is involved here. Also that they've no history. Perhaps you'd like to ask me some questions.

J.B.: How much of a factor does fear remain?

Boone: I think when you look over the state, on a statewide basis, the truth of the matter is that fear isn't as great as it used to be, but there is still some uncomfortableness in terms of blacks in relationship to city hall because of the attitudes that has prevailed all these years. The fact that the complexion of city hall is still largely white. Even

in a city like Richmond which is nearly fifty percent black, you've only got one city councilman, two black city council representatives. The city manager is white. The police chief is white. So, you know, there's still the hostile image that's being projected. So you know there is still some degree of fear because people/<sup>who</sup>want to stay in power know that blacks don't have the kind of representation and political clout they should have in a city of this size. Now it gets even worse when you go to the south side of Virginia. You start thinking about a place like, let's take Mills Godwin's hometown, Chuckatuck; you take a place like Kenbridge, Virginia, I mean Farmville, Virginia even. You have situations there wherein things really haven't changed in terms of attitude. I can show you a picture right now the way discrimination is still flowering. Utilities and facilities--you may have read the Justice Department's suit against a swimming facility and this kind of thing still goes on and it's reflective of the white attitudes that prevail in this area.

J.B.: What do you think black voters would do if Linwood Holton were to run for the Senate against Harry Byrd?

Boone: Oh my God, I think they would come up very strongly for Linwood Holton.

J.B.: *[If there were a]* Democratic nominee also?

Boone: Oh hell, blacks have become sophisticated enough to know that party labels don't mean that much, in this case particularly Harry Byrd. You know Harry Byrd has run as an independent.

J.B.: I'm saying suppose Byrd ran as an independent, the Democrats put up a candidate and Holton ran as a Republican.

Boone: It depends upon who the Democratic candidate is. But I would say

this, no matter who the Democrats put up, Linwood Holton, based on his record, in terms of laying a foundation for human rights in this state for black people, would get a sizable vote and nobody could solidify a solid vote for any Democrat who would run, even if he was black.

J.B.: Is there any feeling among the blacks in Virginia that they would welcome an opportunity to have a moderate Republican to vote for just to prove they're "not in the Democratic bag"?

Boone: Well I think there's always this feeling because you know the history, most blacks have voted Democratic because the Democratic party historically has been more favorable to blacks. And particularly now--you look at Richard Nixon and then you recall Goldwater. You know, you've got a real bad situation on your hands. So what I'm saying, then you recall John F. Kennedy who has a damn positive image in the black community as a Democrat. You recall Lyndon Baines Johnson, you know, who had a real awful record in the Congress but turned out to be a real Civil Rights president. He's a Democrat. Even George McGovern, he's a, you know he comes off real good although he has a rather way out there white image, you know. But still, compared to Richard Nixon, the Democrats have been more favorable, more sympathetic to black causes and aspirations.

J.B.: What would happen in Virginia among blacks if George Wallace were on the Democratic ticket in '76.

Boone: With whom?

J.B.: With anybody.

Boone: Well I tell you, George Wallace is very difficult to accept in the black community. You know, the best deal he could ever have I guess would be lining up with Kennedy. But even at that, that wouldn't help Kennedy in the black community, that's really going to expose Kennedy for great criticism among blacks.

J.B.: Suppose Wallace campaigned actively for the Democratic ticket but were not on it?

Boone: What're you asking?

J.B.: How would blacks react to that?

Boone: Oh, I think that would be all right. That's no problem. You know he wouldn't be in the White House. Plus, you know, you can accept an enemy supporting you from an electoral standpoint but I don't think you could stomach--the black community would stomach going along with George Wallace being in the White House. However, we must admit that things change terribly and can change drastically in this country.

When you consider assassins' bullets and all that sort of thing that's happened in the past, when you consider people who say:"I resign and I will not run again." Now it's very possible if the Republicans had a Ronald Reagan on their ticket and George Wallace on a ticket with Teddy Kennedy, blacks would have no other alternative than to vote with the Democratic ticket. Wouldn't you think so? It just depends on what the other party has. It's a relative situation.

J.B.: If the Republicans had a Rockefeller or a Percy and Wallace on the Democratic ticket as a Vice President..

