

### **Back to the Movement (1979-mid 1980s)**

**NARRATOR:** In the spring of 1980, the city of Miami was flooded with refugees in search of the American dream.

**CUBAN REFUGEE:** This is a big country. I like this system because I -- Now I know the freedom.

**NARRATOR:** They came in search of economic opportunities, in search of political freedom. They came from Cuba and from Haiti. But that spring in Miami, 25 years after the civil rights movement began, the American dream was on trial.

**GLADYS TAYLOR:** I'm asking for the black people to be calm, because this time we can't ... this sitting down. We must take to the streets again like we did in the '60s.

**IRATE MAN:** I want to believe in the American system. No more, never again.

**NARRATOR:** Once again, the nation stood at a racial crossroads. Would America move closer to its promise of equal opportunity and equal justice, or would it back away? The question had been asked a generation before in the 1950s when most of Miami's black population lived on the northern edge of downtown Miami in an area known as Overtown.

**DEWEY KNIGHT:** Overtown was a viable community in which people had common causes and related to each other, there was economic development, businesses, furniture stores, clothing stores, soda water bottling company. The professionals, doctors, lawyers, other professionals were there. The youngsters were considered youngsters of the community so that everyone felt some responsibility for youngsters.

**LONNIE LAWRENCE:** Growing up in Overtown was different from anything else that you could probably even imagine. And I guess because, you know, it was like family, everybody was like family. There was so much togetherness, so much -- Everything there was like close knit.

**DEWEY KNIGHT:** It was a place, a focal point for black people. Segregation, of course, contributed to that, but segregation caused it to be a community where people had a real sense of community.

**NARRATOR:** Segregation also affected nightlife in Overtown. Internationally known black entertainers could perform on Miami Beach, but they were not permitted to stay at the hotels. Instead, they stayed in Overtown. Clyde Killens featured many of them at his nightclub, the Sir John.

**CLYDE KILLENS:** Nat King Cole, Sammy Davis, Joyce Kern, all those guys, when they come down here, they worked at Miami Beach, but their show was in the hotel, they off at 2:00 and they all would come over to Sir John. And they would go in the line and there'd be seven, eight, or ten musicians there jamming.

**NARRATOR:** But in family life, blacks remained second class citizens under Miami's laws of segregation. Protests were staged at downtown lunch counters which refused service to black customers.

**REPORTER:** Dr. Brown, now what do you hope to accomplish by this demonstration?

**DR. JOHN O. BROWN:** We hope to eliminate racial discrimination in all public accommodations here in the city of Miami.

**NARRATOR:** In the '50s, the practice of segregation was slow to change. But other changes did affect Overtown and life would never be the same.

**DR. JOHN O. BROWN:** Well, there was an individual in this community who handled about 75 percent of all the rental property in Overtown area. His name was Luther Brooks, and Luther Brooks came to us to tell us about what some of the plans were for Overtown and the black community. And he brought his maps of everything and showed us, this was about 1959, 1960, how the only way downtown Miami could expand was to expand into what was then known as the Overtown area, a black community.

**NARRATOR:** One of the major changes would be the construction of this interstate highway system which would displace many homeowners.

**DOROTHY GRAHAM:** The house was in my mother's name and she received the letter saying that -- I don't remember now exactly what it said, other than by the right of eminent domain or something to that effect, we would have to move. And other people, they compared notes, and other people got the same kind of notice.

**GEORGIA AYERS:** I'll tell you what we said, the niggers had to go. So they came out and talked to all of the property owners and told them by eminent domain, this property is needed to build this expressway. You know, growth is coming on and sometimes some people lose and invariably blacks would lose.

**DOROTHY GRAHAM:** It was very rough on my mother. You see, it was her house that she and my grandmother had worked for. And it meant that everything we had had was being just taken away. Even your shrubbery that you had cherished and had planted, you couldn't take the with you.

**JESSIE MCCRARY:** Black people were easy prey. They had no political power because they didn't have any people in office. So what government did was they took a little at a time. First they cut the finger off and then they cut the hand off and then they cut the arm off and pretty soon, over time's, dead.

**NARRATOR:** Ultimately, the expressway displaced 20,000 people; 50 percent of Overtown's population.

**DEWEY KNIGHT:** I-95 which was basically developed to get people from suburbia downtown, and in the process destroyed Overtown and that sense of community. All of a sudden, you saw concrete apartment houses coming up, what we called concrete monsters, simply because the demand was for space.

