

PANEL MEMBERS:

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Marie Bernard Miller

Dorothy K. Rappeport, Fort Smith, Arkansas

~~Dr. Beverly White, Marianna, Arkansas~~

Arnell Willis, West Helena, Arkansas

Rabbi Eugene Levy, Little Rock, Arkansas

Linda Ann Poindexter, Little Rock, Arkansas

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P R O C E E D I N G S

1
2 MR. PATTESON: The meeting of the Arkansas
3 Advisory Committee to the U. S. Commission on Civil
4 Rights shall come to order.

~~5 For the benefit of those in our audience, I~~
6 would like to introduce myself and my colleagues. My
7 name is Alan Patteson. I serve as the Chair of the
8 Advisory Committee. The members of the Committee are,
9 and I think I'll go from my list, not knowing exactly
10 where they're all seated: Elijah Coleman from Pine
11 Bluff, Morton Gitelman from the University of Arkansas
12 School of Law, Marie Bernard Miller to my left, Richard
13 -- no, Richard Milwee is a member who could not attend
14 today, also Tony Phillips of Springdale could not
15 attend today. Dorothy K. Rappeport of Fort Smith, Dr.
16 Beverly White, Marianna; Mr. Arnell Willis of West
17 Helena; Rabbi Eugene Levy, Little Rock; Linda Ann
18 Poindexter, Little Rock.

19 Also present with us are Mr. Wilfredo J.
20 Gonzalez, Executive Assistant to the Staff Director of
21 the United States Commission on Civil Rights. He is
22 standing in the back and we will hear from him later --
23 or, sitting in the back, excuse me. William F. Muldrow
24 to my right, and Jo Ann Daniels, both of the Central
25 Regional Division office staff. Mr. Muldrow is the

1 Civil Rights Analyst for the United States Commission
2 on Civil Rights.

3 We are here, as you know, to conduct a
4 community forum for the purpose of gathering
5 ~~information on race relations in the Arkansas Delta.~~

6 Participants in this forum will address not only
7 general race relations, but also how these relations
8 affect education, economic justice, health services,
9 political participation, and the administration of
10 justice. The jurisdiction of the Commission includes
11 discrimination or denial of equal protection of the
12 laws because of race, color, religion, sex, age,
13 handicap, or national origin, or in the administration
14 of justice.

15 The proceedings of this forum which are being
16 recorded by a public stenographer will be sent to the
17 Commission for its advice and consideration.
18 Information provided may also be used by the Advisory
19 Committee to plan future activities.

20 At the outset I would like to remind everyone
21 present of the ground rules. This is a public hearing,
22 open to the media and the general public, but we have a
23 very full schedule of people who will be making
24 presentations within the limited time we have
25 available. The time allotted for each presentation

1 must be strictly adhered to. This will include a
 2 presentation by each participant, followed by questions
 3 from Committee members. To accommodate persons who
 4 have not been invited but do wish to make statements,
 5 ~~we have scheduled open periods on our agenda during the~~
 6 evening session this evening at 8:30 p.m. -- 8:20,
 7 excuse me, and tomorrow at 4:50 p.m. Anyone wishing to
 8 make a statement during that period should contact a
 9 staff member for scheduling. Written statements also
 10 may be submitted to the Committee members or to the
 11 staff here today. Or, by mail to the U. S. Commission
 12 on Civil Rights, 911 Walnut, Room 3100, Kansas City,
 13 Missouri 64016. The record of this meeting will close
 14 on April 6th, 1990.

15 Although some of the statements made today
 16 may be controversial, we want to insure that all
 17 invited guests do not defame or degrade any person or
 18 organization. In order to insure that all aspects of
 19 the issues are presented, knowledgeable persons with a
 20 wide variety of experience and viewpoints have been
 21 invited to share information with us. Any person or
 22 any organization that feels defamed or degraded by
 23 statements made in these proceedings should contact our
 24 staff during the meeting so that we can provide a
 25 chance for public response. Alternately, such persons

1 or organizations can file written statements for
2 inclusion in the proceedings. I urge all persons
3 making presentations to be judicious in their
4 statements. The Advisory Committee appreciates the
5 ~~willingness of all participants to share their views~~
6 and their experiences with this Committee.