Boone: With whom?

J.B.: With anybody.

Boone: Well you can't say "anybody". Hell.

J.B.: With Jackson.

Boone: Jackson and Wallace against whom?

J. B.: Percy or Rockefeller.

Boone: I would be inclined to think that the black community would go along--I'd say Percy--but Rockefeller see isn't a flame--I mean he doesn't come off well in the black community like he used to, particularly after Attica. And also, Rockefeller has made it very clear that he's not the Rockefeller he used to be. You know, haven't you taken note of his position in terms of his philosophy? You see he's no liberal. He's trying capitalize on the conservative mood that's prevailing over this country. So, to answer your question, there would be a possibility--the greatest possibility, I think, for Wallace getting support from the black community would be his being a part of the Kennedy ticket as a Vice President. He did not get anything as a President. Now, let's just from a hypothetical standpoint, entertain the idea of a Kennedy-Wallace ticket against Rockefeller--I think you would have a good chance of the Democrats still getting fifty percent of the vote--of the black vote, or more. Does that answer what you said?

J.B.: I had one black in Virginia, whose active politically, say if it's a question of choosing between Wallace and Nixon that they'd take Wallace.

Boone: I think that's very possible. It would be very difficult for Wallace to be worse than Nixon in terms of blacks. Also, I subscribe to the philosophy of keep them flying. I wouldn't want Nixon to be in there--you know-- a continuation of Nixon.

J.B.: What does the term "Southern Strategy" mean to you? As referred to as Nixon Southern Strategy.

Boone: Southern Strategy means just what Nixon has done in terms of black people.

J.B.: Which is what?

Boone: Oh, keeping them out of high levels of government. It means exploiting the racists' feelings--emotional feelings of white people and using them to accomplish his ends. It means burying the Republican in the long run because this is not going to work. The Southerners are not as stupid as Richard Nixon thinks they are. It means not having any integrity. It means traveling the same road of doom that we followed before in terms of slavery, in terms of segregation--facing politics on race and myths and lies. That's what "Southern Strategy" means to me. It's just regrettable that people would stoop to that kind of politics. I guess, getting back to Wallace, you know I think a lot of black people who have studied him closely would say that they would prefer Wallace because--and even some mayors--the Mayor of Tuskegee has taken that position I think, because Wallace had basically some populous tendencies, even now, in terms of industry coming to the state, in terms of building schools and houses. I think he's endorsed that kind of thing hasn't he? In terms of taxation--of not having it killing the little man--I think this was what the black fellow was saying when he said he would rather have Wallace than Nixon. I think perhaps Wallace perhaps has acquired some respectability because Nixon has been so nasty. You see it depends on where you are and what period of time you know, because Nixon is just a slimy character and I would venture to

say that that feeling perhaps is wider spread than I would expect or you would expect. But it's a different ballgame when you start comparing George Wallace to Percy because Percy doesn't have that nasty, ugly record that Richard Nixon has. You see it's a comparative situation. If I make sense, I don't know if I do or not.

J.B.: How much enthusiasm in the black community would there be for Henry Howell if he would run again for Governor?

Boone: Well, I think that question there--there would be considerable enthusiasm--considerable support. But there is a question mark as to whether blacks would flock out and give the same kind of support as against Mills Godwin, and the reason for that is there is very difficult to get a candidate that blacks oppose to the degree that they oppose Mills Godwin. So, what I'm saying is, if you were to get a good Republican candidate--well take John <sup>Dalton</sup>~~Dawson~~ for instance, who has been endorsed by Linwood Holton, certainly that would be some influence in winning some black votes. Also, the political climate--if a lot of people look at the figures they <sup>Dalton</sup>~~Dawson~~ say: "My God John <sup>Dalton</sup>~~Dawson~~ really did them in that last trip around," you know, and they start talking what they call factorial politics and say: "My God, you know it would do blacks some good to have some blacks a pulling <sup>3</sup> on both sides", so there will be some black opportunists just like they have white opportunists who would say: "Well, I'm going along with John <sup>Dalton</sup>~~Dawson~~." Now of course John <sup>Dalton</sup>~~Dawson~~ would not be as difficult to sell as Mills Godwin was, or is, so the situation would be this--that as I see it, Henry Howell running again--he might have a difficult time keeping the black votes solidified to the degree he did the last trip around. Take Richmond for instance, I don't know if you are familiar with a candidate, a



member of the House of Delegates, by the name of Howard ~~Cawwell~~. <sup>Howell?</sup> <sup>Hart</sup> <sup>?</sup> <sup>?</sup>