**JESSE MCCRARY:** We have not been as militant as we should have been. There is no way we should have let Overtown disappear. But we got snookered, and we got snookered because we were not minding our knitting, we should have been there at the governmental board meetings, at the meetings that talk about development, we were not there. And we trusted people that it was going to be okay.

**NARRATOR:** Many Overtown residents relocated into nearby Liberty City and to neighborhoods that had previously been all white. Frank LeGree was among the first.

**FRANK LEGREE:** At least two weeks after moving in, we were sitting out on the porch one day, and then the mailman came to give us a letter. I thought it was, "Hey, who knows where we're living already?" And when I opened the letter, it said, "Nigger, get out." I say this is something, so we laughed about it. It was nothing, you know, of course we didn't pay no attention to it. So my mother, she said, "Oh, this don't sound too good." I told her, "Oh, don't worry about it." I said, "It's just somebody, you know." So anyway, two weeks later, after we received this, I came home one night and they called to say, "Your windows is all knocked out." Somebody threw a brick and knocked the windows out.

Only thing I wanted was a home for my mother and my family to live. And this is all. But they started this picketing, so I just let them walk and walk. So I went outside, got my sprinklers, put it on my lawn, turned the water up, is that good, you know? And water going -- They just started running from the water, so away went and called the police. When the police come, still they getting them to ... (inaudible).

**DR. JOHN O. BROWN:** I think at that time, most of us in the black community felt that education was the key, and once the schools were integrated and black kids were given the opportunities to get training and everything, then a lot of these other things would disappear.

**NARRATOR:** By the mid-'60s, the success of the civil rights movement promised new opportunities. When Sammy Davis, Jr., visited Miami, he encouraged children to be ready to meet those challenges.

**SAMMY DAVIS, JR.:** It's no longer like, "Well, man, I'm colored, I ain't going to make it no more," and all that. It ain't like that no more. And what happens is that all of the -- All of the civil rights, all of the marches, all of the people who have died in the civil rights struggle will have died in vain if -- And the bigots will win out -- If once the opportunity, once the doors are opened, no one is prepared for it.

**NARRATOR:** Many students at Booker T. Washington High School were ready to meet that challenge. One of them was Arthur McDuffie.

**FREDERICA MCDUFFIE:** To my knowledge, his goal on mind was to strive and strive for nothing but the best, no matter what you were involving yourself, just strive and strive for the top and nothing but to the top.

**LONNIE LAWRENCE:** When I graduated from high school, I went to DC and worked up there for a year and lo and behold, I went to the Marine Corps after being up there for a year, and who the hell I see, you know? And I walk in the barracks and there he was. Art was a hell of a Marine. He was truly a reflection, when you see that commercial about, you know, about this guy and the uniform and carving out something that really -- That was Art. Art was really the kind of person that took a lot of pride in how he looked in that Marine Corps uniform.

**NARRATOR:** In 1968, McDuffie came home from the Marines. That same year, he married his high school sweetheart. As the years passed, Arthur McDuffie became a successful business executive. Even to family members, he could be an exacting boss.

**LOUIS MCDUFFIE:** So I went in and he says, "Well, you're supposed to see Mrs. So-and-so?" And I says, "Yeah." He says, "Why didn't you?" I says, "Well, I forgot it." He says, "Well, I'm going to tell you one thing, I'm going to look over it this time, but don't let it happen again." And he was down to the point. And after that was all over, I proceeded to do my work and he came out and he pat me on the shoulder. He says, "You know, I have to do that because, you know, we can be brothers in the street, but we got a job to do here." I mean, he was just right to the point with it. [laughter]

**NARRATOR:** By the late 1970s, whites had moved out of the Liberty City area, leaving it predominantly black. But many black people had also moved out, leaving behind a struggling community.

**DEWEY KNIGHT:** The upward mobility types had gone. When everyone was there, when the professionals were there and everybody, things moved up that benefited everybody. And as a consequence, the housing goes down, the streets go down, there are very few businesses.

**NARRATOR:** While the Miami area enjoyed an economic boom, the residents of Overtown and Liberty City, the years had been hard. Black unemployment was 17 percent, twice that of whites. Among black teenagers, it had risen to 40 percent.

**CHECKER MAN:** Lot of people want a job and they can't get one. No jobs for them. Therefore, they on welfare. They on welfare because they can't get no job. They go to a place, they get turned down. And half of the things people doin' on the street right now, people forcin' 'em to do it. Because there ain't no jobs, they got to do something to feed their kids. If you got to feed your kids, you may do anything, you know? A lot of good people turn bad because there ain't no jobs.