7 Mr. Gonzalez will now share some opening
8 remarks with us.

9 MR. GONZALEZ: Thank you, Alan.

10 Just an opportunity to wish you all the best
11 of luck during this forum. We in Washington are very
12 interested in the outcome. We have taken a new
13 approach with the naming of Art Fletcher as the new
14 Chairman of the Commission by the President, and Art's
15 philosophy that it's the state advisory committees that
16 will provide for the Commission those issues that are
17 to be the issues of the nineties for the U. S.

18 So, I would like, on behalf of Art, to thank
19 you for inviting me. I look forward to a meaningful
20 meeting. Thank you.

21 MR. PATTESON: Thank you. I hope you will
22 feel free to participate. We were visiting earlier and
23 Mr. Gonzalez told me this was his first visit to this
24 part of the world. So, welcome to Arkansas. And come
25 up to the podium at any time to join in.

1 MR. GONZALEZ: Thank you.

2 MR. PATTESON: We're very appreciative to the
3 Phillips County Community College for the use of these
4 very handsome facilities for this forum, and at this
5 ~~time we would like to call on Dr. Gene Webber who is~~
6 Vice-President for Instructions who has some welcoming
7 comments.

8 DR. WEBBER: Thank you. Good afternoon.

9 We're certainly happy that you selected our
10 campus as the site for this meeting today. Dr. Stephen
11 Jones, the president of Phillips County Community
12 College had intended to be here, but he was called out
13 on a medical emergency in his family, so he asked me to
14 fill in for him today, and I'm very happy to do that.

15 We think that it's entirely fitting that a
16 meeting of this type should be done here at Phillips
17 County Community College because we think of ourselves
18 as a college of opportunity. You may not know this, or
19 you may or may not know this, but this year marks the
20 25th anniversary of the founding of the college. And
21 in those 25 years we feel that the college has led the
22 way in providing opportunities for advancement for
23 people in every walk of life in Phillips County and the
24 surrounding area. Statistically, we know that of those
25 who do come to us for opportunity, at least 65 percent

1 would not have that opportunity were it not for the
2 college being here in Helena. We're very proud of the
3 leadership the college has been able to give in
4 providing these opportunities over the past 25 years.

5 ~~We have done a lot in the past, but we're not content~~

6 to rest on our laurels, not at all. We're forging
7 forward into the future by developing partnerships with
8 the elementary and secondary schools of the area
9 through several special programs we're designing, with
10 industry through our much expanded industrial
11 development office here at the college, and in the
12 community with our total commitment to community
13 education and development. We are a community college
14 in the true sense of the words, and we take those words
15 very seriously.

16 We want you all to know that we're happy to
17 have you here on our campus today, and we hope that
18 you'll call on us again in the future if there is a
19 need. Certainly, anything we can do to make this
20 meeting more successful we'll be happy to try to do.
21 We hope these two days are very fruitful and, please,
22 let us know if there's any way that we may serve you.

23 Once again, thank you and welcome.

24 MR. PATTESON: Thank you, Doctor. I'll say
25 at the front end, I can't think of anything that you

1 could have done that has not been done. The people
2 have been extremely cooperative for us. Thank you.

3 I'd like to call on Mr. Muldrow now, please.

4 MR. MULDROW: I'd just like to second some of
5 ~~the things that Mr. Patteson has said already. We are~~
6 deeply grateful to the Phillips County Community
7 College for the use of their facilities here. These
8 are certainly ideal for our purposes and the staff of
9 the college has been extremely accommodating in meeting
10 our needs and we do deeply appreciate it.

11 We're also grateful to the some 30 people who
12 have offered and agreed to participate in this forum
13 today, to share their views, their opinions, and to
14 bring us their perspective on race relations in the
15 Arkansas Delta. Along with this, we hope will be
16 forthcoming suggestions and recommendations for changes
17 as well as drawing our attention to noteworthy programs
18 which are being carried out to further better race
19 relations in the Delta area.