J.B.: Well, he built his whole political career on black people. He was a white lawyer, but he was always crusading for black rights. Well, blacks have never supported him in full force. I came to town and I think the second year I was in town I got him elected to City Council. I editorialized and had to crusade to say "O.K., let's try 'em". We tried him. We go up against a group called top the establish-<sup>?</sup>ment here and Cawwell did a damn good job. You know, he was really a good fighter for black rights. Then we had problems in terms of the redistricting and the possibility of districts and large systems going up and he saw his high link <sup>? honey</sup> getting whipped, and then there was annexation. So he started appealing to the white conservatives in the new annexed area and then so he took an about face--started pushing against bussing--this sort of thing. You know, he was sorta in NAACP even as an enemy and of course I was the greatest boogie man who has ever come along. So, now, to get back to Henry Howell, in the Richmond area I have--it hasn't come up on a wide scale, but a lot of people will say: "You know, Henry is basically like Howell Cawwell, he will go along with blacks as long as it's politically expedient or as long as it's politically profitable. You see but once the electorate changes or it really comes down tough Henry is not going to be with you. Now I'm saying in the Richmond area that kind of thing could catch on. However, I still believe the best yardstick for measuring the work of a political candidate is his record, so you know, I would have to stick with Henry. His record is better than his opponent, in another gubernatorial election --and that would be my viewpoint, you know. And also the possibility of winning--that's a very important thing. A guy can preach the most

acceptable policy in the world of viewpoints but if he doesn't have a chance of winning it doesn't mean very much.

J.B.: Do you see any movement toward any sort of statewide black political organization?

Boone: Well, already we have a semblance of a statewide political organization, Crusade For Voters, which meets in statewide elections, congressional elections--well, statewide elections, senate, you know.

J.B.: They're<sup>still</sup>/basically Richmond centered?

Boone: The leadership is basically Richmond. Then there's Senator Wilder whose a Democrat of course and he calls a Democratic statewide meeting every once in a while, so I guess you could say that there are some moves toward that end. I do not foresee--if it would come about it would have to come about within these two channels. Could you give me a model? What kind of thing are you referring to? Do you have a model at all?

J.B.: I guess South Carolina is closer to it than anybody. They're not that well structured either.

Boone: You see the problem that you've got in the black community is a lack of resources--financial. And as you know, during this era, it's very difficult to get people to do things without some money and particularly in the black community, because most people are working.

In a white community a person can give his whole--all of his time--throughout an entire year because he likes it. Now how many blacks have that kind of power? I mean monetary power? In terms of contributions, you've got the corporations; you've got all kinds of people in the white community who can get out that loot. You just don't have that in the blacks. A particular

at  
instance, if the millionaires/Thalhimers wanted a candidate to win,  
they just put him on loan to the drive or to the candidate. Nobody  
would know about it. If they need some phones, just call them up and  
say: "Listen, why don't you all come over to our offices tonight.  
Just use the telephones." We don't have that kind of thing you know  
in the black community.

J.B.: How about any statewide voter registration effort?

Boone: Hell!

J.B.: What's your estimate on the number of registered blacks?

Boone: I don't know; I would have to very little figures  
the last trip around. I guess 250,000. I guess that's what everybody  
settles on, isn't it?

J.B.: I've heard even less, 200,000 or 250,000.

Boone: You've heard of the Joint Center on Political Studies? I used  
to toss out figures without even thinking about them, just accept them,  
but here recently I haven't been able to do that, you know, without  
having a guilt feeling about it. I would say that no more than 250,000.  
That would be my answer, because--that's about where I would put it.

J.B.: Do you see any effort towards statewide registration drives?

Boone: You see you've got problems. As I said the big problem is money.