**NARRATOR:** Liberty City was part of an area known to the police as the central district.

**DALE BOWLIN:** It's a very busy area, it's a very volatile area. There's a lot of serious calls in that area. It was not a pleasant place to work for most of our white officers. And so in my opinion, it was used as a punishment area. Some of the worst police officers are put in there to punish them, to show that this is where you're going to end up if you defy the administration, and so forth. And I think that's what happened, I know that's what happened in our department.

**NARRATOR:** In December, 1979, Arthur McDuffie went for a late night motorcycle ride. He failed to stop for a red light, resulting in a high speed police chase through the streets of the central district. According to the police report, McDuffie was injured crashing his motorcycle. Then violently resisted arrest and was taken to Jackson Memorial Hospital.

**FREDERICA MCDUFFIE:** They would not let me in to see him. I asked the doctor why, they said to me, "We're working on him. You will be able to see him in a couple of hours." There was four hours before I seen Arthur. When I did see Arthur, it was like, "This is not Arthur. This is not an accident."

**DALE BOWLIN:** When I went and looked at the motorcycle, and I had some background training in accident reconstruction, I know when a motorcycle slides on its side, that the pegs would stick out, the rubber pegs where you rest your feet should have had worn marks on them from coming in contact with the pavement. I didn't find that. I didn't believe that that motorcycle slid on its side.

**NARRATOR:** McDuffie's friend, Lonnie Lawrence, was a spokesman for the Dade County Public Safety Department. He had a personal reaction to news of the investigation.

**LONNIE LAWRENCE:** The young lady who was handling the case from the internal review section, I asked her I said, "Well, you know, who is this person you're talking about?" You know, because I hadn't really heard anything about it. And she told me the name, and I sort of just sat there because I thought, "Well, maybe it's somebody else." And you know, it -- When I finally realized that she was talking about the Arthur McDuffie that I knew, that I had grown up with, I just couldn't react to it. And I found myself in a very difficult situation because I found myself being an official spokesperson for the department, but trying to deal with the fact that here was a person who was a very good friend of mine, who I grew up with, who I knew very well, was the victim of this police brutality.

**REPORTER:** What did he die from?

**DR. RONALD WRIGHT:** He died as a result of blunt head injuries with the destruction of his underlying brain. He was beaten to death.

**REPORTER:** How hard would someone have to hit someone to inflict such an injury?

**DR. RONALD WRIGHT:** Amazingly hard.

**EULA MCDUFFIE:** My child is dead, they beat him to death like a dog. Just as a dog, they beat him to death, they beat up his head just like a dog.

**NARRATOR:** On December 29th, 1979, Arthur McDuffie, dressed in his Marine Corps uniform, was buried with full military honors. But public outcry over his death could not be laid to rest.

**JANET RENO:** We have filed charges today against five officers of the public safety department as a result of the tragic killing of Mr. Arthur McDuffie and the ensuing effort to cover up the circumstances surrounding it.

**NARRATOR:** Some of the officers were charged with manslaughter, others with tampering with evidence. One was charged with second degree murder. The prosecution's case was supported by statements from other officers who had been at the scene that night.

**CHARLES VEVERKA:** I gave statements to the State Attorney's Office and I did plan on testifying.

**REPORTER:** Were you given immunity?

**CHARLES VEVERKA:** I was today, yes.

**REPORTER:** What are you guilty of?

**MARK MEIER:** I witnessed the incident, I helped cover it up, I lied to the internal review investigators investigating the incident.

**LAWYER:** We don't intend for a trial to be had where before they go in they've already said that these men are guilty.

**NARRATOR:** Lawyers for the defendants asked for a change of venue. In the spring of 1980, the trial was moved to Tampa, Florida, and heard by an all male, all white jury. The defense maintained that McDuffie had fought violently and that the officers used only the force necessary to subdue him.

**MAURICE FERRE:** For weeks on end, the newspapers, and especially the television stations in the evening would report what was going on in the trial so that the people of Miami, and especially the black community, were patently aware of every gruesome detail of how that poor man had died. That they held his head, what kind of a flashlight with how many batteries, where the blood was splattering.

**CHARLES VEVERKA:** With the impact of the second strike. As I stated, I was standing east of Mr. McDuffie and Mr. Marrero. I got splattered with blood.

**DEWEY KNIGHT:** My expectation as was the expectation of everyone in the black community was that those men would be convicted of killing McDuffie. To us, the evidence appeared to be overwhelming, that they were responsible for the death of McDuffie and should have been dealt with accordingly.