20 I would like to say that as a staff member
21 for the U. S. Commission on Civil Rights, located in
22 the Regional Office in Kansas City, Arkansas is one of
23 the 16 states of our region in which we have advisory
24 committees. The members of the Advisory Committee are
25 all citizens of the state representing different

1 segments of the population and they bring their own
2 perspectives and dimensions to the various issues that
3 we undertake. They meet periodically to plan projects
4 such as this and to raise issues which they feel and we
5 ~~feel should be brought to the attention of the public~~
6 as well as to advise our Commissioners in Washington
7 who really set the policy and approve the programs for
8 our Commission throughout the United States. The
9 results of this meeting, the information received here,
10 as Mr. Patteson has indicated, will be summarized in a
11 written report which will be forwarded to the
12 Commissioners in Washington and eventually published
13 and distributed to the public.

14 We want to express our appreciation also for
15 the media people who are here today. We welcome them
16 as well as members of the general public, and we
17 appreciate the efforts and interest which has been
18 shown so far in this topic.

19 So, with those words of appreciation and
20 thanks, I'd just like to say again, welcome to all of
21 you, and to -- looking forward to two fruitful days' of
22 very profitable discussion and presentation. Thank
23 you.

24 MR. PATTESON: Thank you, Bill.

25 Our agenda calls for a representative from

1 the Arkansas Governor's Office. Is Mr. Leroy Brownlee
2 here, by any chance? Well, we make take at this point
3 a ten-minute break because a couple of our presenters
4 are not here yet. I have 1:15. Let's meet again at --

5 ~~for those of you who have an agenda, at 1:50 we're~~

6 scheduled to have had Pamela Moore. She could not be
7 here at this hour and it's been scheduled later in the
8 program today. So, our first presenter scheduled is
9 Mr. Rodney Slater and he's not here yet. We'll take a
10 ten-minute break.

11 (Recess)

12 MR. PATTESON: Let me explain, if you'll take
13 your agenda just a minute and explain where part of our
14 difficulty is coming from. The 1:50 p.m., Pamela
15 Moore, as I mentioned earlier, had notified earlier
16 that she would not be here and she was repositioned to
17 3:05 p.m. where we show Deacon Bill Swift who had
18 cancelled. Make that substitution. We also had
19 received notice that Mr. Slater left Jonesboro at 12:30
20 and he will probably not arrive here until 2:30 so he
21 would be a little bit late. So, we knew we had about
22 45 minutes in there anyway. We do understand, however,
23 -- if you'll move to page 2 -- we understand that Mr.
24 Calvin King is here and we'll go out of sequence if Mr.
25 King is agreeable. Mr. King is the Executive Director

1 of the Arkansas Land and Farm Development Corporation
2 which is an advocacy and support agency for the benefit
3 of small farmers, and I think especially black farmers.
4 Mr. King, would you be prepared at this time to make
5 your presentation?

6 MR. KING: Good afternoon to everyone.

7 I would think possibly, first of all, in
8 beginning my presentation, I need to give a little
9 additional background on the organization that I'm
10 presently working with. Arkansas Land and Farm
11 Development Corporation is a community-based
12 organization. It's non-profit. It's a relatively
13 young organization established back in 1980 for the
14 purpose of addressing the issue of black land owners in
15 the State of Arkansas and small limited resource farm
16 decline in the state as an issue area. We have worked
17 accordingly since then. The organization came together
18 because that was -- it was an issue and it still is an
19 issue by many people in the State of Arkansas, and
20 problems that farmers and land owners in the state have
21 been experiencing, black farmers. And we've continued
22 in that effort as a community-based organization with
23 activities focused from an advocacy perspective as well
24 as technical assistance, education, and training,
25 organization-wise.

1 I would -- In all fairness, I think I should
2 probably begin with the fact that if we deal with
3 history, history from the country and then also history
4 for the State of Arkansas, when we look at the founders
5 of this country ~~and the history of black people and~~
6 white people in the U. S., that the findings would show
7 that there was a direct decision between those who were
8 the conspirators against the King himself. In coming to
9 this country, they were seeking freedom, freedom in a
10 united form and fashion. And they made a very blatant
11 decision. They either had to hang together or they had
12 to hang separately. I'm saying "hanging" literally.
13 You know, hanging by being punished accordingly for
14 their actions. But, all the same time once there was
15 the discovery of America and people coming to this
16 country then, there was a very distinct -- the
17 lifestyle, the differences in lifestyle between blacks
18 and between whites and the white Europeans and the
19 blacks who came to this country from West Africa.
20 Slavery being one. The other being opportunities for
21 white Europeans. From that point in coming forward,
22 blacks, even from a point in history and going through
23 that process, blacks have continuously experienced
24 areas of discrimination, even in today's time.
25 Discrimination in a number of areas. I just want to go

1 through very quickly some areas that we have noted as
2 an organization that we find problems with the local
3 rural communities that we presently live in.

