

WE WANT HAROLD

Inspired by a True Story

Written By

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and
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CHARACTERS

Harold
Sam
Ed Vrdolyak
Conrad Worrill
Jane Byrne
Ed Burke
Lu Palmer
Newscaster
Mary Ella
Paul McGrath
William Harte
Gene
Luis Gutierrez
Buddy
Willie
Roscoe
Slim
Bernie
Judson Miner
Betty
Bill Griffin
Oscar Worrill
Manuel Torres
Marion
Alderman Pucinski
Crowd
Dempsey
Tyrone Kenner
Activist #1
Man In Crowd
Activist #2
Campaign Worker
Don Rose
Man on Platform
Alderman Bloom
Richard Mell
Marilyn
Carol
Frank
Judge Charles Norgle
Nancy Jefferson
Alton
Judge James Murray
Nate Clay
Stage Manager

Gentleman In Car
CTA Worker
Gov. Thompson
US Supreme Court Justice Stevens
Newsguy #1
Granny
Leslie
Newsguy #2
Tim Black
Derrick
Bobby Rush
Walter
District Court Baliff
Producer
Harold Washington Intern
Burton
Doctor
James Hoge
Man In Line
Al Boutte
James Montgomery
Renault
Campaign Worker #1
Alderman Cullerton
Campaign Worker #2
Wilson Frost
Alderman Kelley
Ernest
Jesse Jackson
Roy Washington
Woman In Crowd
Citizen #1
Eugene Sawyer
Jim
Woman on Platform
Citizen #2
Flyer Man
Jorja Palmer
Mittie
Secretary
Allan Streeter
Committeeman
Mr. Snow
Security Guard
Fred Roti
Judge Freeman

TITLE CARD: JEAN BAPTISTE POINT DUSABLE FOUNDED CHICAGO IN 1702.
IT WOULD BE 281 YEARS BEFORE A BLACK MAN WOULD LEAD CHICAGO.
HERE'S HOW IT HAPPENED...

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

HEADLINE: DEC 1976 RICHARD J DALEY DIES

CHICAGO DEFENDER HEADLINE: WILSON FROST LOCKED OUT OF MAYOR'S
OFFICE SUBHEADLINE: BLACKS DEMAND FROST BE ACTING MAYOR

HEADLINE: MICHAEL BILANDIC ELECTED MAYOR

HEADLINE: BLIZZARD BURIES CHICAGO

CHICAGO DEFENDER HEADLINE: CTA SKIPS EL STATIONS IN BLACK
NEIGHBORHOODS

CHICAGO DEFENDER HEADLINE: BILANDIC PLOWS BRIDGEPORT

HEADLINE: 1979 JANE BYRNE ELECTED MAYOR

HEADLINE: JANE BYRNE MOVES INTO CABRINI GREEN

INT. COMMUNITY PROGRESSIVE CHURCH, MAY 1982

LU PALMER, 60 stands at the podium. He has a beard and a full
head of graying hair. There's gray in his beard. He wears a
dashiki. The church is filled with a few hundred people. They
are in the middle of a rally. HAROLD WASHINGTON, 60 sits on the
sanctuary. The crowd cheers.

LU PALMER (V.O.)

We're tired of machine politics. They've
had a stranglehold on this city for far too
long. Remember how they locked Wilson
Frost out of the mayor's office? He was
President Pro Tempore of the city council.
He was supposed to take over when Mayor
Daley died, but they wouldn't let him take
his seat on the 5th floor. They put one
of Daley's lackeys in the position and he
fucked up the snow removal during the
blizzard! Black folks couldn't get their

cars out and then he started towing the cars away! Then we got Jane Byrne. We don't know what in the hell Jane Byrne is doing! Who does she think she's fooling by moving into Cabrini Green? We need a black to run our city! It's our time! You'd think that there aren't any black people living and paying taxes in Chicago. Our money pays for the same streets that white folks drive on!

We've been conducting surveys to see if it was actually possible to run a black candidate for mayor of Chicago. There were several names that came up. Including mine. I withdrew my name. I talked to Manford Byrd and Renault Robinson and they indicated that they weren't interested in running. Margaret Burroughs and Lenora Cartwright said the same. When it came right down to it, there was a clear leader. A man who stood out from the rest of the field. That man...Harold Washington.

The crowd cheers. Harold stands and makes his way to the podium.

HAROLD

Thank you...I am greatly honored and highly appreciative of the opportunity to meet before you today. I consider your invitation here to consider me as a candidate for mayor of the city of Chicago one of the crowning achievements of my career. There is no way in which I can adequately thank you for this honor. I am aware that I ran well in the name-recognition survey you conducted and I would like to believe that those votes were earned. I would like to think that those votes came as a result of my work and productivity in the General Assembly in Springfield. I would like to think that the support of the people came from their knowledge and belief that I have been a servant of the people.

There are a number of fine people who could run for mayor of Chicago. As long as you

have a good plan, it doesn't matter who the man or woman is. If we can come together as a community, we can put a black in the office on the 5th floor. With proper organizing, voter registration, and fundraising whoever we run for mayor can win. It's all in the plan. I'm happy doing my work in Congress, but...

Lu Palmer looks confused as he looks to some of the other organizers. The crowd also looks confused.

HAROLD (CONT'D)

If we're gonna do this, we've got to do this right. The only way I will accept this nomination and run for mayor is if a few conditions are met. We will have to mount a vigorous campaign. We will need at least \$250K in the bank to start and we'll need to register 50K new voters. It's the only way. As a practical politician, I would seek to build a coalition of black and white campaign workers throughout the city. The issue would not be anti-race, but anti-greed and anti-corruption. If these conditions are met, I will gladly accept the nomination and run for mayor of Chicago. Thank you.

Harold walks away. The crowd is rumbling. Lu is confused and talks to another organizer.

MAN IN CROWD

We want Harold! We want Harold! We want Harold!

The rest of the crowd joins in. Harold continues to walk away. Lu catches up to him.

LU PALMER

You hear that Harold? They want you. There's no one else.

HAROLD

I am sure that I or some other politically potent black could enter the mayoral race

and that Black candidate would reshape Chicago politics. Such a candidate would bring a record Black voter registration and would raise the chances of Blacks running in the aldermanic elections coinciding with the mayoral primary next February. That's why I insist that before I run, you register another 50K voters. In the meantime, I gotta get back to Washington.

Harold continues walking.

INT. CHURCH BASEMENT-LATER THAT EVENING

Lu and JORJA PALMER, 52, OSCAR WORRILL 39, TIM BLACK, 64 and ZENOBIA BLACK, 40's and Nate Clay, 46 meet to talk about how to get Harold to commit to running for Mayor.

TIM BLACK

You heard them! They want Harold!

LU PALMER

Man, fuck him!

OSCAR WORRILL

But Harold doesn't want to run.

TIM BLACK

That's not what he said. He said he wanted \$250K in the bank and 50K new voters registered.

NATE CLAY

That's a tall order.

LU PALMER

Fuck him!

TIM BLACK

Lu...

LU PALMER

No, fuck him! We went through all this trouble and interviewed all of these people and everyone said they wanted

Harold and now he's got us jumping through hoops just so that he'll run. Fuck him!

TIM BLACK

It can be done. We'll have to open registration offices all over the city.

NATE CLAY

Even white neighborhoods?!

TIM BLACK

Well, mostly black and Hispanic neighborhoods, but yes, even some white neighborhoods.

NATE CLAY

You think white folks are gonna vote for Harold?

OSCAR WORRILL

I don't think he can win on just the black vote.

TIM BLACK

That's why he wants us to get 50K new registered voters.

TIM BLACK (CONT'D)

Zenobia and I will start looking for places to open registration offices.

JORJA PALMER

We'll start holding classes to educate people on how the political system works and why they need to register and vote. The more they know, the more likely they are to register.

OSCAR WORRILL

Nate and I will start mapping out a plan for hitting neighborhoods.

TIM BLACK

(to Lu)

It'd be really great if you could get the word out on the radio.

Lu gives a disapproving look.

INT. RADIO STATION

Lu Palmer's producer is preparing for Lu to go on the air. Lu enters and sits in front of the microphone.

PRODUCER

You're on in 5-4-3-2...

LU PALMER

Good evening! Thanks for tuning in. Let me perk your ears up with some important information. Black folks have been coming up for some time now, but there's always someone trying to make sure that we don't get too far. But we've got a real chance here to put one of our own downtown on the 5th floor. It's gonna take every single one of us coming together and registering to vote. You hear me? Register to vote! Come Alive October 5! That's right!! Come Alive October 5!

MONTAGE

A young man passes out flyers to passersby at an EL stop. The flyer reads "Politics and you: Understanding the Voting Process"

Oscar Worrill places jars at local grocery stores, barber shops, beauty shops, etc. collecting money for Harold Washington for Mayor

Harold Washington campaigns for Congress

Jorja Palmer stands in a rec room in front of a chalk board with political bullet points. There's a group of about 10 people taking notes.

Someone puts some change in one of the jars. There's very little money in the jar.

A young man passes out more flyers at an EL stop. This flyer reads "Your Voice, your vote"

Another political class. This time there's about 25 people taking notes.

Someone puts change in the jar. There's more money in the jars.

INT. MAYOR BYRNE'S OFFICE

JANE BYRNE, 49 a diminutive woman with a determined look, sits at her desk. DON ROSE, 50, a top adviser sits in a chair across from her. Don is a radical, hippy that despises the machine.

JANE BYRNE

I'm going to remove some people from the school board.

DON ROSE

Why?

JANE BYRNE

I've been urged to do something about the permissive transfer proposal that's on the table.

DON ROSE

By who?

(Jane gives him a look)

The machine?

JANE BYRNE

They made it very clear that this was not something that they'd be on board for.

DON ROSE

So what?

INT. JANE BYRNE'S OFFICE-PREVIOUS DAY

Ed Vrdolyak and Ed Burke sit in the chairs facing the mayor's desk. Jane sits behind her desk.

JANE BYRNE (V.O.)

I told them that this was a matter for the school board and the school board is in support of it. But they don't want black children bussed into white classrooms.

INT. JANE BYRNE OFFICE-DAY

Jane and Don continue their conversation.

JANE BYRNE

They're highly opposed to that. So I have to remove some people.

DON ROSE

Who are you going to remove?

JANE BYRNE

Leon Davis and Michael Scott.

DON ROSE

Who do you have in mind to replace them?

JANE BYRNE

Betty Bonow and Rose Mary Janus

DON ROSE

I take it they also oppose the permissive transfers?

JANE BYRNE

What do you think?

DON ROSE

The citizen review committee won't approve that.

JANE BYRNE

I'm disbanding the review committee. It's not necessary. It makes it look like I can't make competent decisions. I don't need anyone overseeing the appointments I make.

DON ROSE

Don't you think you should at least replace them with other blacks?

JANE BYRNE

I replaced them with women. Still a minority. Besides, I'd have a hard time

finding a couple of blacks who oppose the permissive transfer.

DON ROSE

You're gonna have a hard time getting re-elected without the black vote.

JANE BYRNE

I think I'll be able to come out on top. Blacks are gonna be so pissed that they're bound to put up one of their own for mayor against me. And it's almost a foregone conclusion that Richie Daley is gonna try and dethrone me. They'll split the black vote and I'll take majority white vote and serve another term.

DON ROSE

I hope you're right.

JANE BYRNE

I feel pretty confident.

(changing gears)

I'm going to suggest Thomas Ayers for CPS Board President.

DON ROSE

But they already voted for Rev. Kenneth Smith.

JANE BYRNE

I haven't signed off on it.

DON ROSE

But you're going to, aren't you?

JANE BYRNE

No!

DON ROSE

So you're going to remove blacks from the board, disband the review committee, and not sign off on the person for whom the board voted?

JANE BYRNE

That's right.

Don stands.

DON ROSE

You are digging your political grave. And I'm not so sure that I want to go down with the ship.

Don moves towards the door.

DON ROSE (CONT'D)

I don't think this is the game you want to play.

JANE BYRNE

It's the game I have to play.

DON ROSE

You're cozying up to the same people you defeated to get here. The whole reason why you got elected was because you were anti-machine.

JANE BYRNE

You know how good they are at getting votes. I can't completely alienate them if I hope to get re-elected.

DON ROSE

(gently)

Well, good luck. You're gonna need it.

Don exits.

MONTAGE

Several "man on the street" interviews of people calling Jane Byrne a crazy bitch, she's menopausal, crazy broad, skinny bitch.

INT. HAROLD WASHINGTON APARTMENT

Harold and MARY ELLA, 46 eat dinner. Mary Ella is Harold's girlfriend for 16 years. She's an intellectual and politically savvy.

HAROLD

I don't want to be mayor of Chicago. There's a hierarchy to these things. I went from the IL congress to the IL Senate to US Congressman. Being mayor would be a step down.

MARY ELLA

Nobody said you had to be mayor. They're just saying that if Chicago were to elect a black mayor, it should be you.

HAROLD

There are a lot of fine candidates to choose from.

MARY ELLA

But they don't want to run.

HAROLD

They're trying to railroad me.

MARY ELLA

You'd probably win.

HAROLD

What do you mean? You siding with them?

MARY ELLA

I'm just saying that they're looking for somebody just like you to take on the machine.

HAROLD

It doesn't have to be me. It's really about launching a grassroots campaign.

MARY ELLA

Right. Mobilizing the black community, door to door canvassing...

HAROLD

It would be good to take down the machine though. Jane Byrne threw a wrench into their gears. They were heavily damaged by her win. Another defeat and the machine could die.

MARY ELLA

Exactly.

HAROLD

They'll fight tooth and nail to hang onto what's left. White folks don't let go of power willingly. They're not going down easily.

MARY ELLA

If anyone can destroy the machine, it's you.

HAROLD

I'm not interested in taking on the machine. I left that mess behind me years ago. Being in Congress keeps me far away from trouble.

MARY ELLA

Does it? Remember when Jane Byrne tried to use the machine to eliminate a US Congressman?

HAROLD

Of course I do. They tried to eliminate a congressional seat by gerrymandering the wards and convincing a judge that the population had dropped enough to warrant it. They forgot that white flight had caused there to be a huge drop in the white population so there was no basis for their map. We drew one that was fair to us and the judge accepted that one instead. I know she was pissed about that.

MARY ELLA

Mmmhmm...so you see, you're not really free from the bullshit of the machine even in Washington.

HAROLD

I suppose you're right, but I've got
business with Reagan...

MARY ELLA

(jumping in)

And as mayor you could keep closer tabs on
them to prevent them from trying to regain
power. You could really be the end of the
machine.

HAROLD

You sound like you're really trying to
convince me to run for mayor.

MARY ELLA

You are your own man. You'll do what you
think is best.

Mary Ella continues to eat. Harold ponders what she's said.

INT. UNDERGROUND HEADQUARTERS FOR NAT'L BLACK UNITED FRONT

Several people are milling about. CONRAD WORRILL, 41 reads a
newspaper. Conrad is the founder of the NBUF, a radical
activist. He wears an army jacket with a black beret.

CONRAD

I'm so damned tired of these white folks.
She wants to put that rich white man in as
president of the CPS! What in the hell
does he know about what our schools need?!

ACTIVIST #2

And she removed all the blacks from the
board.

CONRAD

Except for Rev. Kenneth Smith.

ACTIVIST #1

That man doesn't stand a chance with all
them white folks.

CONRAD

Blacks make up 40% of students in Chicago Public Schools so we should hold at least 7 seats on the school board. And the president should be black!

ACTIVIST #1

Can we do anything to stop her?

CONRAD

We need to find something on this guy.

ACTIVIST #2

He's the retired CEO of ComEd.

ACTIVIST #1

Maybe he's taken a bribe.

ACTIVIST #2

Or maybe he's cheating on his wife.

CONRAD

Yeah...you know all them rich guys have a lady on the side and they usually have an apartment set up for them. See what you can find out.

The two activists are downtown at the county clerk's office looking through files. They find some information and write it down.

CONRAD (CONT'D) (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Check the recorder of deeds downtown. Look for multiple properties in his name or his wife's name or even his kids' names. If you find any, take note of their location and stake out the property. See who comes and goes.

The two activists watch an apartment building. While they are there, Jane Byrne exits the building and enters a limousine. They are intrigued.

ACTIVIST #2

You don't think he's sleeping with the mayor, do you?!

Activist #1 shrugs. He writes notes in his notebook.

CONRAD (V.O.)

Also, see where he goes after work. Does he go out for drinks? Who does he meet? Find out everything you can about this guy.

Thomas Ayers gets out of a cab and walks into a downtown bar. The two activists are watching him.

CONRAD (CONT'D) (V.O.) (CONT'D)

If he's meeting with anyone shady or suspect, it may be enough to get him disqualified from the CPS board.

INT. UNDERGROUND HEADQUARTERS FOR BLACK UNITED FUND - DAY

CONRAD

Let's see what we can find.

The activists exit.

MONTAGE

Tim Black sets up a mobile registration unit.

Oscar illustrates points on a map to Tim, Zenobia and Nate.

Zenobia talks to a landlord. She hands him keys.

Someone puts change into a jar. It's much more full now.

INT. CITY COUNCIL HALLWAY

A crowd stands outside the chamber doors.

CITIZEN #1

OK, everyone! We're here to let Mayor Byrne know how we feel! She can't just disregard our needs! We helped her get elected!

ALL

Yeah!!!

CITIZEN #1

She promised to put blacks in key positions
and she pulls this bullshit?

ALL
That's right!

CITIZEN #1
Let's go in and spread out in the gallery.
We've got to have voices coming from all
sides. OK? Let's go!

She goes up the chamber doors, but they are locked.

CITIZEN #1 (CONT'D)
The doors are locked and the meeting is
about to start. What's going on?!

The crowd starts murmuring. They bang on the door. A security
guard comes out.

SECURITY GUARD
Alright! Alright! Listen up! Mayor Byrne
has closed this session of city council.

The crowd starts grumbling.

CITIZEN #1
What?! She can't do that!

SECURITY GUARD
She can and she did. Now go home.

CITIZEN #2
These meetings are supposed to be open to
the public.

SECURITY GUARD
The mayor reserves the right to close
meetings to the public. And you're the
public so goodbye!

The security guard goes back into the council chambers and
closes the door. The crowd stands there in shock and then they
hear the chamber door lock.