**JUDGE LENORE NESBITT:** Bailiff? The bailiff will hand to the clerk, please place them face down for just a moment.

**NARRATOR:** On May 17th, 1980, the jury gave its verdict.

**JUDGE LENORE NESBITT:** Madam Clerk, publish the verdict.

**MADAM CLERK:** We the jury at Tampa, Hillsboro County, the 17th day of May, 1980, find the defendant Alex Marrero as to second degree murder as charged in count one of the information not guilty. We the jury at Tampa, Hillsboro County, the 17th day of May, 1980, find the defendant Ira Diggs as to manslaughter --

**NARRATOR:** The policemen were cleared of all charges.

**DR. JOHN O. BROWN:** We knew that a black man had been killed by a policeman. We knew the policemen who were present. And yet when they have the trial of Arthur McDuffie up there, they came back with a verdict of not guilty, that these people are not guilty of murdering this man. It was just another lynching.

**DOROTHY GRAHAM:** I remember the McDuffie verdict and I feel that black women who have black sons, they must be fools because there seemingly is no justice for a black man.

**CHANTING:** We want justice, we want justice.

**NARRATOR:** It was now five months since the death of Arthur McDuffie. In Miami, people began to gather outside the justice building to protest the verdict in Tampa.

**LONNIE LAWRENCE:** I stood in my office window talking to my director at that point, and I looked out the window. I'm talking to him on the phone, and I said to him, I said, "You're not going to believe this, but I've never in my life seen so many black folk in one place than I see right now." And he says, "What the hell are you talking about?" And I said, "It's about to hit the fan because they're marching down 14th Street."

**NARRATOR:** The police tried to restrain angry demonstrators outside the justice building. Cars were set on fire. More fires were started throughout Overtown and Liberty City. The police couldn't stop the growing furor.

**DALE BOWLIN:** I would direct officers to set up a certain intersection, and I would say, "Stop the citizens from going in there. Let's seal this area off where the violence is taking place." And they would come back on the radio and say, "I'm not staying here. I'm being shot at, I'm pulling out of here. You get somebody else in here." I mean, just open defiance on the air. And looking back on it, I can't blame them. We were totally overwhelmed by the anger and the number of people that were angry and the violence that was taking place. We weren't ready for it.

**NARRATOR:** In Liberty City, white-owned businesses were burned. Individual whites also became targets for violence.

**REPORTER:** Don't know what's going on down there, what do you see down there?

**MAN IN CAR:** They're angry over the results of McDuffie, they're angry. They're angry. They're angry, and they're emotional and anything that looks like it might be Caucasian, they're throwing bricks and rocks and shooting.

**REPORTER:** And shooting?

**MAN IN CAR:** And shooting, they're for real.

**REPORTER:** They got guns out.

**MAN IN CAR:** There's two Caucasians laying in the middle of the street right now. Two people are laying down right in the middle of the street. Don't go down, matter of fact, you're too close, you're too close.

**NARRATOR:** The riot lasted three days, 17 people died, 10 black, 7 white. More than 1,000 people were arrested, most of them with no previous arrest record.

**NARRATOR:** Property damage in Overtown and Liberty City ran to nearly \$100 million.

**MAN IN CAR:** They lost, man, all the way around. And they can keep going because they're losing, Jack, they're losing battle. Because, you know, I feel like, man, when we had the rally downtown, we had enough people there for some positive things to get done. If they could have exerted all their energy into something positive, man, hey, no telling where we could have went. We could have went a long damn way with that, man.

**OTIS PITTS:** You know, we have to recognize that even no matter how well intentioned people are, that we have to solve our own problems ultimately. I mean, at best, we can receive some assistance in doing that, but the solution has to be ours and ultimately, we have to implement the solution.

**NARRATOR:** Three weeks later, President Jimmy Carter met with the city's officials and leaders. He wanted Miami to take strong local action before he committed federal funds to rebuild riot-torn areas.

**PRESIDENT JIMMY CARTER:** We have ... (inaudible) service problems here to address. The prime initiative must come from this community. It cannot come from Washington. And the community must realize that violence and dissention and destruction hurts most those who are least able to afford it.

**NARRATOR:** Carter had been elected with substantial support in the nation's black communities. But now the crowd which lined the street outside was angry that no one seemed to be addressing the injustice which led to the recent uprising. As the President left the meeting, a bottle thrown from the crowd smashed on the limousine's roof.

**MAN ON THE STREET:** The incident itself was an ignorant act. But there's a point behind it, and maybe they don't have another way of expressing themselves or getting that particular attention.