4 One is with the banks. Local banks do not
5 ~~make loans, for the most part, when it comes down to a~~
6 minority or black, limited resource or low income
7 people in this makeup of this area of the State of
8 Arkansas. It's totally a different reaction if you go
9 in and you apply for financing, particularly for
10 business purposes, that the sensitivity to those needs
11 are very limited, very limited. As relates to the
12 banks, while there is a lack of service on the part of
13 the socially disadvantaged, the minorities and the low
14 income segments of the population, when it comes down
15 to the agricultural side, there has been more support
16 going directly toward banks. The loan-guaranteed
17 program is one, putting more security with loans being
18 provided by the bankers to, in most cases, those
19 borrowers that have been with them for a period of
20 time. That population which normally is made up of
21 larger farmers and those larger farmers being white
22 farmers. That's a problem. It's a problem in Eastern
23 Arkansas. It's a problem not just in Eastern Arkansas
24 but in other parts of the state as well, in Arkansas
25 just in general. That's with the banking system.

1 The other area that I want to deal with, and
2 I want to make sure that I get this very clear when it
3 comes down to the Farmers Home Administration because
4 we sometimes are criticized as being an advocate wholly
5 ~~against Farmers Home, at least to the local office, and~~
6 the district offices and the state office. It's not
7 Farmers Home Administration as an agency, people
8 implementing programs that have been approved at
9 another level doing their job, in most cases, in some
10 cases. But, the Farmers Home Administration where I
11 talked about the direct loan program, the direct loan
12 program that at one time existed with a much larger sum
13 of funding where they would make loans targeting
14 limited resource farmers and operating as a limit of
15 last resort was more active in that area at one time.
16 Now, the loans have shifted from direct loans to the
17 loan guarantee and that's where the Federal Government,
18 the Farmers Home Administration, is providing the loan
19 guarantee to farmers, and in most cases, again, those
20 farmers that come in are those who are in a position to
21 get the bank, first of all, to serve as the first
22 lender, the guarantee coming from the Federal
23 Government entity, not for the most part black farmers.
24 Black farmers receive very little service benefit in
25 that area. Limited resource farmers receive very

1 little service benefit in that area. People that --
2 It's more directed toward the Administration toward
3 those who are setting policy or making policy and
4 dealing with regulations that are then passed down to
5 ~~the lower level. That's a problem. The loan guarantee~~
6 is -- The limited resource loan, I would ask you to go
7 back to the Commission's report that was done in 1982.
8 Some of us were just talking briefly a few minutes ago,
9 and when you go back and look at the report and the
10 findings then and those actions -- those -- the
11 actions that were taken, one, against the findings
12 related to black farmers and limited resource farmers,
13 you find that there were actually no actions taken. It
14 was brought to the attention of the Commission at that
15 point in time. There are specific areas of interest or
16 areas of problems at the present and there are those
17 that wasn't addressed in 1982 coming forward. The
18 findings were made, some recommendations were made, no
19 real action steps taken. As a matter of fact, quite
20 the opposite of that. While you had problems and while
21 black farmers or limited resource farmers were not
22 receiving the benefit of direct loan servicing,
23 targeting, you know, that particular segment of the
24 population for the limited resource loan program, for
25 the most part, and the study speaks to that, and while

1 they were eligible for the lower interest rate loans
2 putting them in a position to be more capable of
3 repaying those loans, for the most part, they were
4 given direct operating loans, the regular operating
5 ~~loans with the regular interest rates.~~ And we know
6 what the interest rates went to in the eighties, you
7 know, during that time period. That's when we went to
8 the 15 percent interest rate or higher.