CITIZEN #1

Well ain't that a bitch!

INT. UNDERGROUND HEADQUARTERS NAT'L BLACK UNITED FRONT-NIGHT

Conrad and others are going over some paperwork. The two activists burst through the door.

ACTIVIST #1
Dr. Worrill! We've got something!

CONRAD
Whatchu got?

ACTIVIST #2
Thomas Ayers has a condo in the same building as Jane Byrne.

CONRAD
So?

ACTIVIST #1
He doesn't live there. He doesn't even live in the city. He's registered to vote in Rolling Meadows.

ACTIVIST #2
And his kids go to private school.

CONRAD
I knew that motherfucker didn't belong here! I knew it!

Conrad picks up the phone and dials.

CONRAD (CONT'D)
Hello, Judson? Listen, draw up some paperwork. Thomas Ayers can't be CPS board president because he lives in Rolling Meadows! We're taking the city to court!

Hangs up.

CONRAD (CONT'D)
That motherfucker!

INT. DERRICK HILL SUNDAY MORNING LIVE TALK SHOW

DERRICK HILL, 30 interviews Jesse Jackson

DERRICK

If you're just joining us, we're speaking with the Rev. Jesse Jackson about Mayor Byrne and her proposed appointments at the CHA and CPS boards. Rev. Jackson, in your opinion, what will be the ramifications of Mayor Byrne's appointments.

JESSE JACKSON

Well, Derrick, with Jane Byrne it's business as usual. She claims to have an interest in helping the black community, but she's only looking out for her own much like the Daley machine did.

DERRICK

But you supported her in the election.

JESSE JACKSON

I did and she was elected in large part because of the black community. But she turned her back on us at the first opportunity.

DERRICK

What would you like to see from the Mayor?

JESSE JACKSON

I'd like to see her live up to her campaign promises. She claimed to be anti-machine and really appealed to the black community. We have been left out of patronage jobs for decades. She promised to put blacks in key positions and she's proven that that was just lip service.

DERRICK

Good point. Let's take a caller. We've got Leslie on the phone. Go ahead Leslie. You're on with Rev. Jackson.

LESLIE (V.O.)

Hey, Derrick! Love the show. Hey, Rev. Jackson.

JESSE JACKSON
Good morning, Leslie.

DERRICK
What's on your mind?

LESLIE (V.O.)
Mayor Byrne has a lot of nerve! She ain't got no right to lock folks out of the council meetings. If she can do that, then we should boycott her Chicago Fest.

JESSE JACKSON
Leslie, you might be on to something. The way to send the mayor a strong message is to boycott her baby, Chicago Fest. In fact, I'm going to tear my tickets up right now.

Jesse reaches in his pocket and takes out the "tickets" and rips them in half.

DERRICK
I'm with you Rev. Jackson.

Derrick takes out "tickets" and rips them in half.

DERRICK (CONT'D)
Thank you caller, for your comments. We urge all of you to tear up your Chicago Fest tickets if you got 'em. If you don't got 'em, don't get 'em. The official boycott is on!

INT. BARBER SHOP

ROSCOE JENKINS, 60 and BUDDY, 59 sit in their usual seats. GENE, 56 and WILLIE, 50 have customers in their chairs. Roscoe is a loudmouthed, know it all in overalls and a button up shirt. Buddy is a quiet, simple man. They are regulars in the barbershop. Gene and Willie have been in business together for 25 years. Gene is an even tempered, educated man. Willie isn't educated, but he's not dumb.

ROSCOE

I told y'all not to vote for that white woman! She was on some bullshit from the get go!

BUDDY

She promised to do right by black folks.

ROSCOE

Yeah, so that your dumbass would vote for her.

BUDDY

Are you gonna go to ChicagoFest?

ROSCOE

Hell no! And not because Jesse Jackson said not to go!

WILLIE

Why aren't you going?

ROSCOE

Because that crackerfest ain't gonna benefit nobody but white folks.

GENE

There's gonna be black vendors at the festival.

WILLIE

And black music artists.

ROSCOE

Hmpf. That don't mean shit! She has some nerve tryin' to put that white man in charge of the public schools and then lock the public out when they want to confront her on it?

GENE

Ayers was a good friend to Dr. King and has fought for the black community.

ROSCOE

Whoopdi doo!

GENE

Dr. King trusted him and that's good enough for me. I'm sure he'll do fine.

ROSCOE

Why y'all worship Dr. King? Malcolm wouldn't have trusted him. He would've kept an eye on him, and they wouldn't have been friends.

GENE

Some folks have filed a lawsuit to stop the appointment.

ROSCOE

Did you know that the board voted for Rev. Kenneth Smith, but the mayor wouldn't sign off on it?

BUDDY

I didn't know that.

ROSCOE

That's because you ain't as informed as I am. I know shit. I stay on top of shit.

BUDDY

You do know a lot of shit.

ROSCOE

Damned right I do! I told y'all not to vote for her. Hmpf. Next time y'all listen to me!

INT. JANE BYRNE'S OFFICE - DAY

PAUL MCGRATH, 45 sits in a chair across from Jane's desk. Jane leans on the corner of the desk.

JANE BYRNE

Do you have the numbers from ChicagoFest?

PAUL MCGRATH

There was a total of 1.4 million people who attended this year.

JANE BYRNE

I'd call that a success! That means we had about 100,000 people there per day.

PAUL MCGRATH

It sounds good, but I'm afraid the boycott really hurt us. The numbers are good, but not good enough. We lost...some money.

JANE BYRNE

How much?

PAUL MCGRATH

About \$7 million.

JANE BYRNE

\$7 million?! How the fuck did we lose that much?!

INT. STEVIE WONDER'S STUDIO

(MOS) Stevie is sitting at the piano. His manager walks in and says something to him. Stevie shakes his head. His manager turns and leaves.

PAUL MCGRATH (V.O.)

Well, there were several artists that we had lined up like Stevie Wonder. He alone would have increased that day's total by an estimated 50K or more. But he dropped out.

INT. ARETHA FRANKLIN'S HOUSE

(MOS) Aretha walks into the room and picks up the phone. She listens for a moment and then shakes her head. She hangs up and dials. She tells the person on other end "hell no."

PAUL MCGRATH

Then we had Aretha Franklin to replace him which would have brought an equal number of people to the fest, but she found out she was replacing Stevie and why and she backed out.

JANE BYRNE (V.O.)

Not all the black artists cancelled. We had some that performed, right?

EXT. CHICAGO FEST STAGE

(MOS) Earth, Wind and Fire stand on stage wearing black armbands. The lead singer holds his fist up in black power.

PAUL MCGRATH (V.O.)

Yes, Earth, Wind and Fire performed, but they did so in protest. They wore black armbands.

JANE BYRNE (V.O.)

Christ!

PAUL MCGRATH (V.O.)

And then with all of the black food vendors that pulled out...

MONTAGE

A black vendor rips up his contract.

Another vendor rips up his contract.

Another vendor rips up his contract.

Leon rips up his ChicagoFest contract.

JANE BYRNE

Hold on, Leon honored his contract.

INT. LEON'S BBQ

(MOS) Jesse Jackson talks to Leon.

PAUL MCGRATH (V.O.)

Yes, only after Jesse Jackson assured him that there wouldn't be any retaliation at his restaurants. But the other vendors stayed out in protest.

PAUL MCGRATH (CONT'D) (V.O.) (CONT'D)

The black community stayed home and the ones who didn't formed a picket line at the entrance.

EXT. CHICAGO FEST-NAVY PIER DAY

A very large picket line has formed outside the festival. Some people are talking to families who are approaching the entrance. They speak to them for a few moments and then the families turn away.

PAUL MCGRATH

Only about 1% of black people showed up. With all of that, it's estimated that the ChicagoFest lost about \$7 million.

Actually...

(opening a folder)

\$7,156,689 to be exact.

INT. JANE BYRNE'S OFFICE-DAY

JANE BYRNE

Son of a bitch!

INT. RADIO STATION

Lu Palmer takes to the airwaves.

LU PALMER

Thank you for tuning in. I have faith, y'all. I have faith that y'all are gonna make this happen. You are gonna come alive Oct 5 and register to vote. I can't impress upon you enough the importance of getting out there to vote. Your vote is your voice. Make it count. My wife Jorja and I are still offering classes on the weekends about the political process. These classes are free. Sign up. Come out. Register to vote. Come alive Oct 5!

INT. HAROLD WASHINGTON APARTMENT

Mary Ella and Harold eat dinner. Harold is reading a book.

MARY ELLA

Do you think you could put down that book long enough to finish your dinner?

Harold closes the book.

HAROLD

Of course. I'm sorry. You know, Reaganomics is hurting black folks at a disproportionate rate. I'm trying to find the best way to bridge the gap between them and us. I'm going to introduce a bill that will satisfy their need to protect their tax shelters and provide enough funds for social services.

MARY ELLA

What if you're mayor of Chicago?

HAROLD

Are you gonna start that mess with me again?

MARY ELLA

I'm just saying that the black community is on fire right now. If there was a time for a black mayor, now would be it.

HAROLD

Everyone's pressuring me. Renault Robinson's got the newspapers writing op-eds about the possibility. Jesse Jackson keeps hanging around. You'd think there wasn't another black person capable of running.

MARY ELLA

No one like you.

Harold gives her a look.

MARY ELLA (CONT'D)

It's true. You could be the one to unite this city. It's so divided after Daley's patronage politics, Bilandic's disaster with the blizzard and now Jane Byrne.

HAROLD

Jane Byrne used that bullshit with Bilandic to get blacks to vote for her. The mishandling of the streets being cleared, the CTA trains bypassing black neighborhoods to pick up the white folks, ticketing cars in black neighborhoods who couldn't get their cars moved because of the snow. Bilandic was probably the worst that could've happened to this city. Definitely the worst to happen to the black community. Then Jane Byrne came along and promised to include blacks for the first time and blacks bought it. Oh, she's put a few blacks in key positions, kept them there long enough for blacks to get comfortable and then snatched the rug out from under them.

MARY ELLA

The ChicagoFest boycott hit her where it counts though.

HAROLD

Not enough to make her act right.

MARY ELLA

Which is exactly why Chicago needs a mayor like you.

HAROLD

Listen, Ronald Reagan has been cutting social services programs, increased defense spending including nuclear weapons, and has been trying to dismantle the 1965 voting rights act. I can't effectively fight for these things as mayor. I need to be in Congress.

MARY ELLA

You have friends in Congress, don't you?

HAROLD

Yeah...

MARY ELLA

You'll still keep in contact with them,
won't you?

HAROLD

Yeah...

MARY ELLA

And you'll still be able to negotiate with
them on important issue, won't you?

Harold gets where she's going, but doesn't say anything.

MARY ELLA (CONT'D)

So you can still work your magic with the
other congressmen. You can write bills or
help them write bills and negotiate with
the other side. You can still be
effective in Washington AND run the city
of Chicago.

Harold isn't convinced.

INT. A CHURCH

Harold is campaigning for Congress. He stands at the podium
speaking to a crowd of around 100 people

HAROLD

It's not been a secret that I broke away
from the Democratic machine some time ago.
I've operated as an independent while
running on the Democratic ticket. But
make no mistake, I was elected to Congress
because the people are sick and tired of
the Ronald Reagan's of the world who
continue to give us scraps and expect us
to keep voting them into office. We can
only take so much before we wake up.
Reaganomics is the reason for the
joblessness across the nation. We are here
today to renew an effort that was at its
apex under the leadership of Dr. Martin
Luther King. An effort to bring human
rights to all the people of the nation.
That effort is being eroded by Reagan and
the few. We are here today to renew that

spirit for a government that works for all of the people and that spirit is growing right here in Chicago.

The crowd cheers.

INT. HAROLD WASHINGTON CONGRESSIONAL OFFICE

Harold sits at his desk. Lu Palmer and Oscar Worrill knock.

HAROLD

Come in.

Lu and Oscar enter and walk over to Harold's desk. Oscar lays papers in front of him. Harold picks up the papers and peruses them.

HAROLD (CONT'D)

100K new voters? \$250K in the bank...You didn't rob nobody, did you?

(They both give him a look)

Well, I guess I'm running for mayor.

INT. BETHEL AME CHURCH

There's a rally going on! The church is filled with about 200 people. Harold sits on the stage. Also on the stage is Jesse Jackson 40. JAMES MONTGOMERY, 53 (black) stands at the podium.

JAMES MONTGOMERY

Thank you all for coming out this evening. This is a truly momentous occasion. We finally have a black candidate for mayor of Chicago.

Crowd cheers.

JAMES MONTGOMERY (CONT'D)

Let me just tell you a little bit about this man in case you don't know...He earned a BA in political science from Roosevelt University and a JD from Northwestern University School of Law. After his father died, he became precinct captain in the 3rd ward Democratic organization. He served

terms in both the IL State House of
Representatives and the IL State Senate...

As the speech trails off, Harold goes into deep thought.

FLASHBACK

MONTAGE

Harold walks into his father's law office with his law degree.
His father greets him with a handshake and a hug.

Harold and his father walk the 3rd ward. A neighbor walks up
and talks with them

Harold and his father talk about the voting process in Roy's
office.

ROY WASHINGTON

Being in politics is a 24/7
operation...You gotta get out and talk to
the people. Get them to register. Get them
to volunteer. When you hold office, you're
a public servant. Listen to what they're
saying and try to do the best for the most
people. You can't please everyone, but if
people get the feeling that you have their
best interest at heart, they're more likely
to hear you out. But never forget that you
work for the people.

BACK TO PRESENT

JAMES MONTGOMERY

And he fought for a state holiday to
recognize Martin Luther King Jr. It is with
great pleasure that I introduce to you the
next mayor of Chicago, Harold Washington!

Crowd cheers. Harold stands and makes his way to the podium.

HAROLD

Thank you...There is no way in which I can
adequately thank you for this
honor...Chicago is a divided city.
Chicago is a city where its citizens are

treated unequally and unfairly. Each year, in the last decade, we have lost 11,500 jobs, 3500 housing units and nearly 36,000 people. Since 1955, women, Latinos, Blacks, youth and progressive whites have been left out of the Chicago government. Our businesses are failing at the highest rate since the Depression, in part from high interest rates, and the only answer city government provides is fat consultant contracts for a few politically connected firms and jobs for a few patronage workers. We have a school system that does not educate, in which students continue to lag behind the rest of the country in tests of reading and math ability.

WOMAN IN CROWD

You're like the second coming!!

MAN IN CROWD

Tell 'em Mr. Mayor!!

The crowd cheers. Harold quiets the crowd and then continues his speech.

HAROLD

We have a continuing crime problem in the city. We no longer have dependable housing in the city. The "city that works" doesn't work anymore. City services cost more than in any other city in America. We have one of the highest infant mortality rates in the country and traffic appears to be permanently snarled. We have these terrible problems in Chicago because leadership has not striven for unity. Instead, it has perpetuated outdated politics and pie-in-the-sky financing...I have compassion for the terrible plight of our people and a vision for its future. I honestly believe that out of the other candidates, I am the only one that can rebuild Chicago by rallying Chicagoans to create a city in which every individual will receive his or her full measure of

dignity. I see a Chicago of compassion, where the sick can be cured and where no one is overtaxed on property and burdened with other hidden taxes. All other candidates who will be running will perpetuate politics as usual...I would prefer not to run, but there is a sense of urgency which moves me...Chicago can only be rebuilt if all the people of Chicago and her leaders work together. I have heard the earnest pleas of thousands of people to enter the race. This campaign will be built on the premise that the citizens from every part of Chicago want and deserve fairness, excellence and accountability in city government. Together we can move forward into the future with new vision and a new mutual respect among the fellowship of men and women throughout this great city. Therefore, I will run this race and I will be the next mayor of the city of Chicago!! Thank you.

Crowd goes wild. They start cheering "We want Harold! We Want Harold!" Harold leaves the podium and shakes hands with the people.

INT. HAROLD WASHINGTON CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS

SAM PATCH, 48 a political strategist talks to Harold about the campaign. He is tall with a youthful look.

SAM

Even with the voter registration drive, we're still gonna need a good deal of the white vote. And we're gonna need a solid team to move this campaign forward.

HAROLD (V.O.)

Fortunately, we did most of the legwork when I ran for mayor the first time in 1977. We recruited staff, trained them, and then kept them working through my run for Congress. Jacky has done a great job recruiting and organizing the volunteers. We've got a strong volunteer list working every aspect of the campaign.

INT. A CAMPAIGN OFFICE

JACKY GRIMSHAW, 36 talks to 5 volunteers. She's holding a clipboard and instructing them on their duties.

SAM (V.O.)

We're going to need effective television and print ads. We need to persuade white folks and provoke blacks and Hispanics. We need people who can make commercials that get attention. I recommend Marilyn Katz and Bill Zimmerman. They're about the best in the business.

INT. A CAMPAIGN OFFICE

Marilyn Katz, 42 and Bill Zimmerman, 42 work with some people on the computer to craft a commercial.

HAROLD (V.O.)

Also, we need someone who knows computers. I want to create a database to collect voter names and addresses. We'll need to keep a running total of all the registered voters. This will be invaluable in the future as we move into the computer age. This will help when we're on the ground in knowing where we need to go to register new voters.

INT. A CAMPAIGN OFFICE

KAMAU, 35 sits at a computer inputting names. A campaign worker walks up and lays a large stack of papers on the desk next to the computer.

INT. HAROLD WASHINGTON CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS

SAM

And then of course, most importantly, we need someone to organize the entire on the ground campaign. This is going to be a grassroots effort. Door to door. Hand to hand. We need someone who knows the community, is respected and knows how to

rally the troops. It won't hurt if they're kind of radical.

HAROLD

I'm counting on you. You're damn good at what you do.

SAM

I'd like to think that you had something to do with that.

HAROLD

I remember when you first came to me. Remember that?

SAM

Do I? I never worked so hard in my life! You had me passing out literature until 2 in the morning!

HAROLD

You should've seen the look on your face when I told you that we weren't through for the night.

SAM

You had me working until 6 am!

HAROLD

I told you to go home and get some rest and be back here by 9 o'clock.

SAM

I almost didn't come back!

HAROLD

I know you didn't... But when you did, I knew that you understood what politics was all about and the kind of commitment it takes. That's why I know you'll see us through to the end.

Harold pats Sam on the shoulder and exits.