**REPORTER:** And the point is?

**MAN ON STREET:** That we need help.

**NARRATOR:** Help had always come from within the community, and at times from allies in the federal government. Now, the community was in jeopardy and the government was changing priorities. It was an election year and President Jimmy Carter was challenged in his bid for reelection by Governor Ronald Reagan of California. While campaigning in Philadelphia, Mississippi, he promised a more conservative federal government.

**GOV. RONALD REAGAN:** I am going to devote myself to trying to reorder those priorities and to restore to states and local communities those functions which properly belong there.

**NARRATOR:** Reagan was elected by a substantial majority, an election which signaled an aggressive shift in federal programs and politics.

**REP. WALTER FAUNTROY:** Just last night, our President has announced the first of \$13 billion additional cuts, a part of \$100 billion in cuts in programs that are vital to the role of government to care, protect and defend the poor of our nation and our world.

**NARRATOR:** In Chicago, Illinois, a grassroots coalition began to fight back against what it saw as government's lack of concern. The coalition had its origins in the 1979 snowstorm when Michael Bilandic was mayor.

**RENAULT ROBINSON:** Bilandic went on TV and made a lot of promises about what was going to happen with the snow because it was unusually high, it had paralyzed neighborhoods, it had closed schools and it had made transportation impossible.

**NANCY JEFFERSON:** People were standing on El platforms, and I'll never forget that evening at 4:00 in the evening, he ordered those EIs not to stop in black communities. It was the same on the south side and every side of town, was to pass up the black communities. And the black community people became irate because it was a personal affront, a personal insult and they went to war.

**NARRATOR:** Jane Byrne was running for mayor against Michael Bilandic and she found strong support on the elevated train platforms.

**JANE BYRNE:** So I went to the people and where do you see the most people? You see them going to work in the morning. You see them going into the factories, so yeah, I was up on the El platforms.

**NARRATOR:** With strong support from black voters, Jane Byrne went on to become Chicago's first woman mayor.

**JANE BYRNE:** And I will be more than happy to take the advice of the coalition that put me in as mayor, the chairman of the party, and the people in the neighborhoods. Thank you very, very much.

**NARRATOR:** After two years of Byrne's leadership, many in the black neighborhoods charged that they were underrepresented in her appointments and in city jobs and contracts. Another conflict developed here at Cabrini Green. In this public housing complex, nearly 14,000 people lived within six square blocks. They were plagued by high unemployment, a high crime rate and gang violence. In 1981, Jane Byrne announced that she was moving in.

**JANE BYRNE:** I'm going to straighten out project living in this city because by allowing it, we can harm the whole city, and I'm not going to have it.

**MARIAN STAMPS:** Now you're going to bring your stuff up into the public housing community and tell us that only you can save our children? That's the ultimate of disrespect, okay? And I was not going to get ready for that. I could not accept that because, see, I understood that if we had allowed these children to believe that their salvation was going to come from the great white hope, then what did that say about me as a mother, as a grandmother, and as a black woman?

**ALDERMAN KELLY:** Madame President and members of the city council, the tenants may also have a problem relating to the new neighbor based on the fact that, Madame Mayor, you will have your body guards, limousine with detailed car, bulletproof glass has been installed, and I understand a new driveway that's going to be put in there. I don't think that most of those people there can relate to that sort of situation.

**JANE BYRNE:** Alderman Kelly, they have many vacancies in Cabrini Green at the present time. If you do not want a general on the front line, you can use any of the apartments there any time you would like to also get a first hand view, thank you.

**ALDERMAN KELLY:** I don't need to do that, I've lived there all of my life.

**NARRATOR:** Mayor Byrne lived in Cabrini Green for three weeks. Public housing was managed by the Chicago Housing Authority. The chairman of CHA was Charles Swibal.

**MARIAN STAMPS:** Swibal was not providing any services in public housing, and he very seldom talked to any of the residents. Therefore, the people had no opportunity or no recourse in terms of how they addressed their concerns in public housing.

**NARRATOR:** Public outcry over his performance forced Charles Swibal to resign. But the furor continued when Mayor Byrne replaced him with Andrew Moony. At the same time, the mayor expanded the CHA board, appointing two white women.

**JANE BYRNE:** And I didn't make the switch to put those two white women on that you always hear about until after I lived there, and after I saw that it was a very, very woman dominated society.

**NARRATOR:** The issue became one of representation. Eighty-five percent of the residents in public housing were black. Mayor Byrne's appointment made the CHA board predominantly white.