9 So, that was the problem. While it was a
10 problem then, it still remains to be a problem today,
11 just lending itself as well as the availability of
12 financing for those farmers.

13 The other area that I found to be quite
14 interesting and possibly some of this -- and we have
15 not dealt with an assessment on that, but back on the
16 County committees with the Farmers Home Administration,
17 you'll note that as part of that study that while there
18 were findings of problems, there was a decline in the
19 participation of blacks on the County committees. And
20 the figures were really shocking, anywhere from a 50
21 percent figure or 45 percent figure upwards. While
22 again, findings are showing there are problems, you
23 have, where there have been a decline in the
24 participation of blacks and minorities on the local
25 committee to serve as sort of the review board of the

1 loan-making process with Farmers Home Administration.

2 When it comes down to limited resource
3 farmers and black farmers in general being able to
4 acquire financing, some of the guidelines that are
5 ~~established right now and with Farmers Home serving as~~
6 a lender of the last resort, you'll find that it's
7 virtually impossible to have an entry level into
8 Farmers Home. An example of that would be this: One
9 deals with the management capacity or what is known as
10 the management history of that particular person at the
11 entry level, farmer particularly, minority farmer.
12 Then you must be able to show where you have either the
13 experience or the educational background in that
14 particular field. Now, it's like I can't get a job
15 without experience and if you don't have the
16 experience, there's no employment, period. I can't get
17 any experience without the job. But, my point is that
18 while that's a problem, there's no program established,
19 there has been no outreach program put in place to
20 service that particular need area in dealing with what
21 would be somewhat of the non-traditional process for
22 education and training as relates to this particular
23 area. They might necessarily go on to college, but
24 they seek that area for employment and a means of life,
25 period.

1 The other thing that you get into on that and
2 our experiences have been, and that being a
3 justification or reason for rejection of those loans.
4 While it's used as a reason for denying loans, Farmers
5 ~~Home Administration has been noted as having a system~~
6 to address that area. One has been the supervised
7 accounts. When they provide the loan to the borrower
8 that they do have a system that allows them to monitor
9 or work with that borrower in a supervised capacity.
10 Now, while you have one option on one end, but to use
11 it as a reason on the other end to deny an individual
12 loans in general, knowing that you have a system in
13 place to deal with what their flaw area is. So, it's
14 like it's intentional. We have it, but we're not
15 making this available to you. We're using what we
16 perceive as being your lack of management capacity as a
17 reason for denying you. And, you know, we have letters
18 and cases that directly address that right now. If
19 there's a need for us to deal with it, we have hearings
20 on it. As a matter of fact, we'll be in one Friday in
21 Arkansas. And that has been an area, justification for
22 not making land available on the inventory land where
23 you have the socially disadvantaged program and
24 targeting the distribution of certain lands back to
25 minorities that management again comes into play and

1 management capacity. But, again, a system that's
2 supposed to be structured whereas it can service those
3 areas. And again, you find at the local level -- I
4 think there are possibly a number of reasons for that.
5 ~~One of the main reasons, again, you're going to go back~~
6 to the findings in 1982, what the Commission's findings
7 were and what the solutions would be to those findings.
8 One was to have outreach programs. Another is
9 understanding what the limited resources were that were
10 being provided to Farmers Home Administration,
11 particularly when it comes to dealing with the staffing
12 and in the ongoing continued education and training for
13 that particular segment, you know, of the Government --
14 on Government programs.

15 The other area that I would like to address,
16 and this is still in USDA, is going to be on ASCS,
17 Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service.
18 You find that it's one of the largest distributors of
19 what we call free money, what I call free money, for
20 the most part. I'm a farmer myself, by the way. But,
21 very few blacks benefit from the subsidy payments that
22 go out to farmers. Very few limited resource farmers
23 benefit from those particular programs also. Again,
24 it's targeted in the area for Government monies that
25 are going -- it's automatically given or targeted, for