EXT. CHICAGO CITY STREET

A group of Black folks stand under the EL tracks listening to Conrad Worrill who speaks on a bullhorn. Sam walks up and stands in the crowd listening.

CONRAD

The gov't ain't for us! The gov't owes us! They've been trying to fool us with that separate but equal bullshit far too long! There ain't nothing equal about our school system. There ain't nothing equal about housing. You know why our school system is underfunded? Because our tax dollars fund each neighborhood's schools. So if you live in a poor neighborhood with low taxes, your schools will be underfunded. We must fight this racist ideology and demand a more equitable distribution of funds. This country was built on the backs of our ancestors, but we can't get a piece of the pie or a seat at the table. Reparations now or we take back what is rightfully ours!!

Cheers from the crowd. Conrad moves through the crowd shaking hands.

EXT. CHICAGO CITY STREET-CONTINUOUS

The crowd disperses and Sam walks up to Conrad.

CONRAD

What's happening, brotha?!

They embrace.

SAM

Great speech.

CONRAD

Thank you. You thinking about joining the movement?

SAM

I'm in a movement of my own. I'm working for Harold Washington's campaign for mayor.

CONRAD

Hmpf...

SAM

It's time for a black mayor. We need someone like you for the campaign.

CONRAD

Fuck that! I'm not trying to work within the system. I'm trying to overthrow the whole goddamn, racist system!

SAM

Baby steps, Conrad. Let's get Harold elected first and then lets see what we can get changed.

Conrad gives Sam a look.

INT. HAROLD WASHINGTON CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS

Conrad sits in front of Harold looking none too pleased. They are staring at each other.

HAROLD

Well..?

CONRAD

The only way I will organize on your behalf is if you include a few things on your platform.

HAROLD

OK...what?

CONRAD

Reparations...

Harold just looks at Conrad.

CONRAD (CONT'D)

Overthrow Apartheid...

HAROLD

Mmmhmm...

CONRAD

And free all black political prisoners.

HAROLD

Are you a goddamn fool?!

CONRAD

What?!

HAROLD

I can't run on a controversial platform like that!

CONRAD

Look, someone needs to be talking about these issues. They murdered Fred, they locked up the rest of the Black Panthers! You know it ain't right. Why won't you talk about it?

HAROLD

That's far too controversial for white folks. I can't get elected talking about shit like that!

CONRAD

You've got a spotlight. You can get them to take these issues seriously. You've got a good record with white folks. This is the time and you are the one to do it.

HAROLD

You're wasting my damn time! I'm trying to get elected mayor! I got shit to do!

Conrad gets up to leave.

CONRAD

Fine. You're making a goddamn mistake if you don't get our people reparations!

HAROLD

Get the fuck outta here!

CONRAD
You know they owe us!

HAROLD
I said get out!

Conrad slams the door shut. After a few seconds he pops his head back in.

CONRAD
If you change your mind, you know where to find me.

HAROLD
Get out!

Sam walks in.

SAM
What happened?

HAROLD
That sonofabitch wanted me to run on a platform of reparations and freeing all black political prisoners! He's a goddamned fool!

SAM
I don't know what to say. He's knows the community and knows how to rally the troops.

HAROLD
I wasted my goddamned time on that fucker! Now find me someone who ain't batshit crazy!

Sam exits quickly.

RADIO STATION

Lu Palmer sits in front of a microphone. Intro music plays. A man, his producer, signals Lu to start.

LU PALMER

Welcome to Lu's Notebook. Ladies and gentlemen, now is the time! We have ourselves a black candidate to become the next mayor of Chicago. Harold Washington is our man! It will be an uphill battle, but if we come out in droves to the polls, we shall see in '83! You hear that! We shall see in '83!!!

MONTAGE

Harold stands at a podium speaking to a group of people in a church basement.

Campaign workers walk the streets.

Campaign workers are on the phones. Jacky is directing one of the phone people.

Harold walks the streets talking to constituents. He is followed by a crowd of people.

Harold speaks to a group of people in a meeting room.

Jorja teaches a class of about 40 people.

INT. HAROLD WASHINGTON CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS

Conrad Worrill sits in a chair across from Harold. Sam stands to the side of the desk, but in between the two as if he's mediating.

SAM

Conrad has agreed to organize the ground campaign.

HAROLD

He better not be talking about reparations!

CONRAD

If you don't, who's going to?!

HAROLD

You're still a goddamed fool!

They argue for a few moments.

SAM
Alright! Alright!

They stop arguing.

SAM (CONT'D)
He won't talk about reparations on the
campaign trail...
(to Conrad) will you?

CONRAD
No.

HAROLD
He best not.

SAM
We're gonna talk strategy and get started.

HAROLD
The last time I ran was mostly symbolic.
I needed to prove to black Chicago that we
could make a decent showing. Give them
hope. We need to organize on the ground.
We need to provoke people to get out and
vote so we have to be on the ground every
single day.

CONRAD
I know that!

HAROLD
Well, you better get started.

CONRAD
Yes sir!

Conrad gets up and walks towards the door.

HAROLD
That fucker better not talk about
reparations!

CONRAD

(as he's walking out the door)
I heard that!

Conrad closes the door.

INT. MEETING ROOM

Oscar Worrill, Conrad Worrill, Lu Palmer and Sam Patch discuss strategy.

SAM

The key to this is going to be getting white voters on board. He's going to have to have at least 75% of the black vote and 10% of the white vote along with 15% of Hispanics and Asians.

LU PALMER

That's gonna be a challenge. There were plenty of black folks that hadn't registered, but it's gonna be hard to find white folks who aren't registered.

CONRAD

Damn right it is!

SAM

We need to focus on people who've never voted before, just like we did in the black neighborhoods. Do the same in the Hispanic and Asian neighborhoods.

LU PALMER

Damn! I feel like we registered everyone we could during his first run for mayor and when he ran for Congress. And then we had to get 100K more so that he'd run for mayor. You know this nigga's really getting on my nerves.

OSCAR WORRILL

That's why we need to reach out to the Hispanic and Asian communities, too.

LU PALMER

So how are we gonna find white folks to register?

SAM

I know some people on the north side who can help.

INT. POWER OFFICES-DAY

Sam and Conrad talk to SLIM COLEMAN 40's and NANCY JEFFERSON,
38

SLIM

We just got approved for a plan that will give us access to more potential voters. When Gov. Thompson cut the general assistance grants, Nancy formed POWER: People Organized for Welfare and Employment Rights. The state legislators showed us no respect since most of the people on public assistance aren't registered voters. We asked ourselves "How could we register the most new voters?"

NANCY JEFFERSON

So I said, "The public aid office." It's the one place we know they'll be every month.

SLIM

We asked to set up tables at the public assistance offices and register people when they came to sign for their checks.

INT. BOARD OF ELECTION

Slim talks to a commissioner. The commissioner shakes his head.

SLIM (V.O.)

The Board of Election Commission wouldn't go for it.

INT. ADLAI STEVENSON'S CAMPAIGN OFFICE

Slim talks to JOE NOVAK. Joe nods his head.

SLIM (V.O.)

So we went to Joe Novak who was running Adlai Stevenson's campaign and told him we found a way to get a lot of new voters for the election. So of course he was sold.

INT. ED VRDOLYAK OFFICE

Joe Novak talks to Ed. Ed nods. Ed picks up the phone and dials.

SLIM (V.O.)

He in turn talked to Ed Vrdolyak who got the commissioners to cooperate.

SAM

Vrdolyak got them to cooperate?!

SLIM

Not all poor people vote Republican.

EXT. PUBLIC AID OFFICE

2 workers sit at a table talking to people as they come to the office. One stops and hears the pitch and then picks up a clipboard and registers.

NANCY JEFFERSON (V.O.)

Right. And now we've got 2 voter registrars outside of each public aid office. There are 110K plus public aid recipients. If we could register just 1/2 of them, that's 55K!

INT. HAROLD WASHINGTON CONGRESSIONAL OFFICE-DAY

Sam Patch, Oscar Worrill, Conrad and Tim and Zenobia Black discuss where campaign offices need to be set up.

SAM

We've opened up an office specifically for the campaign on 47th St. We'll need satellite offices in every corner of the city. We'll also need an office downtown.

CONRAD
Who's gonna work in that office?

SAM
What do you--what do you mean?

CONRAD
(emphasizing every syllable)
Who is going to work in that office?

SAM
(hesitantly)
Well, we've got Tom Coffey and Wayne Whalen...

CONRAD
What are they? The Honky Caucus?!

SAM
They're part of the strategy group that's gonna...

CONRAD
I ain't working with no crackers on this campaign!

SAM
Come on Conrad...

CONRAD
I mean it! We'll do what we do on 47th St and they can do what they do downtown.

SAM
Fine, whatever. Can I continue?

Conrad gestures for him to continue.

EXT. WEST SIDE CAMPAIGN OFFICE

Oscar hands a check to the landlord and the landlord hands him keys.

SAM (V.O.)
We need an office in Garfield Park and Humboldt Park. If we situate an office

between North and South Lawndale we can hit both the black and Hispanic communities. On the north side, we may have a little more trouble finding someone to rent us office space and it's going to cost more. So Slim's gonna help us out and secure offices on our behalf.

EXT. NORTHSIDE CAMPAIGN OFFICE

Slim Coleman talks to a man outside a building. Slim hands him a check and the man hands him keys.

INT. HAROLD WASHINGTON CONGRESSIONAL OFFICE - DAY

SAM

Any questions?
(no answer)
OK, let's get busy!

Oscar, Tim and Zenobia exit. Conrad lingers behind giving Sam a disapproving look. Sam catches him and Conrad shakes his head then leaves.

INT. MAYOR'S OFFICE

Jane Byrne talks with Paul McGrath who sits in a chair in front of her desk. Jane paces as she speaks.

JANE BYRNE

Didn't I tell you they'd put up one of their own? I knew it! I'm not worried about it. I may have lost the black vote, but I've still got the white vote.

PAUL MCGRATH

Not the Lakefront Liberals.

JANE BYRNE

Who says?

PAUL MCGRATH

They've always opposed how the machine does business, and you've been working a little too closely with Vrdolyak and Burke. They're not gonna like that.

JANE BYRNE

Come on, Paul. What choice did I have? I can't govern the city unless I cut deals with them. I have no friends in the council. I bark orders from the 5th floor and nobody listens.

PAUL MCGRATH

All they're gonna see is that you're working with the machine. And that's going to harm your re-election chances.

JANE BYRNE

I took on the machine and beat them. That's what they're going to remember. Besides there are plenty of people who still owe a debt to the machine. They've got good jobs, nice homes and clean streets and that's because of the machine.

PAUL MCGRATH

I hope you're right.

JANE BYRNE

(unconvinced)

Of course I am!

INT. HAROLD WASHINGTON 47TH ST CAMPAIGN OFFICE

Harold talks with a campaign worker. FRANK LEE, 32 a black police officer walks up. A group of three black police officers look on.

HAROLD

Conrad needs a list of places we haven't canvassed yet. Print one out for him.

CAMPAIGN WORKER

Yes sir.

The campaign worker walks off.

FRANK

Congressman Washington?

HAROLD

Yes.

FRANK

Frank Lee of the Afro-American Patrolman's League.

HAROLD

Nice to meet you. How can I help you?

FRANK

Well, Congressman, we're here to help you. I and a few of my fellow officers have agreed to provide security detail for you during your campaign.

HAROLD

Security detail? I didn't ask for any security.

FRANK

Yes, sir, but it might get kind of tough for you campaigning...you know sometimes white folks... We just want to...

HAROLD

Hold up...I ain't worried about that. If they're going to do something best they just do it to me. It'll make things difficult for you with those white police officers.

FRANK

We don't care about that. Just being a member of the Afro American Patrolman's league makes us a target.

HAROLD

And you don't need another reason to be a target.

FRANK

But sir...

HAROLD

I mean it. Now go on...I appreciate it, but really I don't need security.

Harold turns and leaves. Frank walks over to the other officers.

INT. TELEVISION NEWSROOM

The newsroom is busy with activity. Newsguy #2 sits at his desk.

NEWSGUY #1

The mayor is giving a couple of speeches later this week.

NEWSGUY #2

I'm covering Richard Daley's speech in Bridgeport.

NEWSGUY #1

Harold Washington has quite a few speaking engagements. Is anyone covering those?

NEWSGUY #2

Why? He'll probably be late or won't show up at all. Besides, no one's going to vote for a black mayor.

INT. CHURCH HALL

Harold gives a speech to a group of people. Mostly black people, but a few white people in the audience.

HAROLD

I appreciate the opportunity to talk to you today. There's a lot of work to be done. When I become mayor, it will not be business as usual on the 5th floor. There will be a lot of changes that some people aren't going to like. And we know their names, don't we? The finances are a mess. The patronage politics are coming to an end. The Reagan Administration has decimated much of the OSHA protections for manufacturing jobs.

Frank Lee and another police officer, dressed casually, walk through the crowd checking everyone out. They try to blend into the crowd. Harold spots one of them.

HAROLD (CONT'D)

We've got a long road ahead of us. This is going to be an uphill battle for sure. Many of you are familiar with my track record in Congress. I will devote the same energy to the people of Chicago as I did to the people of IL.

I see a Chicago of educational excellence and equality of treatment in which all children can learn to function in this ever-more-complex society, in which jobs and contracts are dispensed fairly to those that want and qualify for them and in which justice rains down like water. I see a Chicago in which the neighborhoods are once again the center of our city, in which businesses boom and provide neighborhood jobs, in which neighbors join together to help govern their neighborhood and their city. This will be my mission when you vote for me for mayor.

The crowd cheers.

INT. CHURCH HALL-CONTINUOUS

Harold finds Frank in the crowd and walks over to him.

HAROLD

I thought I told you that I didn't need detail.

FRANK

Yes, sir, but we just couldn't let you be out here campaigning without some kind of protection.

Harold looks at Frank for awhile.

HAROLD

Alright then. But if you're going to be out here, then do something useful like hold my coat.

Harold hands him his coat.

FRANK

Yes sir!

INT. HAROLD WASHINGTON CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS

The campaign workers are on the phone. Harold talks with Sam. He's looking over paperwork.

HAROLD

We don't have enough in the bank!

SAM

The money's coming in. It's just coming in slowly.

HAROLD

Well it's not enough! We've got rent due on our campaign offices. We need tv spots, newspaper ads, fliers...

SAM

I know I know!

HAROLD

Jane Byrne is running all sorts of tv ads! We haven't run any!

SAM

We don't have enough money. We're working the ground campaign right now.

HAROLD

Well, you better figure something out. It'll be difficult for people to give us their vote if we don't run a serious campaign and run some tv ads. There's a lot at stake.

SAM

I know that! I'm trying to get us through the primary.

HAROLD

We've got to think past the primary. We're gonna need a lot more money after the primary in order to win the general

election. So get me some goddamned money!
Go talk to Renault Robinson.

A campaign worker runs in carrying a box.

CAMPAIGN WORKER

They're here!

The campaign worker holds up a blue and white Harold Washington for Chicago button. The campaign workers who aren't on the phone come over to look at the buttons. They each grab a couple. Harold and Sam both pick one up to examine them.

HAROLD

This looks good. I like it.

Harold nods approval to Sam.

INT. INDEPENDENT BANK

RENAULT ROBINSON, 40 stands at the door of the Chairman of the Board, AL BOUTTE. He takes a deep breath and knocks.

AL BOUTTE

Come in.

Renault opens the door and enters Al's office.

RENAULT

Good morning, sir!

AL BOUTTE

Good morning! Come right in! Have a seat.

Renault walks over to Al and shakes his hand and then sits down.

RENAULT

Thank you so much for seeing me.

AL BOUTTE

Not a problem. What can I do for you?

RENAULT

As you know, we finally have a black candidate for mayor. And the community is really behind him.

AL BOUTTE

That's good. Do you really think he can win?

RENAULT

He's got a good showing in our polls. It's up to us to do the work and make it happen. The potential is there.

AL BOUTTE

It'd be nice to have a black mayor. How can I help?

RENAULT

Mayor Byrne and Daley both have way more money than us. They can run all kinds of tv ads, post campaign literature, posters, buttons... We'll need to try and match what they're doing.

AL BOUTTE

They've got a lot of white donors. White people with money.

RENAULT

With all due respect sir, you're a black man with money.

AL BOUTTE

(silently acknowledging)

How much do you need?

RENAULT

For the campaign? Between \$750K and \$1 million.

AL BOUTTE

(chuckling)

I ain't got that kind of money!

RENAULT

No, sir, but we're looking for you to lead
the way in donations.

Al leans back in his chair and contemplates. After awhile he
leans forward.

AL BOUTTE

OK, I'll commit my bank to \$50K See if
Seaway Bank will match it.

INT. SEAWAY BANK

Renault stands in front of the chairman of the board, ERNEST
COLLINS, 67

ERNEST

Al, gave you \$50K?...Alright, you've got
our commitment for \$50K.

They shake hands.

ERNEST (CONT'D)

You should go and talk to Ed Gardner. I'll
bet he'll donate some money.

INT. SOFT SHEEN CORPORATE OFFICES

TITLE CARD: Ed Gardner, founder of Soft Sheen hair products (A
black man with money)

Renault receives a check from ED GARDNER, 58

INT. WTTW STUDIOS

The debates. Harold, RICHARD M DALEY, 41 and Jane Byrne stand
at podiums. Television cameras are set up.

STAGE MANAGER

Places everyone.

JAMES HOGE, 42 enters the auditorium and sits at the moderator's
desk.

STAGE MANAGER (CONT'D)

We're on in 5-4-3...

The stage manager gives the cue that they're on the air.

JAMES HOGE

Good evening. I'm James Hoge, publisher of the Chicago Sun-Times, the sponsor of tonight's Democratic Mayoral Debate. Welcome to the first debate of the Chicago Mayoral election. The sequence of candidates and panelists was determined by lot. Each candidate is entitled to a three-minute opening statement, and we begin with Congressman Washington.