J.B.: North Carolina is so much similar to Virginia from the standpoint  
of relatively low registration. The deeper south states have a higher  
percentage of black registration than the upper south states do. The  
Nixon Administration moved to eliminate the foundation fund

Boone: Yeah. It was unfortunate. Well you take for instance John Brooks.

He was a former national director for the registration and he worked at his office next door. That office is still going but not going to the extent that it was, say five or ten years ago, because they didn't have the funds. That's a very graphic example.

J.B.: But is there any sort of going to the black community itself for funds for that?

Boone: I think so. There are blacks who contribute to black political campaigns, like Senator Wilder. Blacks with money--they toss out a considerable amount of money and Wilder uses it and most black candidates uses it to try to get blacks registered.

J.B.: Traditionally, in much of the South, that's a sensitive subject, and for reasons I don't have to explain I think I'm sensitive to them. I think I understand them more or less, but additionally there has been a pattern in some parts of the South of votes being delivered for money rather than anything else, on a local level especially. Is this still prevalent in Virginia?

Boone: Well I tell you, I can't document that. I can say this. I know there have been cases wherein poll workers will pay and white candidates do that don't they? There are expenses for hooking up telephones. There are expenses for opening up a headquarters.

J.B.: I understand there are a lot of legitimate expenses involved in the blacks also because of average economic status require more funds to get out the vote because many people do need transportation, for example.

Boone: I don't know. Have you documented that when you consider all the TV announcements which are geared for the white audience when you consider all the big billboards which are geared for the white voter--when you consider all the daily newspaper ads.

J.B.: My question is, how much is there beyond the legitimate purposes?

Boone: I really don't think it's that much because, number one, the white candidate's budget would only give black political leaders token consideration anyway. I really don't see that much money coming into the black community from white political candidates, because they view blacks as just needing peanuts to do things. I think they're offering the kind of budgets to blacks that they wouldn't even dream of offering to a white political leader. I just don't see that much validity in it because basically we're dealing with nothing but peanuts. I've heard of a black person or black political leader, quote, political leader, you know taking \$500 from a white candidate, but damn if he does anything what would be left from \$500? Even if he gets a few people out to the poles or he gets out some signs or he rides around--as high as gasoline is automobile. And you would have to do that, the allowance factor you know is worth \$500 right there, but even if a guy got \$500, and I'm skeptical as to whether they ever go above that, you're talking about peanuts. And you can believe white candidates are not giving out many \$500's. I just don't believe it's as widespread as some people believe. Secondly, because you don't have that many established black political leaders. You know. Who are they? Who would you get the damn money to in Richmond?

J.B.: My real question is, is this any problem in Virginia? In some states I think it is, to some extent.

Boone: I just don't see how it would be a problem, I really don't. I would say this, if you've got some money your chances of gettin' elected--

J.B.: Do you think Howell underspent in the black community?

Boone: I do, yes, of course I do. I don't think he--I think to some degree he felt he ought to spend the money where he didn't have the votes--the middle of the road [voter] who was indecisive as to whether he would go for Howell or Godwin--so let's not concentrate this bread there, because he took the position that, you know, most blacks, I've got them in the bag you see. And <sup>when</sup> we had this kind of viewpoint it means that some times you can stumble up by not giving attention to your sympathizers. You know it's just like a woman. Nobody wants to be taken for granted, you know? And if you start taking them for granted you're going to have problems.

J.B.: If someone were a candidate like Howell and he feels because the issues involved are so clearly drawn the leadership in the black community ought to just go out and [support him]. That's a mistake?

Boone: I think, well in politics you can take nothing for granted. That's my position. That you need to pour that money and make sure you get the maximum lump. The plusses you have--you know that's a sure thing, and try to capitalize on it. Now I can also understand that in a close election as took place in the last election that it is now inadvisable strategy to concentrate in the areas in which there is a chance to win a margin voter, that might go one way or another. But as I pointed out before and as you pointed out in your article that the NBC thing--I am convinced was a big factor in the Henry Howell defeat. Also that damn added letter. I think that that added letter, although Godwin apologized for it, was one of the biggest plusses for Godwin.

