



The lumpy "as told to" autobiography of a born-again black Horatio Alger. Johnson, who now serves the Carter administration as an adviser on racial problems, worked his way up from destitution through a career in the Marines, made a killing in insurance, and finally became Assistant Secretary of the Navy under Nixon. He is an intensely, almost embarrassingly, patriotic conservative, standing foursquare behind Reagan and Goldwater, but he's fought racism in the armed forces as vigorously as any radical activist. Johnson is also a

leading Evangelical figure on the Washington scene--as attested by Charles Colson's introduction to the book--and the organizer of some well-attended government prayer breakfasts. Nobody can question either his personal dynamism or the sincerity of his faith. As edited by Balsiger, however, he comes across as an incredibly naive believer in the American Dream. "Mr. Reagan," says Johnson in his first interview with the governor, "let me just ask you a simple question. How do you feel about the insurance business and the free-enterprise system?" Reagan, not too surprisingly, favors both, and when he later tells the press that he's patterned his life after "the Man from Galilee," Johnson is completely won over. He seems overawed by the fact that he's been taken into the councils of the mighty, and unaware that his

assignments, such as reviewing the Pacific Fleet, are mostly ceremonial. He has a few moving tales to tell, such as the deaths of his oldest son (an anaesthetist's blunder) and of his father (at 104!), but his story as a whole will appeal only to die-hard fans of the inspirational genre.