HAROLD

Thank you, Mr. Hoge. Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. My name is Harold Washington and I'm running for the office of mayor of Chicago because Jane Byrne is destroying our city...Chicago can no longer afford Jane Byrne because what is at stake is the very lifeblood of Chicago--jobs, jobs, jobs. To Jane Byrne, jobs are only a means of expanding and controlling her political power and buying votes...And she has blundered. She negotiated away our transit operating subsidy in 1979, costing Chicago \$35 million to \$50 million every year. Your fares went up to \$.90 dear friends...She raised property taxes when the board of education had a cash crisis in 1979...Jane Byrne blundered again in 1981 when she unilaterally imposed a 1 cent sales tax increase for the CTA, thus driving many businesses out of the city...Most recently Jane Byrne blundered by supporting blanket budget-cutting authority for Gov. Thompson, costing Chicago at least \$100 million for education, for health, and for social services...To make matters even worse, Jane Byrne has planted a fiscal time bomb, set to explode right after the mayoral election: an unsound 1983 budget, an anticipated \$107 million board of education deficit and a \$100 million CTA deficit...I ask you Jane Byrne, how are you going to solve the devastating financial

problems you created by your blunders and time bombs? My plans for Chicago are public. The stable fiscal policy I propose can restore Chicago's viability and provide jobs. Thank you.

MONTAGE-MOS

Money is dropped in jars on counters.

Renault Robinson receives a check from a donor

More money is dropped in various jars.

INT. BARBER SHOP-DAY

Roscoe and Buddy sit in the chairs by the window. Gene has a client in his chair. Willie is cleaning up after a client.

GENE

Those debates really showed everyone that Harold ain't playing around. Now, they're gonna pay attention to him.

ROSCOE

Yeah, now white folks have more reason not to vote for him. He's smarter than they are. They don't like that.

WILLIE

I think white folks appreciate a smart black man.

ROSCOE

Where they do that at?

GENE

He told it like it is.

ROSCOE

He didn't mince words. I'll give him this: He told the truth about Jane Byrne. She done fucked up the money in the city.

BUDDY

They ain't gonna trust a black man with the money though.

ROSCOE

Exactly!

GENE

Harold has done a good job in Congress and now I can see why. He's a smart man.

ROSCOE

He's a politician. He's a life long politician. He can make anything look good if he needs to get votes. The question is will he be able to snow us like Jane Byrne did?

GENE

You don't think he's gonna pull a Jane Byrne, do you?

ROSCOE

I don't know. He's a politician. He wants to get elected. They'd put their mama in jail if they can get your vote.

BUDDY

Harold fever is catching on. I'm seeing a lot of jars with change in it for Harold.

ROSCOE

He's gonna need all the money he can get his hands on. He can't compete with white people money.

WILLIE

They can't compete with pissed off black folks.

ROSCOE

Black folks been pissed off since they got plucked us from Africa. It ain't got us nowhere.

GENE

That's not true. We've come a long way since slave days.

ROSCOE

That's just what the white man wants you to think so you'll stop trying to get what he has. White folks ain't gonna let no Negro be mayor of Chicago. You watch!

Everyone is shaking their heads.

BUDDY

Well, I'm voting for Harold on election day. I'm not gonna miss my chance to vote for a black man for mayor.

GENE

Willie and I usually go first thing in the morning so we can open the shop on time.

ROSCOE

Who're you gonna vote for?

GENE

That's none of your business.

WILLIE

(to Roscoe)

Who're you gonna vote for?

ROSCOE

Are you kidding me?! I ain't votin'!

GENE

Every vote counts.

ROSCOE

Not if there ain't enough of 'em.

GENE

This is exactly the reason black folks can't get nothing done. They talk a lot of shit, but never do anything to back it up.

ROSCOE

I read. I analyze shit and if it ain't worth it, I ain't gonna vote.

WILLIE

We're trying to elect a black mayor.

ROSCOE

And trying is all black folks ever gonna do! As long as white folks are around and got all the money, black folks ain't gonna be able to hold no power.

GENE

If you know so much, then you know that that's not true. They elected a black man to the city council back in 1914. What was his name again?

ROSCOE

Oscar DePriest. Yeah, I know about him. And how much do you think they let him do as the only black man in city council? Not a goddamn thing!

GENE

Maybe not, but he was also the first black man elected to Congress. And he introduced an amendment barring discrimination in the Civilian Conservation Corps...

WILLIE

That was part of the New Deal.

GENE

Sure was! And it was passed by the Senate and signed into law by President Franklin Roosevelt.

BUDDY

I think Harold Washington was in the Civilian Conservation Corps.

ROSCOE

How in the hell do you know?

BUDDY

I don't know. Maybe I heard that
someplace.

ROSCOE

Well, since you all know so much, maybe you
also know that DePriest was against higher
taxes for the rich and he didn't think that
poor people should get any federal aid.
See, he was just some uppity nigga catering
to the white man.

GENE

Well, Harold ain't like that.

ROSCOE

Oh please. Eventually he'll have to be.
He ain't gonna get nothing done with a
majority whites on the council. So he
doesn't even need to run because he ain't
gonna win so there's no need to vote for
him.

WILLIE

Man, I ain't trying to hear that shit.

GENE

I'm just glad more black folks don't think
like you.

ROSCOE

Hmpf. Next thing you'll tell me is that a
black man can be president if enough black
folks vote for him.

GENE

Well, I wouldn't go that far.

EXT. CHICAGO CITY STREET

Several people waiting at the bus stop are wearing Harold
buttons.

INT. A CORNER STORE

A man picks up a newspaper and steps to the counter. He's
wearing a Harold button as is the cashier. The man hands the

cashier money and the cashier hands him some change. He sees a jar that says "Elect Harold Washington Mayor" The man tosses the change in the jar.

EXT. CHICAGO CITY STREET - NIGHT

A prostitute walks the street. 2 policeman pull up.

POLICEMAN

Move along before I arrest you.

PROSTITUTE

Excuse me! I'm a member of the Michigan Blvd Business Women's Association and I am collecting money for Harold Washington's campaign.

She holds up a jar of money. The policeman shakes his head and drives away.

PROSTITUTE (CONT'D)

That's right, baby! Hoes for Harold!!

INT. NORTHSIDE REC ROOM

Several people are waiting for Harold Washington to speak. He is late.

INT. COUNTY JAIL REC ROOM

There are inmates wearing Harold for Chicago buttons. One man with a button is passing a hat around asking for money.

EXT. CHICAGO CITY STREET

A man, 45 wearing a long, tattered overcoat passes out literature for Mayor Byrne to passersby. The light turns red and a car stops at the corner. The man walks up to the car and hands the gentleman driving a flyer. The gentleman takes the flyer and places it in his seat. The man starts to walk away, but turns back to the gentleman.

FLYER MAN

I'll bet you don't know who I'm going to vote for...

GENTLEMAN IN CAR
Mayor Byrne

FLYER MAN
Naw, man!

The flyer man opens his coat to reveal about 10 Harold Washington buttons.

FLYER MAN (CONT'D)
I'm gettin' paid by Mayor Byrne. I'm VOTIN'
for Harold Washington!

EXT. UNIVERSITY OF IL CHICAGO PAVILION

A large crowd of people file into the auditorium. They are holding Harold signs. A crowd across the street. It's snowing.

INT. UNIVERSITY OF IL CHICAGO PAVILION

There's a large crowd of about 12,000 people. Harold walks out on stage and the crowd goes wild. They cheer and yell for several minutes.

INT. UNIVERSITY OF IL CHICAGO PAVILION-CONTINUOUS

Harold is in mid speech

HAROLD
I think your former Mayor Bilandic is a wonderful fellow, but I depart radically from him when he says he would hope that I would have all the qualities of past mayors. There are no good qualities to be had! (cheers) None. None. None. None. I did not mourn at the bier of the late mayor. I regret anyone dying, but I have no regrets about him leaving. He was a racist to the core; head to toe and hip to hip. There's no doubt about it. And he oppressed black people to the point that that was the way some of them thought they were supposed to live. Just like some of the slaves on the plantation thought that was the way they were supposed to live. I give no hosannas to a racist, nor do I

appreciate or respect his son. If his name were anything other than Daley, his campaign would be a joke. He has nothing to offer anybody, but a bent up, tin can smile, no background and he runs on the legacy of his name; an insult to common sense and decency. Everything I've ever gotten in the world, I worked for. Nobody gave me anything. Although I may sound abrasive, I have no malice towards anybody, but I have a job to do and I'll approach it like a masterful surgeon cutting out cancer. I cut it out with no emotion. Get it out! Get it out! (cheers) So I approach this awesome job with pride; pride in my community, pride in the ability of my community to rouse up as though they had been a sleeping giant and to recognize that there is a responsibility that they cannot shirk. Nobody else is gonna shoulder that burden. I believe in the powers of redemption. I simply cannot believe that the God I worship would permit us to sit in this country for 400 years and suffer the indignities which we have suffered, piled time after time and so heavy that it has almost broken the backs of one of the most powerful people in this world. I can't believe there is no redemption, but that redemption is not going to come out in hatred. It's going to come out in positive attitude towards our fellow man. I represent and you represent the fruit of the loom; the best this world has to offer. We've been through the crucible and we've come out strong and powerful; tinsel strength. We have the right and the responsibility to give the best that we have to a society and we wanna give it. We'll give it to 'em even if we have to knock 'em down and beat 'em over the head and make them take it!! We're gonna give it to them!

The crowd rises to their feet and explodes in applause.

INT. A RALLY ON THE NORTHWEST SIDE

Hundreds of people gather inside a community room for a rally for Mayor Byrne. There are people with Byrne for Mayor signs. Ed Vrdolyak makes his way through the crowd to the podium.

ED VRDOLYAK

Listen up! Listen up people! I've got a few more rallies to hit so let me just say this really quickly.

The crowd settles down.

ED VRDOLYAK (CONT'D)

This primary election is very important. I think you know what's at stake here, but in case you don't let me just tell you. A vote for Daley will be a vote for Washington. (Boo!) There are only 2 viable candidates in this election. Protect your precincts. Protect your neighborhoods. It would be the worst day in the history of Chicago if your candidate did not get elected. This is a racial thing. Let's not kid ourselves. I'm calling on you to save our city. We are fighting to keep this city the way it is.

The crowd cheers.

INT. A RANDOM OFFICE DOWNTOWN 4:55PM

2 ladies, at their respective desks, put away papers, straighten their desks, turn off lights. It's quitting time.

BETTY

Girl, I gotta get to the polling place so I can vote!

CAROL

Who're you telling?! I gotta get my vote in for Harold!

BETTY

Amen to that!

Betty and Carol grab their coats and exit the office.

EXT. EL PLATFORM

Betty and Carol stand on a crowded platform. Everyone is waiting on the southbound train. Across the tracks, the north bound trains are running.

CAROL

What's going on with the trains?

BETTY

The north bound trains are running just fine. Something's going on with the southbound trains.

MAN ON PLATFORM

This is some bullshit! They stopped the trains to keep us from voting for Harold! Look at the northbound trains! This ain't no accident!

The crowd agrees.

MAN ON PLATFORM (CONT'D)

They need to get these trains moving!

The crowd agrees and starts yelling at the CTA worker inside their booth. The CTA worker comes out to talk to the crowd.

CTA WORKER

I don't know anything! They haven't given us any information! Just be patient!

MAN ON PLATFORM

Why are the north bound trains running?

CROWD

Yeah!

CTA WORKER

I don't know! The problem must be the switches on the southbound tracks. I'll see what I can find out.

The CTA worker goes back into the booth and makes a phone call. The crowd grows more restless. The CTA worker looks concerned.

NEWS REPORT

NEWSCASTER

We're more than half way through the primary election and it's a close race between the incumbent Jane Byrne and Harold Washington on the Democratic side. Bernard Epton has secured the Republican nomination as three other candidates were removed from the ballot due to issues with their petitions.

INT. HAROLD WASHINGTON CAMPAIGN OFFICE

Harold and some other people are listening to election results that are filtering in. Sam is on the phone.

SAM

The Red line trains are down. There aren't any trains going to the south side right now. There are hundreds of people stranded on the platforms downtown!

HAROLD

What in the hell is going on?

SAM

No word. Let's hope these aren't voters trying to get to the polls.

HAROLD

Hmm...could be foul play.

Sam turns and makes a call. Harold looks concerned.

EXT. EL PLATFORM

The crowds are even larger and more angry.

WOMAN ON PLATFORM

I've gotta get to the polls before they close! I gotta put my vote in for Harold!

Crowd agrees.

MAN ON PLATFORM

They're trying to keep the black man from becoming mayor! The Machine is behind this shit!

WOMAN ON PLATFORM

We should go down to city hall!!

Crowd agrees. Some of them start moving off the platform. Majority of people stay and yell at the CTA worker.

BETTY

I'm staying in case they get the trains going and I can still make it to the polls before they close.

INT. HAROLD WASHINGTON CAMPAIGN OFFICE LATER THAT EVENING

Everyone is still watching election results. The polls are now closed.

CAMPAIGN WORKER #1

You really think they had something to do with the trains not running?

CAMPAIGN WORKER #2

You know how they do. I wouldn't be surprised.

CAMPAIGN WORKER #1

I'll bet this affects the numbers at the polls.

CAMPAIGN WORKER #2

Of course it will. That was the plan.

NEWS REPORT WITH ELECTION RESULTS

NEWSCASTER

The polls have closed and preliminary results are in. Harold Washington is the projected winner in the Democratic primary election. He beat the incumbent, Mayor Jane Byrne. I'm sure this comes as a big blow to the Mayor.

Campaign workers cheer.

NEWSCASTER (CONT'D)

On the Republican side, Bernie Epton is the nominee and it looks like he will take on Harold Washington in the April general election.

INT. MAYOR BYRNE CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS

Several people are sitting around the television watching the election results. Mayor Byrne looks pensive. She turns and walks away.

BILL GRIFFIN

Mayor Byrne, are you going to concede?

No answer.

BILL GRIFFIN (CONT'D)

Mayor Byrne? Mayor Byrne?

She goes into her office and shuts the door.

INT. HAROLD WASHINGTON CAMPAIGN OFFICE

Everyone cheers at the numbers that have just come in. They congratulate Harold. A camera crew is there to capture the moment. Jesse Jackson walks in.

HAROLD

I proudly and humbly accept on behalf of the people of the city of Chicago, the Democratic nomination for mayor of Chicago.

Crowd cheers.

HAROLD (CONT'D)

Y'all know that now the real work begins, right? I couldn't have done any of this without you and if your hard work is any indication, we'll take 'em in the general election in April!

Crowd cheers. Jesse pulls the cameraman off to the side. Sam is on the phone.

SAM

Mayor Byrne still hasn't conceded.

Crowd boos.

HAROLD

Whether she concedes or not she still lost.

Crowd laughs.

Jesse is giving an interview. Harold spies this and doesn't look pleased.

JESSE JACKSON

This is a momentous victory. The black community will come together to support Harold Washington in the general election and we will have our first black mayor.

Harold pulls Sam to the side.

HAROLD

What is Jesse doing?

Sam shrugs.

HAROLD (CONT'D)

Look, I don't want Jesse hanging around this campaign. White folks don't like him and I don't want them to think that I'm gonna have Jesse in my ear. Keep him away from the cameras. Keep him quiet.

Harold walks off

SAM

Sure thing.

HEADLINE: HAROLD WASHINGTON WINS THE PRIMARY

INT. CHICAGO TRIBUNE-NEXT DAY

Black people are moving around with a skip in their step. White people look like someone died. A group of black people meet up in the break room and celebrate cautiously. A white person enters and the celebration stops. They disperse.

INT. HAROLD WASHINGTON APARTMENT - DAY

Harold is getting dressed. He pulls his pants up and tries to fasten them, but his pants are too small.

HAROLD

Hm

INT. HAROLD WASHINGTON CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS

Sam, Conrad, Oscar, Lu and others strategize.

SAM

The key is to register new voters.

OSCAR WORRILL

We've registered everyone we could.

SAM

No, no. Harold always says there's always more people to register. Remember we need to focus on people who have never voted before. We need to spread throughout the city. Hispanic and Asian neighborhoods. Lu, I need you to keep promoting registering on the radio.

LU PALMER

I would except that they canceled my show.

ALL

What?!

LU PALMER

White advertisers pulled their ads. They said that I had gotten too political. I told 'em I've always been political.

SAM

We know what this is about.

LU PALMER

Damn right! They're trying to silence us. I'll figure something out. I'll start

another show on another station or something.

SAM

You think you'll find some other airwaves?

LU PALMER

Maybe

Sam continues to strategize.

INT. HAROLD WASHINGTON CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS

Sam and Harold are talking and eating chicken wings. The radio is on in the background.

SAM

She's mounting a write-in campaign.

HAROLD

She's what?!

SAM

I guess she feels she can still win the general election.

HAROLD

The people have spoken. They don't want her. She'd rather destroy Chicago and the Democratic Party than abide by the will of the people.

SAM

You know, a lot of Democrats have switched sides since you won so she probably thinks that gives her a chance.

HAROLD

(chuckling)

The machine is on life support. There's no party loyalty. They can't even support the man who won fair and square because he's black. They're really showing their colors.

SAM

Some aldermen started publicly supporting Epton.

HAROLD

Yeah, I know. Majerczyk, Clewis and Rittenberg...so far...

SAM

What about Vrdolyak and Burke?

HAROLD

I don't think even they have the balls to publicly come out and support the Republican candidate. That would surely be a signal that the machine is dead! But I have no doubt that they are secretly supporting him. They'll do anything they can to keep me from being mayor.

SAM

There's something else I need to talk to you about.

HAROLD

What's that?

SAM

You've got to start showing up for all of your press conferences. It's not a good look when you've got a crowd and press waiting and you're a no show.

HAROLD

I don't give a shit what people think.

SAM

What do you mean you don't give a shit what people think? You want to get elected don't you? You've got to show that you're reliable.

HAROLD

Worrill needs to communicate with the downtown campaign office.

SAM

You know how he feels about working with them.

HAROLD

Well, if they don't coordinate my press conferences, then I'm bound to miss a few.

SAM

You know white folks don't play that shit.

HAROLD

I really don't give a shit what white folks think.

SAM

You've got to! You've got to get at least 10% of the white vote. Black folks are notorious for not coming out to the polls so you've got to get a healthy percentage of white folks to vote for you if you want to win. You've got to start speaking their language.

HAROLD

Mmmhmm

SAM

And your clothes...

HAROLD

What the fuck is wrong with my clothes?

SAM

Your shirt's wrinkled. Your tie's got stains on it.