1 the most part, towards a certain segment of the
2 population and you know who are going to be recipients
3 of that. While we have criticism on one end when we
4 talk about -- and I say Government support or subsidy
5 ~~for household expenses and they call it normally~~
6 welfare, we have to understand that we also have major
7 subsidies that are dealing with another segment of our
8 population where it allows them to establish equity and
9 it allows them to establish business operations. It
10 allows them to establish status, point positions in the
11 community by way of Government payments. But, on the
12 other hand, the Government payments that are limited
13 as far as household is concerned, and the subsidies,
14 they are very limited and it does not allow the
15 establishment of status, it does not allow you to
16 establish business operations. All the things that one
17 segment of funding will allow you to do, another
18 segment does not allow you to do it at all. As a
19 matter of fact, you have too much money in the account.
20 You simply would be cut off. If you work and earn a
21 certain amount of income, you're subject to be cut off.
22 So, you're penalized on one end. On the other end, you
23 are, I guess, praised.

24 But, we receive very little. Blacks receive
25 very little and it all has to do with programs, you

1 know, the types of crops you're producing, and it's
2 targeted toward large farm operations. Again, white
3 farmers, the land ownership base and control in those
4 cases, for the most part, are white farmers. That
5 ~~again may be just repeating something you're heard over~~
6 and over again because, again, I think those findings
7 have already been made by the Commission. It's a part
8 of the report and the study. And we look at the
9 distribution of those funds and you'll find that the
10 majority of those funds go into control and the hands
11 of large farmers and sort of maintaining the present
12 status quo, for the most part.

13 The other thing I've found in dealing with
14 the ASCS is that -- this is just an interesting
15 experience out of review of some minutes and it's not
16 just Farmers Home, but where there are problems with
17 individuals acquiring services from certain agencies,
18 particularly agricultural agencies. You'll find the
19 same problem when it comes down to distribution of
20 those monies. Disaster payments is one example of
21 that, another example. While disaster payments would
22 go to anyone who is determined eligible, being black,
23 white, small resource farmer or large farmer because
24 they have been declared a disaster area such as 1989
25 for Arkansas, that committees, county committees with

1 ASCS, the local administration has a mind set -- and
2 noted point again, we can produce these records from
3 minutes that have come from committee minutes -- while
4 the national office makes a decision that it is a
5 ~~disaster area and payments are going to be made~~
6 available and hear what the requirements are, you can
7 find with these agencies that they make just the
8 opposite type decisions, or they actually administer
9 the programs that again, works against the limited
10 resource farmer and the minority farmer. One example
11 would be -- just some reading while we were going
12 through some minutes -- noted that if an individual has
13 filed disaster payments more than one time that they
14 would take the approach or their mind set is that we
15 probably should not be making payments available to
16 them again. Now, first of all, the only reason
17 disaster payments are being made available is because
18 it's a disaster, and they wouldn't have gotten disaster
19 payments in the previous years if it wasn't a disaster.
20 So, I mean, why would you change the way that this
21 program is going to be administered? You can check
22 that. We can produce it in actual minutes and records
23 accordingly in our own minds. And you find
24 discrimination practices the same that exist in a
25 number of other areas, and that itself is an act of

1 discrimination because you know that if an individual
2 has a drought or if there's a drought and the area is
3 declared a disaster, you may find some of the larger
4 farm operators who have irrigation and may have gotten

~~5 Government subsidy support to put irrigation on those~~

6 farms that they will be less inclined to have yields
7 very low because they have irrigation there. While the
8 limited resource farmers or the black farmer, for the
9 most part, do not have irrigation systems. So, the
10 ones with irrigation systems may not be eligible for
11 the disaster, but if it's a drought, then all those
12 without irrigation, you know they're going to suffer,
13 and they would be eligible. So, benefits on one hand,
14 no benefits on the other, and justifiable while one may
15 need and one may possibly not need payments in those
16 areas.