**MARIAN STAMPS:** And you have no intention of doing what you said. We say it's an illegal meeting, it is not representative and the meeting is over with. Ain't gonna be no more meetings today.

**RENAULT ROBINSON:** It was wild. But, of course, the city council approved all three of them anyway. What happened, though, was that we said this is exactly what we needed. This shows black people unless we register to vote, we have no chance of ever overturning this kind of oppression.

**NARRATOR:** Voter registration was also an issue in the spring of 1982 when the Illinois Department of Public Aid reduced the funds available for recipients.

**NANCY JEFFERSON:** We took a group to public aid, to Springfield, to the legislators about the public aid cutback. And so we were told by the legislators, "Your people don't vote." You know, and which was the truth. These public aid people were not voting. And we just came back and took that as a lead to organize public aid recipients to vote.

**SLIM COLEMAN:** We had a meeting and said we're going to have to get some respect out of these politicians. The only thing they respect is votes, and we're going to have to get our own folks registered. We formed a group then called Power with about 23 different community based organizations around the city and determined to go register people at the public aid and unemployment offices.

**NARRATOR:** A voter registration effort began on the streets of Chicago. Behind the scenes, leaders focused on the need for worthy candidates.

**LUTRELLE PALMER:** We were up here in this very room talking one night in our regular meeting, and we had a list of black mayors on the wall. And there were more than 200 black mayors, and somebody said, "Well, why can't we have a black mayor in Chicago?"

**NANCY JEFFERSON:** And I think we were dealing with not so much as who as to what we wanted. What kind of person we wanted. We was first ironing all that out. And then I think it was Lou or somebody that talked about let's look at Harold Washington.

**NARRATOR:** Harold Washington ran for mayor in 1977, following the death of Mayor Richard J. Daley, he lost.

**HAROLD WASHINGTON:** This is Congressman Harold Washington speaking to you from Chicago.

**NARRATOR:** Now he was the United States Congressman from Chicago's south side. Secure in his national post, he was reluctant to run again for mayor.

**RENAULT ROBINSON:** The real issue with Harold was did we have an opportunity to make black people understand what was going on and what could happen? It had nothing to do with the incident. Black people had been insulted every kind of way you can insult black people. Over the years, they had been insulted daily, plundered by example after example and it tended to just wash over their heads and they didn't understand, they didn't do anything about it. They cared, but then they didn't care. It was like, "Well,

what can we do about this?" And so Harold was saying, "Look, if we're going to end up with people having the same reaction, we're not going to be able to pull it off."

**LUTRELLE PALMER:** I also believe in an idea and when an idea whose moment comes, when that moment truly comes, nothing, nothing, nothing can turn it around or chase it away.

**NARRATOR:** Black leaders trusted the community's feelings about who should run for mayor. A field of six names was presented to this meeting on Chicago's south side.

**LUTRELLE PALMER:** So in essence what we did was to present those six names. We did not have the people, those six people there, but we just presented their names and the people voted. Once again, Harold Washington was far and away the number one choice.

**RENAULT ROBINSON:** It took a lot of doing to get Harold to show up there. And only after a pre-arrangement between myself and Lu, that Harold would not be forced to declare his candidacy, did Harold finally agree to show. And with great reluctance he came and made one hell of a speech, absolutely electrifying speech.

**LUTRELLE PALMER:** At that meeting, Harold made a strange speech, it was really a strange speech. And he started talking about it's not the man, it's the plan. And when he finished speaking, I walked over to Harold and said, "What are you talking about?" I said, "What's this man and the plan business, and when are you going to give us kind of a concrete time frame?" Harold said to me on the platform, while the program was still going on, Harold said, "I'm not going to run." And I looked at Harold, thunderstruck.

**RENAULT ROBINSON:** We were able to sit Harold back down and say, "If you were to run, what would it take to show you that people were really serious?" And this was, of course, part of a prearranged proposition. He said, "Fifty thousand new registrants and \$100,000." Fine. Then we let Harold go, I stayed and we worked through how we were going to accomplish that.

**NARRATOR:** The registration effort continued. Now with a goal of 50,000 new voters by the registration deadline of October 5th.

**ED GARDNER:** And I had never had a conversation with Renault Robinson before, so he came by and he explained the whole problem. He said, "You know, we're not going to do anything to change this city because we're not registered." Two hundred and fifty thousand black Chicagoans need to be registered, and what can we do about it? My son and daughter, Terry, said, they said, "Well, look Dad, why don't we allocate our last quarter advertisement dollars to voter registration in this city?"