HAROLD

Sometimes I don't have time to iron my shirt. That's why I wear a jacket all the time. Most of the time you can't see my shirt.

SAM

Still...If you'd like I can send someone over to launder your shirts and ties.

HAROLD

Whatever. I ain't worried about that mess.

SAM

So let someone else worry about it.

(changing gears)

Are you getting enough sleep?

HAROLD

What are you, my mother?!

SAM

You look tired.

HAROLD

Do I?

SAM

Yeah, you do. This election isn't keeping you up at night, is it? Because you let me worry about the money, the voters, th--

HAROLD

I'm fine.

SAM

Are you sure?

Harold gives him a look. Sam backs off.

ON THE RADIO

GOV. JAMES THOMPSON talks about Harold Washington's previous tax issues. Sam turns up the radio.

GOV. THOMPSON

Bernie Epton is really the only candidate to vote for. He's the one who'll be good for Chicago. Harold Washington has a criminal past. Remember, I was U.S. Attorney for the Northern District of IL at that time and Mr. Washington hadn't filed tax returns for 19 years. In fact we couldn't find evidence that he had ever filed a tax return!

INT. HAROLD WASHINGTON CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS - CONTINUOUS

HAROLD

I don't know why they're still talking about that mess. I aired all of my dirty laundry back in '77 and again in January. That's old news. That must be all they've got on me. And he sure knows how to embellish a story. I didn't file taxes for 5 years and I ended up owing something like \$515. You'd think they'd find something new like maybe I eat too much fried food or something. (to the radio) Talk about something new!

SAM

They ain't got nothing so they bring up old shit.

HAROLD

I won't play dirty politics like that. I'm gonna talk about the issues and that's it. I won't play that game.

SAM

Don't you have anything on Bernie?

HAROLD

Even if I did, I'm not gonna use it. I worked with Bernie in the IL House and we got along fine. Just because we're opponents now doesn't mean that I'm gonna dig up some shit on him and use it.

SAM

They're certainly playing dirty.

HAROLD

He may not have signed off on what Gov. Thompson is saying.

SAM

But he certainly isn't stopping him from saying it.

HAROLD

I ain't worried about them.

SAM

You know how this works. You've got to look squeaky clean in order to get those votes. It would be helpful if we had something that we could use--

HAROLD

No.

SAM

It doesn't have to be scandalous, just--

HAROLD

I said no! Now drop it!

Sam concedes.

INT. RALLY FOR EPTON-BRIDGEPORT

The community room is filled with mostly white men and women. They are wearing all white buttons. There are 6 people in the crowd wearing paper bags over their heads which read: Unknown Democrats for Epton. There are several people with mock campaign buttons with Harold Washington's mug shot. Bernie Epton steps up to the podium.

BERNIE

Thank you! Thank you! This is a great turnout! I see that we have some Democrats in the audience tonight.

(boos from the audience)

No, no! They're for Bernie Epton!

(cheers)

We're glad to have them. Think about what that says about Harold Washington. The Democrats are willing to vote Republican instead of their own candidate. That tells me that we can win, Chicago!

Cheers.

INT. RALLY FOR WASHINGTON

A few hundred people are gathered in a church hall. They are mostly black, but also whites and Hispanics. They are sporting blue and white Harold Washington buttons. Harold steps up to the podium. The crowd cheers.

HAROLD

Now this is a good looking crowd!

Cheers.

HAROLD (CONT'D)

Mayor Byrne has made a mess of the finances of this city. CPS is broke and she has done nothing, but turn her back on the people, especially black people. The ones who feel the most of this fiscal fiasco is our school children. There are not enough funds to adequately school our children. Bernie Epton is like most Republicans. They believe in the trickle down theory, that if they take care of the richest of our society, that economic prosperity will benefit all of us. And we know that that is fiction!

Crowd cheers.

HAROLD (CONT'D)

As your mayor, I will clean up this mess and fund our schools the way they should be funded so that every child has a fighting chance! I will not stop fighting Ronald Reagan in Washington.

Crowd cheers.

INT. HAROLD WASHINGTON APARTMENT-NIGHT 2AM

Harold lies in bed reading. Mary Ella lies next to him. She rolls over. The light wakes her.

MARY ELLA

Are you still awake?

HAROLD

Yeah, I'm reading Das Kapital.

MARY ELLA
It's after midnight.

Harold looks at the clock.

HAROLD
It's actually after 2. I'll go to sleep soon.

MARY ELLA
What's keeping you awake?

HAROLD
I'm working out a plan to get the city's finances in order. I'm just getting some ideas in my head.

MARY ELLA
You have to get up early. You won't have much sleep.

HAROLD
When do I ever get that much sleep? Besides, I've been running on 4 hours of sleep for the last 20 years. I'll be fine.

MARY ELLA
You've got to get some rest. You can't keep running on so little sleep. You're not getting any younger.

HAROLD
Thank you for your concern. You go back to sleep. I'll turn out the light here shortly.

Mary Ella kisses Harold on the cheek and rolls back over and Harold reads a few more lines and then closes the book, turns out the light and rolls over.

EXT. HAROLD WASHINGTON CONGRESSIONAL OFFICE - DAY

Harold and WALTER MONDALE, 55 climb into a limousine.

EXT. ST. PASCAL'S CHURCH-DAY

A crowd of protesters stands outside holding signs that say Epton for Mayor or Epton Now.

EXT. CHICAGO CITY STREET

Harold Washington and Walter Mondale ride in a limousine that pulls up to St. Pascal's church.

EXT. ST. PASCAL'S CHURCH-DAY

The crowd sees a limousine pulling up to the church. They start shouting and holding up their signs. They are angry. Harold and Walter exit the limo. The crowd shouts louder. They begin walking up to the church. They are flanked by security who are trying to keep the crowd away from them. A racial slur can be heard. Harold and Walter reach the door of the church. The words "Nigger, nigger die!" is spray painted on the door. They enter the church and are escorted to their seats. The crowd outside is growing louder and louder. They begin to bang on the door of the church. Harold looks at Walter with concern. He stands and walks over to the priest and says something to him. He turns and motions to Walter and the security detail that they are leaving. Harold says something to the media people. They all exit the church amid jeers and yelling and pushing. The security is busy keeping the crowd away from Harold and Walter. They make their way back to the limousine and get in.

WALTER

It feels like we drove to the deep south.

HAROLD

Well, Martin Luther King always said that Alabama could learn how to hate from Chicago.

The limousine drives away as the crowd continues to yell.

HEADLINE: JANE BYRNE WITHDRAWS WRITE-IN CAMPAIGN

INT. HAROLD WASHINGTON CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS

Marilyn Katz and Bill Zimmerman go over footage from St. Pascal's to create a commercial.

MARILYN

We need to highlight this scene. Can you isolate some of the protesters?

BILL

Sure.

MARILYN

Good. Do we have footage of Harold talking to children?

BILL

Yeah, we've got some good shots.

MARILYN

OK let's intercut this with the scene from the church. It'll make a nice contrast.

Harold walks in.

HAROLD

How's the commercial coming?

MARILYN

This is what we've got so far...

Bill hits play and shows Harold the commercial. Harold watches.

HAROLD

I don't like it.

MARILYN

What's wrong with it?

HAROLD

It's too close to being a smear tactic. And I promised that I wouldn't mount a smear campaign.

MARILYN

But it just shows the difference between how the two sides behave. It'll set you apart from Epton as a more civil leader.

HAROLD

I'm sure Epton didn't encourage his supporters to act like that.

BILL

Mr. Washington, I've been a part of many campaigns and believe me, I've seen politicians say much worse than what this ad is saying. And you weren't twisting anything. This is just showing the other side in all of their ugliness.

HAROLD

I don't think I need to air this and I don't want to use it. Make another commercial. This one is not to air.

MARILYN

But, Mr. Washington...

HAROLD

I said no. And that's final. Now make another commercial.

Harold turns and leaves.

INT. BERNIE EPTON CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS

Bernie and JIM FLETCHER, 48 talk strategy.

BERNIE

We need something to ignite a sense of urgency. Washington supporters are going to turn up at the polls.

JIM

There's never been more than 30% of registered black voters who actually vote. Washington can't win with that percentage.

BERNIE

He's also got the support of the Lakeside Liberals.

JIM

That still won't be enough. He won't be able to get enough of the white vote to win.

BERNIE

I'd feel better if there was an incentive for people to come out and vote Republican.

JIM

He's black.

BERNIE

Jim...

JIM

Come on, Bernie. They don't want a black man as their Mayor. That's just the truth. And there are ways of saying things without saying things.

BERNIE

I don't know Jim...

JIM

Maybe we can think of something before it's too late.

Bernie turns and walks away. Jim gets an idea.

MONTAGE

There are people wearing all white buttons and buttons that say Epton: Before It's Too Late

TV AD

Footage of the scene at St. Pascal's church and footage of school children reciting the Pledge of Allegiance. And then the tag line: Harold Washington for Mayor

INT. HAROLD WASHINGTON CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS

Sam Patch and Harold talk to Marilyn and Bill.

HAROLD

How did that ad get on the air?!

MARILYN

I don't know.

HAROLD

It's your job to know! I explicitly said NOT to air that ad.

MARILYN

I know! I know! I just don't know how it got on the air.

SAM

Well, someone had to pay for the spot.

BILL

It was part of a pool of spots that we purchased. We didn't buy an individual spot.

MARILYN

If it makes any difference, you've gone up a few points in the polls.

Harold gives her a look.

HAROLD

This can't happen again! When I say something's not to air, I expect you to can it!

MARILYN

Yes, sir.

Harold storms off and Sam follows.

MONTAGE

HEADLINES: NEWSWEEK "CHICAGO'S UGLY ELECTION

PEOPLE MAGAZINE: HATRED WALKS THE STREETS

ESQUIRE MAGAZINE: DISASTROUS FOR CHICAGO

BOSTON GLOBE: CHICAGO HAS A BLACK EYE

EXT. ALBANIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH-DAY

A crowd outside of the church shout Epton and slurs at Harold as he exits the church and makes his way to the limousine. He

attempts to talk to some of them, but they just shout louder. Harold moves on and blows kisses to them. He gets into the limousine as the crowd continues to shout at him.

INT. MUNDELEIN COLLEGE AUDITORIUM-DAY

A crowd of mostly white people wait for the speaker, Harold Washington.

INT. MUNDELEIN COLLEGE AUDITORIUM BACKSTAGE-DAY

Harold walks in the door and an intern runs up to Harold and hands him a flyer. It reads: Protect your children. Harold Washington is a child molester

HAROLD

Where did you get this?

WASHINGTON INTERN

Someone handed it to me. They said they're all over the city.

Harold walks out on the stage and the crowd starts cheering. He walks up to the podium with the flyer in his hand.

HAROLD

Thank you for having me. And thank you for coming out. I have to address this before I get to my speech. This flyer was just handed to me and I was told that they are all over the city. I just can't...for the life of me...Here I am running a campaign where little children all over my community are ecstatic! They're telling their mothers to vote for me. So why am I the victim of this scurrilous, incessant low-life kind of attack? Well, I've had enough! Mr. Epton's campaign has made repeated attacks on my character, my business dealings, my personal life and now this. This I will not stand for!

(sets the flyer aside) Now...let's talk about the business of getting me elected your next mayor of Chicago!

The crowd cheers and shouts "We want Harold!" Harold balls up the flyer and throws it to the ground. The crowd cheers.

EXT. A POLLING PLACE-5:55AM

MONTAGE

The line outside the door is winding down the path and around the corner.

Another polling place has a similar scene.

At yet another polling place, an elderly woman (90) is being wheeled to the line by her granddaughter. A man sees her and offers to let her ahead of him.

MAN IN LINE

Ma'am, would you like to go ahead of me?
It's awful cold out here.

GRANNY

That's so nice of you. You know, I don't come out much anymore, but I thought it was important for me to place my vote for Harold Washington. I never thought I'd see the day where we could have a mayor who looks like me! I had to come out and cast my vote! I want to make sure they don't pull any shenanigans with my vote. I'm gonna put it in the machine myself!

MAN IN LINE

That's probably a good idea.
(to the other people in line)
Hey, do you think we could let this lady go in first so she doesn't have to wait in line so long?!

The other people are happy to let the elderly lady go in front of them. The granddaughter wheels her past the line

GRANNY

Thank you all so much!
(chanting)
We want Harold! We want Harold!

The rest of the crowd starts to chant We want Harold as well.

INT. HAROLD WASHINGTON CAMPAIGN OFFICE-MID MORNING

The campaign office is still busy making last minute phone calls. Sam is pacing looking worried.

HAROLD

Sam, would you sit down. You're making me nervous.

SAM

I just have this weird feeling that we forgot to tap into some aspect of the voters.

HAROLD

We didn't. We ran a good campaign. I Think you'd be hard pressed to find anyone that didn't register to vote.

SAM

Registering is one thing. Getting them to actually come out and vote is another.

HAROLD

They'll come. This movement is important to a lot of people...By the way, did you go vote?

Sam stops and with his eyes wide, grabs his coat and rushes out the door. Harold chuckles.

INT. BERNIE EPTON CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS-NIGHT

Bernie and James, his campaign manager watch the early numbers.

JAMES

Well so far, you're in the lead.

BERNIE

It's way too early to be optimistic. There's only 23% reporting.

JAMES

There'd have to be a big swing for it to make any significant difference. I think you're gonna be ok.

BERNIE

Let's hope.

JAMES

They're predicting a record number of voter turnout. This city doesn't want a black mayor. We all know what happens if a black becomes mayor...

BERNIE

What happens? What, Jim? Harold Washington is a capable opponent. I served with him in Springfield and he's a great legislator! People like him! On both sides! The truth is that Chicago would probably do just fine under Washington. This isn't going to be a landslide victory! All we can hope for is that there's enough apathy in the black community to keep them from coming to the polls. Let's not start a premature celebration.

Bernie walks off.

INT. HAROLD WASHINGTON CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS-NIGHT

Sam, Oscar, Conrad, Lu, Jacky, and all the campaign workers watch as the numbers come in. They look cautiously optimistic.

NEWSCASTER

The numbers are still coming in and it's a close race. Epton started out in the lead, but the people have come out for Harold Washington and he now has a slight lead over Epton. This race is going to be a close one.

SAM

The people are coming out!

HAROLD

I had a feeling they would. This is too important. They're tired of Mayor Byrne. They're tired of the Machine. They're just tired.

NEWSCASTER

The polls have been closed now for a few hours and it looks like Harold Washington has emerged as the winner with 51% of the vote.

INT. DONNELLEY HALL-NIGHT

Harold and Mary Ella make their way into the auditorium. It is filled with Harold supporters. About 15K. When the crowd sees him, they begin to chant. "Harold Harold!" Harold walks up to the podium.

HAROLD

You want Harold? You really got him now! To those who supported me, I offer my deepest thanks. I will initiate reforms, but I challenge you. I challenge each and every one of you to rededicate your efforts to heal the divisions that have plagued us. Chicago is one city. We must work as one people for our common good and our goals. Our politics are strong and vigorous and are on the verge of vibrant growth and development here. Our most important concern at this moment is unity. Tomorrow, we'll begin with a prayer breakfast. It will be a symbol that our gathering together includes all of Chicago. I intend to lead a prayer for our continued unity and success as a great city. We're gonna break from tradition and hold the inauguration at the Navy Pier Ballroom. There were a lot of people responsible for this victory and I want as many of them to witness history as possible.

The crowd cheers.

INT. NAVY PIER BALLROOM-DAY

The inauguration. Coretta Scott King, Lou Gossett, Jr, Dick Gregory, Ralph Abernathy are in the audience. There are approximately 4000 people in the ballroom. Mayor Byrne mingles with the aldermen Sitting on stage is Judge Charles Freeman, Cardinal Joseph Bernadine, Gwendolyn Brooks, et. al

INT. HAROLD WASHINGTON'S HOME-DAY

Harold is trying to pick out his tie.

HAROLD

I can't find a clean tie.

Mary Ella comes to his side to help him. She finds the perfect one and he puts it on.

MARY ELLA

You just became mayor of Chicago. You better start cleaning all of your ties and suits.

HAROLD

(putting on tie)

I don't have time for such things.

(continues to fuss with his tie)

What if I can't unite everyone? What if--

Mary Ella helps him with his tie.

MARY ELLA

Mr. Washington? I've never seen you so unsure of yourself. You're gonna do just fine. You're the best man I know and that's why this city voted for you.

HAROLD

I still can't believe it! We overcame all the racist rhetoric, the negative publicity, the negative ads, all the racist literature--

MARY ELLA

Because good always wins out. These people are on the right side of history. It's about time for a black to be mayor of Chicago. And the voters knew it and made

it happen. You're going to represent this city the way it should be represented.

HAROLD

You've always believed in me, haven't you?

MARY ELLA

Ever since I laid eyes on you in the 3rd Ward Democratic organization. I knew you'd do big things.

HAROLD

But did you think that I'd ever be mayor?

MARY ELLA

If you wanted it, I knew you'd achieve it.

HAROLD

Even when I didn't know that this was what I wanted.

MARY ELLA

You figured it out.

HAROLD

I think this is going to be the best thing I've done. Don't you think?

MARY ELLA

I think it's going to be your legacy.

HAROLD

I just want to do good work. I want to bring this city together. I want everyone to prosper, but more importantly I want blacks to get a fair shake.

MARY ELLA

With you as mayor, everyone will be better off. Blacks, Hispanics, gays, women. Even white folks!

HAROLD

You know, I couldn't do any of this without you. I want you to know how much I appreciate you.

Harold reaches in his pocket and pulls out a ring box.

HAROLD (CONT'D)

Will you marry me?

MARY ELLA

Yes!

Harold puts the ring on her finger and gives her a kiss. He turns and checks himself out in the mirror. He grabs his coat. Mary Ella grabs her purse and they head out the door.

INT. NAVY PIER BALLROOM-DAY

A stream of people come into the ballroom. There are more outside who can't get in. Ed Vrdolyak talks to Ed Burke. Mayor Byrne makes her way to her seat.

EXT. HAROLD WASHINGTON'S HOME-DAY

Harold and Mary Ella get into the limo.

EXT. CHICAGO CITY STREET

The limo drives up lake shore drive towards Navy Pier. Harold is looking over his speech. Mary Ella looks on.