17 The other thing I'm going to give as an
18 example of that -- and I want to say this because it's
19 what I feel is a process and how sometimes people
20 happen to be employed by the Federal Government and
21 attempt to use their positions to threaten or
22 discourage people from doing things because they happen
23 to be more in support of what I would call again the
24 status quo segment of the population. One example
25 would be -- and this is -- I'm not calling an

1 individual by name, but an individual who was working
2 and dealing with ASCS again. It has some conflicts.
3 It goes back some years ago, roughly 1986 and '87.
4 Applied for disaster payments. This individual and
5 ~~some others who applied for disaster payments and they~~
6 determined they were being not eligible because they
7 had crop insurance. You were not ineligible because
8 you had crop insurance. Right now it's a requirement
9 that you have crop insurance to be eligible. But, it
10 was misinformation that was given, be it intentionally
11 or not intentionally. So, the individual went through
12 the process. He received his. He informed others what
13 their rights were to get payment. So, one particular
14 farmer who did not get his payments had to go through
15 the appeal process, through the Senator's office, on
16 down the line. And this happened to come out of the
17 county that I live in also, Lee County. He appealed it
18 all the way to the national level. The national level
19 reversed the decision at the county level and said,
20 "Pay the man." But the local still flatly refused him
21 and did not pay what the full benefits were. That's
22 still being dealt with right now. This goes back
23 roughly to 1987, 1988. While another person who
24 happens to be black was involved in that process, that
25 it received payments and went through, but the rumors

1 were out that they would possibly be running for a
2 political office this year, black person. A situation
3 that had not come up since 1988 -- now, this may just
4 be the time that you go back and check the records on

5 ~~it. Since 1988, then was brought back out in 1990 by~~

6 this local county employee and a letter sent to that

7 farmer accordingly. As a matter of fact, the same

8 letter that was written in 1988, informing him that

9 they felt he was overpaid. Now, you know, again, there

10 is -- there are a number of ways that you can do things

11 that discourage people and these are the same type of

12 tactics, you know, that we know that's been used over

13 and over again. This happens also to the person that

14 wasn't even going to run for political office, but, you

15 know, I had heard it and a number of other people had

16 heard it. So, I mean, I would assume since this

17 Government employee happens to also be politically --

18 you know, inclined or involved in the politics, that he

19 would have possibly heard the same thing. And the

20 position that the black farmer -- the rumor was that

21 the black farmer was going to be running happens to be

22 a position that one of the larger white farmers are

23 running for. Now, this may all be an accident. It may

24 all be accident, but I would not think that this is an

25 accident. And this large white farmer also happened to

1 have a very direct tie -- relationship back to this
2 county committee that is made up of large white
3 farmers. And these are real experiences that again,
4 documentation and the letter, the same letter that was
5 not rewritten or typed, you know, is on record. And
6 you can check and see and you'll find out that there is
7 a farmer running for County Judge in Lee County. I
8 hate to talk about my own county, but it's a fact. But
9 there is a white farmer running for County -- and there
10 was also rumors that this person was going to be
11 running for County Judge. Again, tactics that
12 discourage, and again, you talk about -- it was talked
13 about in 1982 as a part of the study, what the tactics
14 have been and what the tactics are as a process.

15 The final area is on Federal crop insurance,
16 and these are, again, direct experiences we've had and
17 cases that we have now. Federal crop insurance -- we
18 have specific findings where they have acted in the
19 same manner, determining people ineligible for crop
20 insurance payments based on supposedly what their
21 findings were. Managerial practices being another.
22 Happens to be during a disaster year. Normal
23 production practices were not carried out, you know, a
24 determining factor for that. Well, you know, who did
25 carry out normal production practices in 1989 of the

1 farmer? It was one of the worst years we've ever had
2 in the history of Arkansas. And how do you use that as
3 grounds for determinations for not paying an individual
4 for their insurance benefits they're entitled to?
5 ~~Again, that seems to be happening more with blacks than~~
6 with whites.

7 My final area of conclusion on this is that
8 when you go back to the Farmers Home Administration
9 area also, the new entry level farmers, we've also had
10 experience where we had entry level farmers and they
11 happened to be black entry level farmers, 1989, who did
12 not have average or normal yields in their production.
13 Again, grounds used for determining the individual
14 ineligible for refinancing is management capacity,
15 management ability based on yields from previous years.
16 If 1989 was the year that you entered farming which is
17 probably one of the worst years ever, you wouldn't have
18 a normal experience. Believe me, and I farm. Your
19 experience would not be normal for the most part. Your
20 yields were not normal. Your planting practices were
21 not normal. In a lot of cases, you just didn't get
22 planted, period, on some of the farms. So, how do you
23 use a year such as 1989 as grounds for 1990 for not
24 continuing with this individual, or with these
25 individuals?