We were in radio commercials for two or three weeks. Come alive October 5. But also, once we advertised on a station, we had the station also match our spots, so we had a large number of spots running every day, but we had that power and the strength as a major advertiser to get them to do this.

**WOMAN ON STREET:** I just registered, I didn't vote last time. And I hate it, I regret it.

**REPORTER:** Why?

**WOMAN ON STREET:** Because of all those leaders we got. I mean, Reagan cutting everything, Thompson's cutting everything, Burrows cutting everything. We might as well just tear the whole machine down.

**REPORTER:** What made you stop by to register?

**YOUNG FATHER:** Because I'm 22 years old and I haven't registered to vote yet. I would think it's about -- long overdue.

**NARRATOR:** By October 5, voting rolls swelled to include more than 100,000 newly registered black voters, twice the number required by Harold Washington. On November 10th, 1982, Washington announced his long-awaited decision.

**HAROLD WASHINGTON:** I have been urged by those various pleas of thousands of people to enter this race. Therefore, I hereby declare my candidacy for mayor of Chicago.

**NARRATOR:** The 1983 Democratic race for mayor would include Harold Washington, Mayor Jane Byrne, and Richard M. Daley, son of the late Mayor Daley of Chicago. But the question remained, could Harold Washington get the new voters to the polls on election day?

**HAROLD WASHINGTON:** The people who believe in us who take it upon themselves to talk to other people, we can dispel this business about I can't win. We got the votes out here, why can't I win? It's simply saying that people won't come out and vote. We have 670,000 black registered voters in this city, and those are votes I need to win this campaign running away? You know how many votes I need? Four hundred and fifty thousand votes and I can walk in. We got 670,000 out here. And we have never argued that we want anything short of a coalition. When you get right down to it, the votes are there. They're here, they're here.

**JOSEPH GARDNER:** It was truly a grassroots campaign in the strict sense of the word. In all of my years of being involved in politics in the City of Chicago, I had never seen such an outpouring of support from people, many of whom had never really been involved in political campaigns. There were teachers for Harold, there were barbers for Harold, beauticians for Harold, taxi cab drivers for Harold.

**NARRATOR:** A Washington win would not come easily. His campaign lost the support of leading Democrats. Jane Byrne was endorsed by Senator Edward Kennedy, a past presidential candidate. Future presidential candidate Walter Mondale endorsed Richard Daley.

**JESSE JACKSON:** Well, there was a sense that we had been abandoned by liberals. If the most progressive liberals, Mondale and Kennedy, had this disregard for what the Chicago Movement meant, we could only change that by becoming their peers. That meant someone had to begin to run against them in the primaries. It is out of that context our fighting for Harold and fighting against liberal contempt, that my own candidacy emerged out of this crucible, out of this process.

**NARRATOR:** Jane Byrne held a commanding lead in the polls. The two weeks before the primary, Washington supporters showed their increasing strength, 15,000 attended this rally. As Washington gained on Jane Byrne, the mayor's advisors proposed a strategy to appeal to white voters.

**JANE BYRNE:** We had to get on TV. The emotion that was really taking place in the black community so that people began to say, "Harold is a real challenge here." So my press secretary made an announcement that I was canceling. To this day I think it was stupid. That I was canceling all my stops in the white community, all of them, and I was going strictly to the black community to shore up my vote with the thought if I went nowhere else, under equal time, they would have to put on what was really happening out there to Jane Byrne when she went into the black community.

**MAN ON MEGAPHONE:** The snow queen has returned to the scene, but not for long. In this building, we're going to punch 29 for ... (inaudible) and punch nine for Harold Washington.

**JANE BYRNE:** I mean, forget it, forget it, you know? Harold, Harold, Harold. And they wanted it on the tube. And that way they thought people would know, okay, that we've got a real race here.

**ROSIE MARS:** I got up one Saturday a week before the election, I was all set to vote for Jane Byrne for mayor. And my radio normally don't be turned to a talk show, but this morning it was on Operation Push. So I was listening to Jesse Jackson speak, and Harold Washington came on the radio. I never saw his face, I didn't know who was running against Jane Byrne or color of skin, and he spoke. So I sit down, he was speaking so clearly and for all of the city and the people, I sit down on the couch and I went to listening to this man speak. And what brought me out of this trance was my burnt biscuits, the biscuits was burning in my oven. And I sent my children to the adult learning center in the next building to get literature on Harold Washington.