INT. NAVY PIER BALLROOM-DAY

Police start to get in place. They line up on either side of the entrance. The band tunes their instruments.

EXT. NAVY PIER BALLROOM-DAY

Harold's limo pulls up. Several cars pull up behind the limo. A man approaches the limo and opens the door. Harold steps out followed by Mary Ella.

INT. NAVY PIER BALLROOM-DAY

The house manager signals to the conductor. He raises his baton and the band starts to play. The police line up to salute the new mayor as he enters. Harold enters the ballroom and the crowd cheers. The people on the stage stand and applaud the new mayor. Harold and Mary Ella walk in followed by his brothers, and sister. Harold waves to the crowd. He climbs

the stairs to the stage and is greeted by Mayor Byrne, Judge Freeman, et al. The crowd is loud and happy. The cheers go on for several minutes.

INT. NAVY PIER BALLROOM DAY CONTINUOUS

Everyone is singing the national anthem.

JANE

...And the home of the brave,

Applause.

JANE (CONT'D)

I would now like to welcome to the podium the honorable Charles E Freeman, judge of the Circuit court to administer the oath of office to Honorable Harold Washington as Mayor of the City of Chicago.

Applause. Judge Freeman and Harold Washington approach the podium. Judge Freeman holds the Bible out for Harold.

JUDGE FREEMAN

Please place your hand on the Bible, raise your right and repeat after me...I, Harold Washington...

HAROLD

I, Harold Washington...

JUDGE FREEMAN

...do solemnly swear to execute the duties of the Mayor of the city of Chicago...

HAROLD

...do solemnly swear to execute the duties of the Mayor of the city of Chicago...

JUDGE FREEMAN

...and to uphold the statutes and ordinances of the city of Chicago...

HAROLD

...and to uphold the statutes and ordinances of the city of Chicago...

JUDGE FREEMAN

...and to protect and defend the
constitution of the state of IL and of the
United States of America.

HAROLD

...and to protect and defend the
constitution of the state of IL and of the
United States of America.

JUDGE FREEMAN

Congratulations!

They shake hands. Jane Byrne brings the gavel over to Harold
and hands it to him.

JANE

Here, sir. I believe this is yours.
(hands him the gavel) I wish you
the very best from my family and
me. Congratulations!

They shake hands.

Harold steps up to the podium.

HAROLD

(examining the gavel)

This is a very serious vow that I've just
taken before God and man, to do everything
in my power to protect this city and every
person in it. I do not take this duty
lightly. I was up late last night thinking
about this moment. It went through my head
hundreds and hundreds of times, and words
that I was reading put me in a reflective
and a somber, somber mood.

I made a list of some of the things you told
me during the election campaign, and I
found out that you had given me the best
and most solid advice...My election was
the result of the greatest grass roots
effort in the history of the City of
Chicago. It may have been equaled
somewhere in this country, I know not
where...

INT. 10TH WARD ALDERMANIC OFFICE-NIGHT

Vrdolyak, Burke, FRED ROTI, 65; RICHARD MELL, 47, FRANK DAMATO, et al. have a meeting in Vrdolyak's office. Vrdolyak sits on the edge of his desk. Ed Burke and Fred Roti sit in chairs. The others stand around.

HAROLD (V.O.)

...So that there's no confusion, these cuts will begin in the Mayor's office. I'm going to set a personal example for what we all have to do by working harder and longer than you've ever seen a mayor work before.

Applause.

INT. 10TH WARD ALDERMANIC OFFICE-NIGHT

Vrdolyak is having a very intense discussion with the aldermen. He's getting their assurance that all of them are going to stick together and block things the new Mayor tries to do.

HAROLD (V.O.)

Today, I want to tell you how proud I am to be your Mayor. There have been 41 mayors before me and when I was growing up in this city and attending its public schools, it never dawned upon me nor did I dream that the flame would pass my way. But it has.

My good friends and neighbors, the oath of office that I have taken today before God binds us all together. I cannot be successful without you. But with you, we can not fail. I reach out my hand to you and I ask for help. With the same adventurous spirit of Jean Pointe Baptiste DuSable when he founded Chicago, we are going to do some great deeds here together.

Applause.

HAROLD (CONT'D)

In the beginning there was the word. Throughout this campaign you've given me

the word. The word is over. Let's go to work! Thank you.

Applause. Harold bangs the gavel.

INT. CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS - DAY

City Council is in session.

MONTAGE

There's an overwhelming number of failed appointments and resolutions one after the other

Failed Appointment 29 Nays, 21 Yeas

Failed appointment 29 Nays, 21 Yeas

Pickers are outside city hall "Stop the Vrdolyak 29" "Free Mandela"

More failed appointments and resolutions-29 Nays, 21 Yeas

INT. CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS-DAY

City Council is in session. There is an audience in the gallery. REV. HERBERT MARTIN, 40 opens the meeting with a prayer. After the prayer, Harold calls the meeting to order.

HAROLD

Ladies and gentlemen--I submit herewith a resolution to pave streets, fix sewers, install curbs and make other improvements to the 19th Ward using municipal bonds. We will issue 3 year bonds at the current rate to fund these improvements. Your favorable consideration of this resolution will be appreciated.

WILSON FROST

I move that we suspend the rules temporarily for the immediate consideration of the proposed resolution concerning using municipal bonds for street improvement in the 19th ward.

HAROLD
All in favor.

20 yeas. Harold looks incredulous.

HAROLD (CONT'D)
Opposed?

29 nays.

HAROLD (CONT'D)
Motion failed to pass. The resolution is referred to the Committee on Finance and the Committee on Committees and Rules.

Harold sits in disbelief. After a few moments

HAROLD (CONT'D)
You understand don't you that this resolution was to help the residents of Mt. Washington to have sewers so that their streets don't flood everytime it rains--

MICHAEL SHEAHAN
Yeah, by raising my constituents' taxes!

HAROLD
That's not true. We use bonds so that--

MICHAEL SHEAHAN
Yes it is! You can't expect to spend that money--

HAROLD
It's the best way to--

Harold and Michael argue back and forth for a few moments. Harold stands and bangs the gavel as Michael continues to argue.

HAROLD (CONT'D)
Order! Order! Order!!

Harold looks out over the council floor. He's almost defeated. He shakes his head in disbelief. Alderman Burton Natarus stands.

HAROLD (CONT'D)

The Chair recognizes Alderman Natarus.

BURTON

I move that we adjourn the council meeting.

Several aldermen start grumbling. "What? We just got started!"
"What's going on?"

HAROLD

All in favor.

Several aldermen shout yea.

HAROLD (CONT'D)

Opposed.

Several more aldermen shout nay.

HAROLD (CONT'D)

We're adjourned!

Bangs the gavel. Harold turns and leaves the chambers.
Several of the "29" shout that they need a roll call vote.
Harold's supporters follow him out of the chambers.

ED VRDOLYAK

You can't just adjourn the meeting!! You
didn't have the votes.

Ed Vrdolyak looks around wondering what the hell is going on.
Eventually he runs up to the mayor's chair.

INT. CITY HALL CONTINUOUS

Harold walks down the hall to his office. He's followed by all
of his supporters including TYRONE KENNER, 50 black with a short
afro and a mustache.

TYRONE KENNER

Mayor Washington! Mayor Washington!

Harold continues walking until he reaches his office door. He
opens the door, enters and walks to his desk. He sits down,
slams his portfolio on the desk and motions his supporters into

his office. MARION VOLINI, 48 (white) decides to go back to the council chambers to see what's going on.

INT. CITY COUNCIL

Ed Vrdolyak is standing at the mayor's chair. He's banging the gavel. The chamber audience is rowdy. Ed attempts to gain order and bangs the gavel again. The audience is shouting "We want Harold"

ED VRDOLYAK

We want Harold too, but he ran away.

The audience continues to shout. Ed Burke stands.

ED BURKE

I move that Alderman Vrdolyak be elected as temporary presiding officer of the city council in absence of the mayor, until the council elects a President Pro Tempore...All in favor

29 "ayes"

ED BURKE (CONT'D)

Opposed?

Silence.

Ed V. bangs the gavel.

ED VRDOLYAK

Motion prevails.

The audience yells "You're not the mayor" Ed V. bangs the gavel until they quiet down. Marion Volini peeks around the corner.

ED VRDOLYAK (CONT'D)

Order! Order! We've still got city business to conduct. Order!

The audience members start filing out. They begin to quiet down.

ED BURKE

I move that we increase the number of committees to 29.

ED VRDOLYAK
All in favor

29 ayes

ED VRDOLYAK (CONT'D)
Opposed.

Silent.

ED VRDOLYAK (CONT'D)
(bangs gavel)
Motion prevails.

ED BURKE
I move that Alderman Richard Mell be elected Vice Mayor for the 1983-1987 term.

ED VRDOLYAK
All those in favor.

29 yeas

ED VRDOLYAK (CONT'D)
Opposed.

Marion calls from the corner.

MARION
Nay!!!

They turn to see who gave the dissenting vote.

ED VRDOLYAK
Motion passes.

A few stragglers start yelling again as they file out. Ed V. bangs the gavel.

INT. MAYOR'S OFFICE

Several of his supporters are crowded into his office and many are hanging outside the door. Harold sits in his chair thinking. Others are saying "They're being racist. The mayor can't do anything." BOBBY RUSH, 37 and ALLAN STREETER, 48 approach the mayor's desk.

BOBBY RUSH

This is some bullshit!

HAROLD

They certainly seem to have us by the balls, excuse my french.

ALLAN STREETER

Mayor, they ain't gonna let nothing pass! The whole city is gonna be shut down.

HAROLD

Now, now. Let's not get carried way. I don't think even Fast Eddie and his cronies want to shut down government. That would affect their constituents which doesn't look good on them. No, they're trying to make me look like I can't control the council. And right now they've got the upper hand.

BOBBY RUSH

What's our next move?

HAROLD

I'm not sure. I tried to appeal to their sense of decency and their love for this city.

INT. CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS

Ed Vrdolyak is still in the mayor's seat. The crowd is still grumbling. Ed Burke is in the middle of a list of committees.

ED BURKE

Fred Roti-Committee on Buildings, Frank Stemberk-Committee on Committees and Rules, Frank Brady-Committee on Employment, Alderman Majercyzk-Committee

on Health, and myself, I will chair the Finance Committee.

ED VRDOLYAK
All in favor?

29 ayes

ED VRDOLYAK (CONT'D)
Opposed?

Silence. Ed bangs the gavel.

ED VRDOLYAK (CONT'D)
Motion prevails.

The remaining crowd gets louder. Ed V. bangs the gavel and tries to regain order. Marion exits.

CROWD
You're not the mayor! We didn't elect you!

The sergeant at arms tries to calm the crowd. Eventually the crowd calms down.

ED VRDOLYAK
Let's move on!

INT. MAYOR'S OFFICE

Marion comes back to report on what's going on.

MARION
Mayor Washington! They've taken over the meeting and they're passing a bunch of resolutions. They elected Dick Mell as the Vice Mayor! They assigned all of us to committees and they voted themselves as chairman on most of them. They **did** elect Eugene as President Pro Tempore

HAROLD
Hmpf. We know that doesn't mean shit. Wilson was President Pro tempore when Boss Daley died and they locked him out of the mayors office. They're just mocking us.

TYRONE KENNER

So what do we do?

HAROLD

It can't be legal for them to do any of this without the mayor being there.

MARION

They're changing the Rules of Order.

HAROLD

Of course they are the...dirty sons of bitches

INT. CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS

The council is still in session and motions are passing.

ED BURKE

I move that we change Rule 36 to read that "Members, Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of committees may be removed only by a resolution of the Council adopted by an affirmative vote of 2/3 of all the Aldermen entitled by law to be elected.

ED VRDOLYAK

All in favor

29 ayes

ED VRDOLYAK (CONT'D)

Opposed

Silence

ED VRDOLYAK (CONT'D)

(banging the gavel)

Motion passes.

INT. MAYOR'S OFFICE

Harold sits at his desk going over paperwork. Oscar and Conrad Worrill and Sam burst through the door.

CONRAD
Mayor Washington!!

HAROLD
Goddammit Worrill, don't you know how to knock?

CONRAD
Sorry, Mayor, but I think you'll forgive me once you hear this news...We secured a hearing by a Federal judge to have the ward maps redrawn.

HAROLD
We just redrew the map back in '81 after the 1980 census. Remember, they were trying to eliminate a congressman.

CONRAD
Yes! But we took another look at the map and it looks like the Hispanic ward maps weren't drawn to take into consideration their growing population.

HAROLD
What do you mean?

OSCAR WORRILL
The Hispanic population has grown by 23%, but they've gained no councilmen from their community.

HAROLD
So they're being represented on the council by whites who are part of the Vrdolyak 29.

SAM
They also diluted the black vote in some of these wards. A lot of the black and Hispanic population were on the fringes of these wards. So they drew the lines so that they'd be a part of the neighboring white wards. This is gonna be the key, Harold. Once we prove that these border

lines need to be redrawn, they'll have to order special elections.

HAROLD

So we need to find qualified Hispanics to run and then we need to stump for them. How many wards are we talking about?

CONRAD

Right now, it looks like 7 key wards. The 15th, 22nd, 18th, 37th, 25th, 26th, and 31st wards.

HAROLD

Some of those are black wards.

CONRAD

Yes, and the rest are Hispanic wards.

SAM

We'll need to take at least 4 of those wards in order to shift the power.

HAROLD

The problem is that according to IL law, you can't call a special election after the 1/2 way point between regular elections.

SAM

Harold, it's worth a shot. We think the discrimination is so egregious that they'll call the special election to immediately correct this.

HAROLD

Gentlemen? Se Habla espanol.

MONTAGE

Harold and Sam strategize at the ward map.

Conrad, Harold and Oscar look at the map.

Sam on the phone.

Harold and Sam looking through pictures.

INT. CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS-DAY

City Council is in session. Harold stands.

HAROLD

Good Morning, Ladies and Gentlemen: Once again we may find ourselves in a parliamentary quagmire, but I believe the resolution of our differences is in sight. I see that through the spirit of compromise which characterized the creation of the negotiating teams, we will hopefully be able to get on with the business of the people of Chicago. Let me explain where I believe we stand, both in the city Council and in the courts. On May 2nd, the City Council adjourned, but a number of members stayed on and continued to meet. Obviously, we have a difference of opinion even as to that act of adjournment, the members remaining purported to adopt rules and as the acting Corporation Counsel stated, the City Council is a continuing body and therefore takes a 2/3 vote of the whole membership to amend the existing rules. This was not obtained. Thus, there was no meeting to adopt rules; but even if there was, the vote was insufficient. Similarly, there were not enough votes to reorganize the committees.

Several of the 29 give each other looks

HAROLD (CONT'D)

The special session call for May 7th was defective because as I stated, you cannot have a special session approve minutes, that is, the Journal. Meanwhile, the lawsuits have been filed to make available court determination of our differences, if we cannot. I do not believe the courts should have to intervene in the functioning of this City Council. But if we cannot resolve our differences then the courts will have to, for we must proceed, and fairly soon, with the business of the city. I have no personal quarrel with

anyone. I am peace-maker and a man who reaches out to each of you for a fair, reasonable solution to our problems. Let's recess the City Council for several days until Monday May 16th, to get our negotiators to the table, and have them come back with an agreement we an all support. The people of Chicago will respect us more if we show them we can do our business ourselves.

Alderman Bloom stands.

ALDERMAN BLOOM

I move that the City Council recess to Monday may 16th at 9:30am.

HAROLD

(to the clerk)

Would you call the roll?

The clerk calls the roll: 21 yeas, 29 nays

HAROLD (CONT'D)

The motion to recess fails to pass. At this time, I'd like to submit my veto of the resolution establishing committees, my veto of the resolution establishing rules for City Council and my veto of the ordinance setting the special meeting to approve the Journal proceedings.

ED BURKE

I move to refer the Mayor's veto to the Committee on Committees and Rules.

HAROLD

The Chair rules that the motion is out of order.

ED BURKE

I'm appealing the ruling of the Chair

HAROLD

The appeal is dilatory. Moving on...

INT. CIRCUIT COURT - DAY

James Montgomery stands at the podium in front of JUDGE JAMES MURRAY, 66 (white). WILLIAM HARTE, 52 (White) sits at the defense table.

JAMES MONTGOMERY

Your Honor, on May 2, 1983, Mayor Harold Washington adjourned the city council meeting after a motion from Alderman Burton Natarus. After the mayor and some of the aldermen exited council chambers, several remaining members stayed and took over proceedings. They changed Rules of Order, created committees and appointed themselves as chairs of those committees, passed resolutions and basically put themselves in charge of city council business. We contend that the meeting ended when Mayor Washington adjourned and left council chambers. We ask Your Honor to set aside all business conducted after Mayor Washington left chambers and restore the council as it was prior to the adjournment. Thank you.

James goes back to the plaintiff table.

JUDGE JAMES MURRAY

I'll hear from the defense counsel.

William Harte rises and goes to the podium.

WILLIAM HARTE

Thank you, your Honor. As the plaintiff's council stated, on May 2, 1983, Harold Washington adjourned the city council meeting after a motion from Alderman Burton Natarus. However, he did so without a vote of council members. Robert's Rules state that there must be a vote on a motion in order for the motion to pass. Therefore, the meeting did not end when Mayor Washington left the chambers and any business conducted after that should stand. All appointments, any resolutions, any and all business was

conducted during the council meeting.
Thank you.

JUDGE JAMES MURRAY

Alright counsel. I will take everything
you've said under consideration and then
make my ruling. We'll reconvene in 2
weeks.

BAILIFF

All rise.

James and William rise. Judge Murray rises and exits.

INT. MAYOR WASHINGTON'S OFFICE

Harold sits in his office, pensive. Scenes from his past flash
in his head.

MONTAGE

A young Harold runs track

A young Harold in an Army uniform attempts to enter a restaurant,
but is denied.

A young Harold graduates from law school.

A young Harold talks to his father, Roy.

ROY WASHINGTON

You've got to get out and talk to the
people...you're a public servant...never
forget that you work for the people.

INT. MAYOR WASHINGTON'S OFFICE-PRESENT

Harold picks up the phone and dials.

HAROLD

Worrill, get as many committee members as
you can and get a couple of schools busses.
I ain't playing with these people anymore.