Because, you know, it raised the question, my God, I didn't know Godwin thought that way, I thought he had changed. But that letter confirmed that Godwin was the same old Godwin and what Abbott's <sup>1.</sup> saying it, maybe we missed that so I think that was the cause for a lot of people who hate Jews, you know? In this state they just hate Jews who come out and vote for the old Godwin. And it was to his advantage that that Abbott letter came up. Although you had a lot of so-called respectable people denouncing it, you had a lot of other people who said: "Well, you know I'm going on over with Mills because he thinks a certain way." That might sound like an irrational statement but I believe this is the way it worked. I don't see that Abbott letter as being a negative, for him. Any other questions?

J.B.: No. Is there anything you wanted to comment on that we haven't talked about?

Boone: No, I just--to a great degree I think that black voters are blamed too much for what takes place in a society in which whites really have the control of what takes place and I would hope that whenever people write about any political subject that they wouldn't be so quick to blame the black voter for what happened. You know it's just like the James Meredith case in which after James Meredith got shot, people were calling me at the Afro saying: "Well, you know, James Meredith is the blame for that because you weren't down there. You knew he was going to get shot." You know, that's perverted thinking to me.

J.B.:                               black voters and what is it they do to turn  
off black voters?

Boone: Well I think the main thing is showing concern and being regular in general and having a good record in terms of what you stand for. I think that turns on black voters. You know, just what can you do for me? And that's a legitimate question in any political situation. I think that the thing that turns off black voters is, you know, nasty records, insensitive attitudes like Mills Godwin. Mills Godwin is one of the best case studies of what a candidate ought not to do to the black voter.

J. B.: Are you talking about in '73?

Boone: I'm saying any time. He's the same no good rascal.

J.B.: Well you got black voters in '64 didn't you?

Boone: Let me tell you. What happened with after Goldwater? It was the ascendancy of Lyndon Baines Johnson, right? Now, it was a thing in which blacks were showing their support of Lyndon Baines Johnson.

J.B.: And Godwin having ridden aboard the Lady Bird Special.

Boone: That's right, and the hope was that this buy would be different. It just didn't happen that way. Now most politicians would have changed like Lyndon Baines Johnson did, but Mills Godwin is such an entrenched rebel that he just does not have the proclivity for changing.

J.B.: Well he made some black appointments in his first term as governor didn't he?

Boone: Hell no, not really! I mean you had blacks in nonpaying positions--put one say on Department of Welfare and Institutions, one on the beauty thing. I'm talking about putting blacks in positions wherein they can bring about change in the state for other blacks.

I'm not talking about that damn prestige position.



J.B.: How effective was Bill Robertson?

Boone: Well I think Bill did some good things, particularly in the employment. I think from a symbolic standpoint he did a hell of a job because he served notice on white folks that you know, we've got a different <sup>^</sup> day up there at the State House. I think he did what he could do and his basic accomplishment was what he did in the field of employment, working with these white businessmen and getting them to accept the Holton policy of hiring blacks. And in the state government he rode on pretty heavily and particularly in the Division of Motor Vehicles. That was one of the most racist setups they had under the Godwin Administration and I guess the complexion down there now is about 30-40% black. Now this is very important. Why? Because these people can hire high school graduates. In other words my feeling is government is most responsive when it's serving the little guy, not the guy who has a college degree, not the guy <sup>who's</sup> ~~whose~~ already doctors or lawyers. Hell, these guys are going to do O.K. under almost any situation. But I'm talking about Joe Blow. And this is the guy that I'm concerned about. This is the guy I'm concerned about being helped by an appointment in a top position who can control some jobs. And when you get black people in control, just like Ernie Fields for instance, <sup>^</sup> who headed up the State Selective Service Board, appointed by Holton. I mean this had a hell of a impact on the Selective Service in Virginia. You see? So, you know, this is the way I look at it. I think you can just look at what Mills Godwin does to answer your question. He's one of the best examples of how to turn off black people. He turns off practically everybody. You know--well I couldn't say that if you look at the vote but he's not the

most likable people among the people who supposedly likes him. He just doesn't allow them to get close, you know. He's a very callus type of individual. You know he thinks he's the Nixon version of the king, in Virginia, you know. That's what he thinks he is--a damn king or something.

J.B.: Is there anything else that we haven't discussed that you'd like to comment on?

Boone: No.