**LUTRELLE PALMER:** On election day, I'm in my office and an old man walked in on those walkers. And said, "Could I just rest for a minute?" I said, "Certainly." I said, "Are you on your way to vote?" He said, "Yes." I said, "We'll take you to the polls." You know what that man said? He said, "No, I want to go on my own and vote for that boy."

**NARRATOR:** On February 22nd, 1983, Harold Washington won Chicago's Democratic primary. The grassroots organizing had worked. Seventy-nine percent of the registered black voters went to the polls that day.

**HAROLD WASHINGTON:** You want Harold? You're gonna get him now.

**NARRATOR:** Seven weeks later, Harold Washington was elected Chicago's first black mayor.

**JOSEPH GARDNER:** Many of us have to remember how we were able to elect Harold Washington. We didn't get a popular candidate first, we started talking about issues that were of concern to people throughout the city of Chicago. We built a coalition, we registered people to vote, we had a movement, if you will, that got transformed into a fairly sophisticated political organization. And then we had a candidate who could drive it forward. I think that formula worked in Chicago in '83, it'll work in other major cities around this country if it's followed because I think it's a blueprint for victory.

**MARIAN STAMPS:** The election was about us gaining control of our own community. Real simple. And the night that Mayor Washington was elected, I mean, the people in Cabrini, it was a major celebration.

**NANCY JEFFERSON:** We danced in the street, we danced in the street. We absolutely -- It was the greatest feeling we ever had in life, it just -- Everybody felt empowered.

**ROSIE MARS:** I felt like I was a part of something. He said, "You know, we were making history. You know, so I was a part of it. I was a small person in the corner, wouldn't get the big headlines, but I made it happen."

**NARRATOR:** Many people made the movement happen. Ordinary people who stood up to injustice and inspired others to follow.

**C.T. VIVIAN:** It was a clear engagement between those who wished the fullness of their personalities to be met and those that would destroy us physically and psychologically. You do not walk away from that. This is what movement meant. Movement meant that finally we were encountering on a mass scale the evils that had been destroying us on a mass scale. You do not walk away from that, you continue to answer it.

**NARRATOR:** On the journey to freedom, they won battles that became universal in their meaning.



**MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR:** The decision rendered by the Supreme Court yesterday was a victory. It wasn't merely a victory for 16 million Negroes of America. That was a victory for justice.

**NARRATOR:** In the early 1960s, the battle for justice raged.

**FANNIE LOU HAMER:** Is this America, the land of the free, the home of the brave? To have my life be threatened daily because we want to live as decent human beings in America.

**MALCOLM X:** Our problem is not an American problem, it's a human problem. It's not a Negro problem, it's a problem of humanity. It's not a problem of civil rights, but a problem of human rights.

**NARRATOR:** In the 1970s and '80s, the struggle continued, bringing America closer to the promises it made. Despite the resistance, the movement could not be stopped.

**UNITA BLACKWELL:** 1964, I went to Atlantic City, New Jersey, challenging the regular Democratic Party, fighting to get people to know that we had been denied the democratic process. By 1984, I was asked to speak in the National Democratic Convention in San Francisco.

It's been a long haul, but I have come from the outside to the inside and now to the podium. And that --

I felt tears because Fannie Lou Hamer should have been standing there. She was standing there in us, in me, in Jesse, in all of us.

**JESSE JACKSON:** Our flag is red, white and blue. But our nation is rainbow, red, yellow, brown, black and white, we're all precious in God's sight.

**UNITA BLACKWELL:** That's what I felt. That I was standing there for all who had died, all who will live, all for the generation to come.

**NARRATOR:** In less than two generations, the movement made a beautiful beginning and sent a message to the world.

**ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON:** When the civil rights movement is no longer needed and we ask ourselves, what did it mean, it seems to me the answer will be that it meant something universal. It meant something beyond Chicago and Detroit and Mississippi. Our own freedom is precious and important, but in the end what gives our movement its majesty is the example that's set throughout the world for people of color, and for people who in any way were oppressed and found in that example a reason to hope and strive for a different life.

**GEORGE CLEMENTS:** I'm grateful for anybody, white, black, yellow, red, brown, anybody who's going to do something to stop these people from dying from drugs.

**NARRATOR:** The movement is not yet over, the story is not yet done. America faces new challenges.

**WOMAN IN CHICAGO:** We want to stop the drugs and stop the crime, and we gonna keep on fighting.

**NARRATOR:** They had the courage to stand up and point out the road all of us must travel. Brothers, sisters, children, all the colors of the earth, standing up. Still standing up. Amen.