INT. UNDERGROUND HEADQUARTERS FOR BLACK UNITED FUND - DAY

Conrad is on the phone. There are several activists sitting at desks. Some are talking, some are looking at paperwork.

CONRAD

You got it!

(hangs up)

(to the room)

Hey, y'all! Get on the phone and start calling committee members. The mayor ain't playing with these crackers no more! Come on now!! Get out those rolodexes and start making phone calls!

The activists start looking through rolodexes and making calls.

INT. CIRCUIT COURT

Court is in session. Judge James Murray sits on the bench. James Montgomery and William Harte stand at their respective tables.

JUDGE JAMES MURRAY

I'm ready to make my ruling. In the matter of Mayor Harold Washington vs. the Chicago City Council. I find that the City Council meeting on May 2nd did not end when Mayor Harold Washington adjourned the meeting and left council chambers. So the committee assignments will stand, resolutions and appointments will stand. However, Mayor Washington has the right to veto ordinances that would fund those committees. This is my ruling.

(bangs gavel)

EXT. 19TH WARD CITY STREET

Two bus loads of people pull up and park. The door opens and people begin to file out onto the street. Someone is directing people in various directions.

EXT. 19TH WARD CITY STREET-CONTINUOUS

A committeeman knocks on the door. The door opens. MR. SNOW, 45 stands there. He's abrupt

MR. SNOW

Yeah. How can I help you?

COMMITTEEMAN

Well, I understand that you and your neighbors are looking to get some street work done.

MR. SNOW

Yeah, definitely. The streets flood every time it rains. We need curbs and sewers to drain the water. It just gets worse and worse ever year.

COMMITTEEMAN

Well, Mayor Washington said that he'd like to fix that for you.

MR. SNOW

Great!

COMMITTEEMAN

In fact, he proposed an order to issue municipal bonds so that he wouldn't have to raise taxes to do it.

MR. SNOW

Well, I'll be damned. That's even better!

COMMITTEEMAN

However, your alderman voted against it.

MR. SNOW

What !!?

COMMITTEEMAN

Yeah, he and several of the other aldermen feel that the mayor will eventually have to raise taxes to pay back the bonds. The Mayor feels that he can fix the budget and pay back the bonds without raising taxes so...

MR. SNOW

Well, I'm gonna call my alderman and tell him exactly how I feel.

COMMITTEEMAN
(handing him a card)
Here's his number.

MR. SNOW
Thanks!

He goes inside and closes the door. The committeeman seems pleased.

MONTAGE

Series of neighbors with cards in their hands and closing the doors.

HEADLINE: MAYOR ISSUES MUNICIPAL BONDS TO FUND MT. WASHINGTON STREET IMPROVEMENTS; CITY COUNCIL APPROVES

INT. US DISTRICT COURT

JUDSON MINER, 40, Oscar Worrill, Conrad Worrill, et al walk into the courtroom. Ed Vrdolyak, Ed Burke, William Harte, 52, et al. sit on the defendant's side. There's no one in the courtroom. Each side eyes the other. The bailiff enters.

DISTRICT COURT BAILIFF
All rise!

Everyone stands.

DISTRICT COURT BAILIFF
The Honorable Charles Norgle presiding.

JUDGE CHARLES NORGLER, 48 enters and takes his seat.

JUDGE CHARLES NORGLER
This is the matter of the Chicago Black United Communities vs. The City of Chicago. I'll hear opening remarks from the plaintiff's attorney.

JUDSON MINER
Thank you, your Honor. Judson Miner for the plaintiffs. Your Honor, on May, 21 1981, Mayor Jane Byrne redrew the district map in Chicago that diluted the black and

Hispanic representation in the city. This is in direct violation of Section 2 of the 1965 Voting Rights Act which prohibits voting practices or procedures that discriminate on the basis of race, color or membership in one of the language minority groups. We believe the current ward map was gerrymandered to dilute the voting power of blacks and Hispanics. The wards in question are 22, 25, 26, 18, 31, and 37. These wards are predominately black or Hispanic and yet the lines were drawn to so that the ones that were on the fringes were put into predominately white wards thereby diluting their voting power. We ask that you order that a new map be drawn and a special election held to elect new members of the city council to reflect the proper demographic. Thank you.

Judson returns to his seat.

JUDGE CHARLES NORGLE
Opposing counsel.

William Harte, stands and goes to the podium.

WILLIAM HARTE
Thank you, your Honor. The plaintiffs would have you believe that the district maps show unfair representation. The truth is that the population of the city has declined and therefore the maps must be redrawn to factor in the change. We feel that our map depicts an accurate representation of the city's demographics.

JUDSON MINER
Your Honor, it's true the population has declined, but that decline has been the white population leaving the city. The black and Hispanic populations have both grown in the same time period and therefore their representation should as well. Their map dilutes their representation and that goes against IL statute and federal law.

WILLIAM HARTE

They will still have representation.
They...

JUDSON MINER

They are outnumbered in wards where they
should have a majority.

JUDGE CHARLES NORGLÉ

Mr. Harte, you can't draw a map that
doesn't accurately represent the makeup of
the ward.

WILLIAM HARTE

What we did was move the ward lines to cover
the "one person, one vote" principle in and
around 19 wards. The map developed by the
plaintiffs favors blacks and not
Hispanics. Indeed, Chicago is a segregated
city with regard to blacks and whites. But
Hispanics are dispersed all over the city.
It's difficult to get a minority
controlled map. Fracturing and
manipulations are going to occur.

JUDGE CHARLES NORGLÉ

Council, the map is unconstitutional.
The maps are to be redrawn.

JUDSON MINER

Your Honor, I'd like to submit a new map
that has been redrawn that we feel is fair
to blacks and Hispanics. We ask that you
approve this map and then order a special
election.

WILLIAM HARTE

Your Honor, state law prohibits a special
election once we're 1/2 way between the
general elections. That 1/2 way point was
in April.

JUDSON MINER

Your honor, we believe that the
gerrymandering was so egregious as to
warrant overriding state law.

JUDGE CHARLES NORGLÉ

Thank you counsel. I will take a look at this map and render a judgement at a later date. We're adjourned.

Bangs gavel.

Everyone files out of the courtroom. Judson, Conrad, and Oscar file past William, Ed V and Ed Burke.

INT. US DISTRICT COURT OF APPEALS HALLWAY-CONTINUOUS

ED VRDOLYAK

We can't let that map be approved.

ED BURKE

And we can't have a special election.

WILLIAM HARTE

Don't worry. If the judge orders a special election, I'll file an appeal. And we'll keep filing appeals until we can come up with a map of our own.

ED VRDOLYAK

We can't have a special election before the general election.

WILLIAM HARTE

OK I'll keep appealing until after the general election.

INT. MAYOR'S OFFICE

Harold and Sam discuss strategy.

HAROLD

Got any qualified candidates?

INT. A CAMPAIGN OFFICE

Jesus "Chuy" Garcia, Rudy Lozano, and many campaign workers stand in a campaign office. Jesus holds a clipboard and directs campaign workers.

SAM (V.O.)

Jesus "Chuy" Garcia. He holds a BA in political science from UIC. He managed the late Rudy Lozano's campaign when he ran for alderman of the 22nd ward.

HAROLD

The one that was murdered for his labor and political activities?

SAM

Yeah, but they said it was a gang member that murdered him.

HAROLD

Yeah, the same gang that murdered Fred Hampton.

SAM

You got that right.

HAROLD

Jesus Garcia is a good one. Who else?

SAM

Monica Faith Stewart. She worked on your campaign for mayor.

HAROLD

So she's an ally.

EXT. VASSAR COLLEGE

MONICA FAITH STEWART, 33, (black) stands in a cap and gown holding a diploma.

SAM (V.O.)

Well, she's kind of like you. She's pretty independent. She's not a blind loyalist. She took on Kellam in 1977 for alderman and lost. She's smart. She's a former state legislator and Vassar College graduate.

HAROLD

Hm, OK.

MONTAGE

Freeze frames of Juan Velazquez, 39; Luis Gutierrez, 32; Percy Giles, 32; Marlene Carter, 46; and Migdalia Collazo, 39.

SAM (V.O.)

And then there's Juan Velazquez in the 25th ward, Luis Gutierrez in the 26th ward, Percy Giles in the 37th, Marlene Carter in the 15th and Migdalia Collazo in the 31st.

HAROLD

Let's hope that the judge rules in our favor and orders a special election.

SAM

It all hinges on that.

HEADLINE: JUDGE RULES WARD MAPS REDRAWN

INT. WILLIAM HARTE OFFICE

William sits at his desk doing paperwork. A secretary walks in with mail and lays it on his desk. William picks up the mail and files through it. He sees a letter attached to a newspaper. He picks up a letter opener, opens the letter, pulls it out and reads it. His eyes get big. There's a note at the end of the letter telling him to turn to page 28 of the newspaper. He opens the newspaper and sees an ad stating that "William Harte has been relieved of his duties as Corporation Counsel." He picks up the phone and dials.

WILLIAM HARTE

That sonofabitch just fired me!

INT. US SUPREME COURT

William and Judson stand in front of the JUSTICE STEVENS,

JUSTICE STEVENS

I've read over this case and it's very clear that the map is unconstitutional as the District Court has already determined. This appeal is unwarranted. I won't overrule the lower courts. Case dismissed.

Bangs gavel.

INT. US DISTRICT COURT

William and Judson appear before JUDGE CHARLES NORGLER, 48.

JUDSON MINER

Your Honor, I'd like to submit this ward map for your review. We believe this map has more fair representation. And we ask that it be approved.

WILLIAM HARTE

Yes, your honor. We believe this map is fair and that's why we feel that there's no need for a special election.

JUDSON MINER

Your honor! First of all, Mr. Harte was fired as counsel for the defense. He...

WILLIAM HARTE

The Mayor has no authority to fire me! I was retained by Ed Vrdolyak and the majority of the City Council...

JUDSON MINER

You can't represent half of the city council and be paid by the city. The mayor is the chief executive officer of the city and therefore has the right to make fiscal decisions that affect the city's budget.

WILLIAM HARTE

He didn't hire me therefore he can't fire me.

JUDSON MINER

In any case, they've been appealing any idea of a remapping. They haven't submitted a map of their own.

WILLIAM HARTE

Your honor, the map that is before you is the map that we have approved. We feel it represents Hispanics and Blacks fairly and therefore, we can redraw the lines, but

there doesn't need to be a special election.

JUDSON MINER

That doesn't even make sense. If you approve of this map, then there has to be a special election.

WILLIAM HARTE

Your honor...!

JUDGE CHARLES NORGLER

Alright, I've heard enough. I'm going to set the hearing to approve the map for Nov 4.

JUDSON MINER

Your honor, we were hoping to call a special election before next year.

JUDGE CHARLES NORGLER

Counsel, this is a very important matter and we must weigh all the considerations in this matter. We can't rush to a judgement. There's a similar court case in the North Carolina Supreme Court that might set a precedent for this case.

JUDSON MINER

With all due respect, that case should have no bearing on ours.

JUDGE CHARLES NORGLER

We'll hear this in November. I've made my ruling.

Bangs gavel.

INT. VRDOLYAK ALDERMANIC OFFICE

Ed V, Ed Burke, William Harte meet

WILLIAM HARTE

I can't represent you in anymore appeals.

ED VRDOLYAK

Why not?

WILLIAM HARTE

Washington sent me another dismissal letter and this time he publicized it. From now on, James Montgomery is representing the city council in all legal matters and he's been instructed not to appeal this anymore.

ED VRDOLYAK

That sonofabitch! He must've found out that you were being paid by the city to work this case.

ED BURKE

That means we'll have to retain our own counsel if we want to keep this in appeals. And we'll have to pay for it out of our own pockets!

ED VRDOLYAK

Goddammit!!

INT. US DISTRICT COURT

Judson and James Montgomery appear before Judge Charles Norgle

JUDGE CHARLES NORGLER

I've made my decision. The ward lines are to be redrawn according to the map submitted by Mr. Miner. Furthermore, I'm ordering a special election to take place on March 18, 1986.

JUDSON MINER

Thank you, your honor.

MONTAGE

Harold marches with Jesus "Chuy" Garcia in the Mexican Independence Day parade

Harold speaks at a rally for Marlene Carter

Harold gets his picture taken with Monica Faith Stewart

Ed Burke and Ed Vrdolyak meet with Manuel Torres

Harold walks with Juan Velazquez through a neighborhood shaking hands

SPECIAL ELECTION DAY

INT. A POLLING PLACE-22ND WARD

The polling place is busy with people voting. There are people waiting in line and all the voting booths are taken.

INT. A POLLING PLACE

There are people waiting outside looking at their watches. The polling place isn't open yet. A car pulls up and a frantic man gets out and runs up to the door. He's fiddling with his keys. He finds the correct key and opens the door. The people start filing in.

INT. A POLLING PLACE

The polling place in the 26th ward is dead. One of the workers is blowing bubbles. Another is playing solitaire. A voter walks in and startles the workers.

INT. MAYOR'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Harold, Sam and Conrad watch the election results come in.

SAM

All of these races are so damn close!

HAROLD

Too damn close! We need to take 4 of these races to get control of the city council back.

SAM

It looks like we've already lost the 31st and 18th ward.

HAROLD

It's not looking good in the 25th either.

CONRAD

You know Vrdolyak promised them jobs.
Them Hispanics are almost as bad off as
black folks. And they be dangling the
scraps..I don't blame them for taking the
bait, but damn! Somebody gotta see them for
who they are.

SAM

What's that?

CONRAD

Some dirty ass crackers!

They chuckle.

INT. MANUEL TORRES' CAMPAIGN OFFICE

Manuel Torres, Ed Vrdolyak, Ed Burke et al watch the election
results come in.

ED VRDOLYAK

You've got this!

MANUEL TORRES

Yeah, I think so.

ED VRDOLYAK

I invited some press and I think you should
make a victory speech.

MANUEL TORRES

You don't think it's too early?

ED VRDOLYAK

No. 97% of the precincts are reporting.
You're in the lead. The only way you can
lose now is if they steal this election.

INT. MAYOR'S OFFICE

Harold, Sam and Conrad are still watching the results coming
in. The phone rings. Sam gets up to answer it.

SAM

Hello...He did what? OK thanks.

Sam hangs up the phone.

SAM (CONT'D)

Torres has declared himself the winner.
He just gave a victory speech.

CONRAD

Those motherfuckers are trying to steal
the election!

Harold gets up.

HAROLD

I'm heading over to Luis' campaign
headquarters.

SAM

You want us to come along.

HAROLD

No, stay here and keep an eye on the results
of the 15th. It was pretty close and we
might have a runoff in that ward. I'll be
back later.

INT. MANUEL TORRES' CAMPAIGN OFFICE

Manuel has just given his victory speech. Breaking News comes
on the television. One of the campaign workers turns up the tv.

ED VRDOLYAK

Quiet everyone!

NEWSCASTER

Judge Joseph Schneider has ordered several
precinct polling places to remain open for
an additional 2 hours after the 7pm closing
time. Final numbers for election day
will be delayed as a result.

ED VRDOLYAK

What?! That's ridiculous! They can't do
that! They're trying to steal this
election!

Ed walks over and picks up the phone and dials.

ED VRDOLYAK (CONT'D)

I'm gonna challenge every goddamned ballot cast after 7 o'clock!! Hello Joe? Listen, call the Board of Elections and tell them we're challenging the ballots cast in the 26th, 15th and 31st wards.

Ed Burke comes to Ed V and shows him some numbers on a piece of paper.

ED VRDOLYAK (CONT'D)

Oh, we won the 31st? Not the 31st..
(looking at the piece of paper)
The 37th...All of 'em! I'll be damned if they're gonna steal this election!

INT. LUIS GUTIERREZ CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS

Harold walks in to a lot of ruckus. Luis runs up to him.

LUIS GUTIERREZ

They're challenging the ballots at several precincts in the 26th ward as well as the 15th and 37th.

HAROLD

Those sonsofbitches are trying to steal this election!

Harold walks over to the phone, picks it up and dials.

HAROLD (CONT'D)

Hello, Sam...

INT. MAYOR'S OFFICE

Sam is on the phone.

SAM

Yeah, we heard. Well, in the 15th, no one got the 50% plus one vote to avoid a runoff so Marlene is going to go against Frank Brady.

INT LUIS GUTIERREZ CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS

HAROLD

That's why they want to challenge those ballots. Percy was way ahead the last I checked so I don't know why they're challenging the 37th.

INT. MAYOR'S OFFICE

SAM

Yeah, Percy won by a landslide. It doesn't make any sense.

INT. LUIS GUTIERREZ CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS

HAROLD

Well, the results showed that Luis won in the 26th and he won by enough that there wasn't a need for a runoff. So of course they're challenging those votes.

Split screen

LUIS GUTIERREZ

We're not gonna let them steal this election

MANUEL TORRES

We're not gonna let them steal this election.

INT. A POLLING PLACE

Sheriffs enter the polling place and gather boxes of ballots. They carry them out to their cars as stunned polling place workers look on.

NEWS REPORT

NEWSCASTER

After the ballots were impounded in several precincts, they are set to have a runoff election in the 15th ward where Marlene C Carter will take on the incumbent Frank Brady. In another hotly contested race, the 26th ward aldermanic race doesn't seem to be as clear. Initially,

it showed that Luis Gutierrez won by enough votes to win outright. But a last minute challenge by Ed Vrdolyak, resulted in 10 more ballots being found that forced a runoff between Gutierrez and Torres. Both of those runoff elections will take place on April 29th. The outcome of these races will determine who has control over the City Council.

EXT. CHICAGO CITY STREET-DAY

Luis and Harold are walking neighborhoods

EXT. COMMUNITY REC ROOM

Manuel Torres talks to a room of people. Ed Vrdolyak stands off to the side.

EXT. CHICAGO CITY STREET-NIGHT

A group of people mostly women walk the streets with flyers for Gutierrez.

EXT. CHICAGO CITY STREET-DAY

Torres passes out flyers.

INT. UNIVISION STUDIOS

Luis and Manuel are standing at podiums. It's a debate.

MANUEL TORRES

The Democratic Party has supported me and many of you have your jobs thanks to the Democratic Party. Vote for me and you will continue to have jobs. You'll be able to take care of your families.

