

# Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with Taylor Pensoneau

Part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library  
*Illinois Statecraft – Gov. Quinn* Oral History project

Interview # ISQ-A-L-2020-031

Taylor Pensoneau, the Illinois statehouse reporter for the St. Louis *Post-Dispatch* during the 1970s, was interviewed on the date listed below as part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library's *Illinois Statecraft – Gov. Quinn* Oral History project.

Interview dates & location:

Date: Jul 15, 2020    Location: Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library, Springfield, IL

Interview Format: Digital audio

Interviewer: Mark R. DePue, Director of Oral History, ALPL

Transcription by: \_\_\_\_\_

Edited by: \_\_\_\_\_

Transcript being  
processed

Total Pages: \_\_\_\_\_    Total Time: 1:06 / 1.1 hrs

Accessioned into the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Archives on August 7, 2020.

The interview is archived at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library in Springfield, Illinois.

© 2020 Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library

## Abstract

### Taylor Pensoneau, *Illinois Statecraft – Quinn*, ISQ-A-L-2020-0??

**Biographical Information/Overview of Interview:** Taylor Pensoneau was born on October 20th, 1940 in Belleville, Illinois. He decided early on to go into journalism, earning his college degree from the University of Missouri-Columbia in 1962. Pensoneau covered the Illinois Statehouse beat for the St. Louis *Post Dispatch* from October 1965 through January 1978. During that time, he closely followed the governorship of Dan Walker, and became acquainted with one of Walker's young staff members, Pat Quinn.

Pensoneau first encountered Quinn when Quinn was helping to run Walker's gubernatorial campaign in southern Illinois in 1971-72. He got to know Quinn during that campaign, then followed Quinn's career in the Walker administration, first in a role as ombudsman for Governor Walker, then his transfer to the Department of Transportation, where Pensoneau recalls Quinn assisted on personnel matters. That position was often considered one dealing with patronage issues, a practice which was entirely legal and accepted at the time. In early 1975 Pensoneau wrote a series of articles about allegations in the Department of Transportation and other departments of ghost payrollers. These were often young Quinn staffers who on paper worked at a specific agency but in reality performed work for the governor's office, in some cases tasks of a political nature. Many over the years have alleged that Pat Quinn was one of Walker's ghost payrollers. Pensoneau did not cite Quinn by name in any of his articles, nor does he know if that was actually the case for Quinn.

**Subject Headings/Key Words:** Pat Quinn; Governor Dan Walker; St. Louis *Post Dispatch*; 1972 Illinois gubernatorial campaign; political patronage; ghost payrollers; Victor DeGrazia; Illinois Department of Transportation; Cutback Amendment of 1980

**Notes to the Reader:** Readers of the oral history memoir should bear in mind that this is a transcript of the spoken word, and that the interviewer, interviewee and editor sought to preserve the informal, conversational style that is inherent in such historical sources. The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library is not responsible for the factual accuracy of the memoir, nor for the views expressed therein. We leave these for the reader to judge.

## COPYRIGHT

**The following material can be used for educational and other non-commercial purposes without the written permission of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library. "Fair use" criteria of Section 107 of the Copyright Act of 1976 must be followed. These materials are not to be deposited in other repositories, nor used for resale or commercial purposes without the authorization from the Audio-Visual Curator at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library, 112 N. 6th Street, Springfield, Illinois 62701. Telephone (217) 785-7955**