LUIS GUTIERREZ

(in Spanish)

My supporters couldn't give a damn about the Democratic Party. They let you have jobs that THEY want you to have. We're ready to work on moving socioeconomic justice forward. (A mis seguidores les

importa un carajo el Partido Demócrata. Te dejan tener trabajos que ELLOS quieren que tengas. Estamos listos para trabajar en el avance de la justicia socioeconómica.)

INT. LUIS GUTIERREZ CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS

Harold, Luis, Conrad, Sam and several campaign workers listen to the numbers coming in from the election.

HAROLD

It looks like Marlene is going to win the 15th ward. I'm gonna give her a call to congratulate her.

Harold steps away to make a call.

NEWSCASTER

The contest that everyone is watching is the one between Luis Gutierrez and Manuel Torres in the 26th ward. With Marlene Carter winning in the 15th ward, Mayor Washington will need this win to regain control of the City Council

LUIS GUTIERREZ

It sounds like voter turnout was low.

SAM

That could hurt our chances. I wouldn't be surprised if Vrdolyak and his crew used some scare tactics to keep people away.

LUIS GUTIERREZ

I hope it's not that bad.

CONRAD

Listen, they will do just about anything to keep Mayor Washington from doing his job. They are like sinking in quicksand and grabbing for a rope. This is Chicago! They could be dangerous.

Harold comes back to continue to watch results come in.

NEWSCASTER

We're continuing to receive election results in the runoff elections. In the 26th ward, Luis Gutierrez has 7,269 votes or 51% and Manuel Torres has 6,493 or 46%. That is with 98% of the precincts reporting. The projected winner is Luis Gutierrez.

Everyone cheers and congratulates Luis.

LUIS GUTIERREZ

We did it!!!

HAROLD

We sure did! Congratulations! You really led a good old fashioned grassroots effort and it paid off.

LUIS GUTIERREZ

Thank you, sir!

HAROLD

I'll see you at the next council meeting.

LUIS GUTIERREZ

Yes, sir!!

Harold leaves and Luis is surrounded by campaign workers and family congratulating him.

INT. CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS

(MOS) The city council is in session. The following titles appear over the meeting.

CITY COLLEGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES: RONALD GRYZWINSKI APPROVED

CULTURAL AFFAIRS ADVISORY BOARD: AMINA DICKERSON, OSCAR MARTINEZ APPROVED

CHICAGO PARK DISTRICT: MARGARET BURROUGHS APPROVED

CTA BOARD JAMES CHARLTON, WALTER CLARK APPROVED

RTA BOARD: PASTORA SAN JUAN CAFFERTY, CLARK BURRUS APPROVED

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS: LAWRENCE KENNON, MICHAEL HOWELL
APPROVED

URBAN RENEWAL BOARD: JOYCE WADE APPROVED

INT. CHICAGO CITY STREET - DAY

Harold is campaigning for re-election. Harold rides in his car down the street. There are people standing outside of their homes with children waving at Harold as he rides up the street. It looks like a parade.

INT. CHICAGO CITY PARK-CONTINUOUS

Harold's car pulls up to the park. There's a podium set up. 50 or so people stand around waiting for Harold. When they see his car, they begin to cheer. Harold waves to the crowd as he walks up to the podium.

HAROLD

Thank you. When I started my work on the 5th floor downtown, I knew it would be challenging. And I asked you and many members of this city to give me a chance. I want this city to prosper. The WHOLE city. Not just downtown.

The crowd cheers.

HAROLD (CONT'D)

I want to redirect funds into your neighborhoods so that you can see the prosperity that you deserve.

The crowd cheers.

HAROLD (CONT'D)

So that your schools will be able to educate your children like they do on the north side.

The crowd cheers.

HAROLD (CONT'D)

So that you can see economic development in your neighborhoods. I believe that we

can do this. And if you'll elect me as your mayor again, I will see to it that this city is fair to all of its residents.

The crowd erupts.

HAROLD (CONT'D)

I'm gonna be your mayor for 20 years!

The crowd erupts louder. Harold waves to the crowd as he walks off the stage and walks back to his car.

INT. HAROLD'S CAR

Harold pulls out a handkerchief and wipes his brow. He's breathing heavily as though he had been running. He's almost out of breath. The car pulls away.

INT. HAROLD WASHINGTON'S APARTMENT DECEMBER 1986

DEMPSEY TRAVIS, 66 MITTIE TRAVIS, 82 and Mary Ella Smith are sitting in the living room laughing. Mary Ella and Dempsey are sitting on the couch. Mittie is sitting in a chair. There is a wall full of books and books all over the living room. Harold comes in with some cookies.

MARY ELLA

He was looking around like he had no idea where he was!

HAROLD

You talking about my cousin?

MARY ELLA

Yes!

HAROLD

You should've seen the look on his face! When he got out of the car, he looked like he had seen a ghost.

MITTIE

You're so ornery!

Harold pours punch into cups.

HAROLD

That I am!

Harold brings punch to Dempsey and Mittie.

MITTIE

You didn't spike this punch, did you?

HAROLD

I wouldn't do that!

MITTIE

Well, why not?! You know I don't mind a little sumpin' sumpin' in my holiday drink!

HAROLD

Well if you want me to put a little in there...

MITTIE

No, no...You're supposed to sneak it in there and surprise me.

HAROLD

Next time.

Harold winks at Mary Ella.

DEMPSEY

How's the campaign coming along?

HAROLD

We're moving along. You know those leftovers from the machine are doubling down to try to keep me from being re-elected. But I think we've got a good chance.

DEMPSEY

Jane Byrne looks desperate in her campaign ads.

HAROLD

I ain't worried about her. The machine hates three way primaries so she'll be shut out.

DEMPSEY

Black folks ain't buying what she's selling anymore.

HAROLD

We don't need to worry about that. She ain't gonna make it past the primary. I'm not counting her completely out, but I'm not going to worry so much about her. She's running on the same old tired platform that she ran on in '83.

DEMPSEY

Harold, I got you a Christmas present.

HAROLD

Did we say that we were exchanging gifts this year?

DEMPSEY

No, but I just thought this was something you could use.

Dempsey and Harold stand and walk out to the hallway.

HAROLD

Excuse us.

INT. HAROLD WASHINGTON APARTMENT HALLWAY-CONTINUOUS

Dempsey and Harold walk out to the hallway. There is a treadmill with a big red bow on it sitting there. Harold laughs.

DEMPSEY

What so funny?

HAROLD

You. This. What is this?

DEMPSEY

It's a treadmill.

HAROLD

Yes, I see what it is. Why is it in my hallway?

DEMPSEY

You need to take care of yourself. You work ridiculous hours, you don't eat right. At least get some exercise while you're reading a book or something.

HAROLD

You know I don't have time. There's a city to run, a campaign to lead. I run around this city enough. I don't need to run on a treadmill.

DEMPSEY

You do all of your running around in a car. You get very little exercise. You don't get a lot of sleep.

HAROLD

I've been getting by on 4 hours of sleep for years. You know how I feel about maximizing the hours in the day.

DEMPSEY

Since you and I are good friends I'm gonna tell you straight up. You're not in good shape. You've been steadily putting on weight over the last several years. You're not healthy.

HAROLD

That's not nice.

DEMPSEY

Maybe not, but it's true. You can't even buy suits off the rack anymore. They have to be specially made.

HAROLD

They're specially made because I'm the mayor.

DEMPSEY

When was the last time you saw your doctor?

HAROLD

I don't know.

DEMPSEY

Just use it once a week.

HAROLD

I'll try.

DEMPSEY

That's all I ask. I'm worried about you man!

HAROLD

Yeah, yeah...you should worry about how old you're getting!

DEMPSEY

Shit! You're right behind me!

Both laugh.

INT. VRDOLYAK ALDERMAN OFFICE

Ed Vrdolyak, Ed Burke, Richard Mell et al are in a meeting.

ED VRDOLYAK

He's out of control!

ED BURKE

Is there any chance of swaying his people over to our side?

ED VRDOLYAK

Are you kidding me? They've all been waiting for this! All of their cousins, and mummies and aunties are just waiting in line for their patronage jobs! I thought he was going to end all that. Yeah, he's kicking out all the whites to put his own people in.

RICHARD MELL

I haven't had any issues. All of my friends are still in their positions and my committeemen are still doing their jobs.

ED VRDOLYAK

How did you come out of this unscathed?

RICHARD MELL

I don't know.

Ed V looks at Richard suspiciously.

ED VRDOLYAK

Did you go behind our backs and make some kind of a deal with the mayor? You sonofabitch!

RICHARD MELL

It's not like that Ed.

ED VRDOLYAK

Oh no! Well tell me what it is like then because I'd love to know.

Richard hesitates to tell his story. After a moment he speaks.

RICHARD MELL

Look, at some point we have to work with the mayor. We can't always be the opposition, not if we want to unite the city.

ED VRDOLYAK

You goddamed traitor!

Ed lunges at Richard, but Ed Burke steps in.

ED BURKE

Alright, alright! Cool off! This is getting us nowhere. We've got to come up with a plan B. How are we gonna get him out in the next election?

RICHARD MELL

What's wrong with working with him?

ED VRDOLYAK

What the fuck is wrong with you?! We can't keep going down this same route! We'll lose every job we've worked so hard to get. The city is going to be a ghetto if we don't do something.

RICHARD MELL

It's not that bad. And Harold has been pretty fair.

Ed lunges at Richard again.

ED BURKE

Alright you guys! We need a strategy to get him out in the next election.

ED VRDOLYAK

We've tried. And nothing has worked...There's one thing we haven't tried.

ED BURKE

What are you thinking?

EXT. CHICAGO CITY STREET

Ed Vrdolyak walks along the street and passes out flyers that say Vrdolyak for Mayor-Illinois Solidarity Party. He hands a flyer to someone of color who looks at it confused and then throws it away.

HEADLINE: MAYOR WASHINGTON WINS PRIMARY

INT. JANE BYRNE CONDO

Jane and her adviser BILL GRIFFIN, 43 meet in Jane's study. Bill sits on the couch. Jane is leaning against her desk. She's drinking scotch.

BILL GRIFFIN

It's not a good idea to try and exploit the racial tensions. They've pretty much calmed down at this point. They've gotten used to a black mayor.

JANE

But they're still there.

BILL GRIFFIN

Jane, don't try it. You're not going to win.

JANE

How the fuck do you know?

BILL GRIFFIN

Because you lost the primary to Washington twice and you know it's virtually impossible to be a write-in candidate.

JANE

He wasn't able to get as much done as he said he would. I think we can exploit that.

BILL GRIFFIN

He couldn't do that much because he was in a war with the city council. The machine was trying desperately to hang on to whatever control they still had. But he was able to wrestle that away from them.

JANE

The machine is fractured and is falling apart. Hell, it's almost dead. This is my chance.

BILL GRIFFIN

No, Jane. I won't be a part of it. You sound desperate and borderline racist.

Bill gets up and walks to the door

BILL GRIFFIN (CONT'D)

If you decide to do this, you're gonna do it on your own.

Bill leaves.

JANE BYRNE

Goddammit!

INT. JANE BYRNE PRESS CONFERENCE

A handful of reporters are at Jane Byrne's condo office. Jane steps up to the podium.

JANE

Thank you for coming. I'm going to be brief. I'm ending my write-in campaign and making my endorsement for the upcoming election. I am endorsing Harold Washington for mayor of Chicago. Thank you.

Jane walks away. The reporters shout questions at her, but she continues to walk away.

HEADLINE: HAROLD WASHINGTON WINS RE-ELECTION

INT. MAYOR'S OFFICE

Harold sits in his office. Conrad sits across from him.

HAROLD

Come on, Worrill.

CONRAD

No.

HAROLD

Why not?

CONRAD

Because I've work to do outside of the government.

HAROLD

Look, we've finally got a black man as mayor. Take advantage of it. Take the job.

CONRAD

No. But I will ask if you will give my brother Oscar a job. He's not as radical as I am. He'll appreciate it.

HAROLD

Are you sure you won't take the job?

CONRAD

You know I ain't trying to work within the system. I'm trying to overthrow the whole goddamn system.

Conrad turns and leaves. He opens the door.

HAROLD

Worrill!

Conrad stops and turns around.

HAROLD (CONT'D)

You're still a goddman fool!

Conrad laughs. He turns and leaves.

CONRAD

See ya later, Mr. Mayor!

Harold's secretary comes in.

SECRETARY

You ready to go over your schedule for the day?

HAROLD

Sure. I'll be right there.

Harold gets up and walks to the secretary's desk. The secretary sits down.

SECRETARY

You have a groundbreaking at 9:00am in Bronzeville, then a meeting with Alton Miller at 12:30pm.

HAROLD

Thank you. I should be back here in the office by 11:30 so if anyone calls, tell them I'll get back to them then.

Harold turns to leave.

SECRETARY

Here! Don't forget your coffee!

Harold turns back and picks up the thermos of coffee.

HAROLD

Thanks!

Harold exits.

EXT. BRONZEVILLE CITY STREET

Harold attends a ground breaking of a new building. There are 6 gentlemen including Harold with shovels. Each one scoops a shovel full of dirt. They pose for the cameras and then throw the shovel of dirt. Harold is sweating profusely.

HAROLD

You think I could get some water?

A man hands a bottle of water to another gentlemen who hands it to Harold. He opens the bottle and takes a sip. Harold stands there for a moment to see if the water was helping. He takes another sip. He's still sweating, but is doing better. He turns and walks back to the limousine.

INT. MAYOR'S OFFICE

ALTON MILLER sits in the chair in front of the mayor's desk. He's holding a portfolio . Harold sits behind the desk.

ALTON

How was the ground breaking today?

HAROLD

Fine except that they gave me too much dirt to shovel. I was sweating like a pig. I'm still sweating!

ALTON

That building will be a welcome addition to Bronzeville.

HAROLD

Affordable housing is needed there and I'm glad that we were able to break ground on this building this year.

Alton opens the portfolio. When he does, he drops a pen. He bends over to pick it up. As he's picking up the pen, he hears a thud. When he raises up, he sees the mayor slumped over on his desk.

ALTON

Did you drop your pen too? (continuing with business) I wanted to go over the next couple of days press briefings.

No answer.

ALTON (CONT'D)

Mayor Washington?

Alton jumps up and runs over to the mayor.

ALTON (CONT'D)

Mayor Washington?!

EXT. CHICAGO CITY STREET

An ambulance races down the street towards the hospital.

EXT. NORTHWESTERN HOSPITAL

The ambulance pulls up. The EMT's get out and open the back. Alton steps out. They pull out the gurney with the mayor and wheel him into the hospital.

INT. NORTHWESTERN HOSPITAL CONTINUOUS

Alton follows behind, but then is asked to wait when they wheel the mayor into the ER. Several people wait outside the ER. Reporters and camera crews start to arrive. After awhile, the doctor comes out and shakes his head.

DOCTOR

Harold Washington was brought into the ER under cardiac arrest. After several minutes of CPR, we were unable to revive him. Time of death was 1:36pm.

INT. HAROLD WASHINGTON APARTMENT - DAY

The phone rings. Mary Ella walks over and answers.

MARY ELLA

Hello...

She drops the phone and screams.

INT. ED VRDOLYAK'S OFFICE

(MOS) Ed V and Ed Burke are sitting in the office. The phone rings. Ed V walks over and answers. He gives a slightly surprised look. He looks at Ed Burke who also looks surprised.

INT. JESUS GARCIA'S OFFICE

(MOS) The phone rings. Jesus answers. He slowly sits in the chair stunned at the news.

INT. JESSE JACKSON'S OFFICE

The phone rings. Jesse picks up.

JESSE JACKSON

Hello? Oh god!

INT. CITY HALL ROTUNDA

(MOS) A long line of people wait to view Harold Washington's body lying in state. The line is around the block. People are crying.

INT. BARBER SHOP - DAY

Gene, Willie, Buddy and Roscoe are dressed in suits. The mood is somber.

ROSCOE

I can't believe they killed him.

GENE

They didn't kill him.

ROSCOE

They hell they didn't! They knew he was gonna be mayor for 20 years like he said. And they killed him.

GENE

He was out of shape. He died of natural causes.

ROSCOE

That's what they want you to think.

GENE

Come on Roscoe. Let's go.

Willie, Buddy, Roscoe and Gene exit the barbershop. Gene puts a sign in the window that says "Closed for the funeral of Mayor Harold Washington"

EXT. CHICAGO CITY STREET

(MOS) People are lined up on the street as the funeral procession makes its way to the church.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

INT. CHRIST UNIVERSAL TEMPLE CHURCH

NOV 30, 1987

Mourners pack the church. Jesse Jackson stands at the pulpit.

JESSE JACKSON

Today we weep, but we must think through our tears. Harold is dead. Observe his remains. We rejoice in his spirit. It's all in this room. How could He take Harold, we ask. We're hurt. We need him so much, now more than ever before, it seems.

We who live must keep the team together. Harold's latest slate is the monument to his vision of the city and urban America. He didn't leave us comfortless. He left us with five pillars that will be challenged. There'll be those putting dynamite sticks around those pillars lest we protect. When great teams are down, they rally. We cannot surrender to darkness, to polarization and pain and division. If we did, our enemies would rejoice. Our

sadness must not be the occasion of their celebration. We are healed by our stripes and made stronger by our suffering.

We`ve lost a friend, a brother, a leader from precinct to Pretoria, Pilsen to Poland, from Robert Taylor to Soweto. Our faith is being tested. We`ve lost Harold. We`ve not lost our faith. We will not surrender.

You fought the good fight, Harold. You showed them, big wards, big city, big mayor. You ran the good race, the strongest last leg we`ve ever seen.

Thank you very much. I`ll see you in the morning, buddy. We will not let you down. We will not let you down. We will not let you down.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

PICTURE OF SMILING HAROLD WASHINGTON

SCROLLING LIST OF HAROLD WASHINGTON ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Harold Washington computerized the voter registration rolls.

Harold ensured the Voting Rights Act of 1965 remained in effect

Harold initiated the development of the south shore area

Harold oversaw the development of Navy Pier

Because of Harold, Chicago city government is more transparent

Harold Washington Institute for Research and Policy Studies at Northeastern IL Univ

Main Library was named for Harold Washington

One of the City Colleges was named after Harold Washington

Harold Washington Cultural Center opens in Bronzeville

Created the Ethics Commission

Led movement for MLK holiday in IL