1 I'm going to conclude basically by saying
2 that in Arkansas -- it's not just Arkansas -- but we
3 have a very serious problem. It has to do with, one, I
4 feel is race relationships, the other being with a
5 ~~direct sensitivity to what the needs are of the low~~
6 income segments of the population or minority segments
7 of the population and outreach programs being
8 administered to reach that segment of the population
9 because they're not being reached as it stands right
10 now. That's all I have. Thank you. I'll just leave
11 this for the record, just a written statement.

12 MR. PATTESON: We would like to ask questions
13 if you don't --

14 MR. KING: Sure.

15 MR. PATTESON: Are there any questions from
16 the panel?

17 DR. WHITE: I'd like to know, Mr. King, what
18 have been the results of this disenfranchisement for
19 the farmers? That is, do you see over the last eight
20 to ten years a loss of farms by farmers because of the
21 things that you have discussed, or possibly attributed
22 to them?

23 MR. KING: What type of --

24 DR. WHITE: The losses in terms of farmlands
25 owned by small farmers and particularly minority

1 farmers.

2 MR. KING: A report was done by Associated
3 Press, I guess, roughly three months ago -- not three
4 months, a month or so ago, that dealt with the numbers.

5 ~~In 1982 in Arkansas there was roughly some 1,300-plus~~

6 black farmers in Arkansas. Since that time, in 1989
7 going to '90, that number had declined to 700-plus
8 farmers. So, the impact, you know, of just the loss of
9 that number itself in black farmers, I think says
10 something. You'll find also that with limited resource
11 farmers, be it black or white, there has been a
12 consistent decline. But, amazingly, you know, the
13 decline rate of blacks in comparison to whites, you
14 know, blacks are two or three times that of whites,
15 34 or 40-plus percent were white and I've forgotten
16 what the percentage figure was -- I mean, with blacks,
17 and what I consider to be a minimum figure when it
18 comes down to whites in farming as well as land
19 ownership.

20 MR. MULDROW: Thank you very much, Mr. King,
21 for that very comprehensive review. It's very
22 enlightening to me. Just briefly, you have indicated
23 several areas where black farmers, small farmers which
24 translate, in many cases, to black farmers are
25 disadvantaged in policies and administration of

1 policies, and outreach programs which would ordinarily
2 be designed to include or draw in small and black
3 farmers. What is the -- How are black farmers
4 represented in the decision-making, policy-making
5 ~~processes? Are they -- Do they have a voice in the~~
6 administration and the making of these policies?

7 MR. KING: You're speaking of the national
8 level?

9 MR. MULDROW: Well, I was thinking especially
10 of this area, but I assume that would translate
11 nationally also.

12 MR. KING: Well, I would assume and I would
13 hope that the findings that you will have here, that
14 this would have some impact, both national as well as
15 local in what the needs are and what the problem areas
16 are. Participation, you know, again, there are number
17 of tactics, and tactics were used from a point of
18 history, tactics are used today. They're not as
19 blatant but they're tactics still to discourage, you
20 know, people from both their participation and
21 sometimes in just not having them participate, period,
22 when it comes down to policy. When you start to talk
23 about whether or not policies are being implemented in
24 a form or fashion, that is just -- as far as blacks and
25 limited resource farmers are concerned, then that

1 takes, you know, a review and a education process that
2 they understand what those policies are, and what it
3 means as far as their benefits are concerned and
4 services are concerned. You don't have their

5 ~~participation that much on the front end. I don't~~

6 think you'll find it's being seeked that much on the
7 front end. And that would come down to the political
8 process and the politicians and who they actually speak
9 to from the State Government on down to the Senators.
10 Normally, in most cases they speak to two different
11 communities and different segments of the population.
12 They speak to the black segment of the population and
13 they speak to the white segment of the population. You
14 speak to the large farmers and you may speak to the
15 small, limited resource farmers when you start to deal
16 with needs. The 1990 farm bill is presently being
17 worked out. Participation should be being urged on the
18 part of black farmers and the part of limited resource
19 farmers to participate and understand what is being
20 discussed. That should be taking place not just by
21 elected officials. It should be taking place by those
22 institutions that seek to serve or are supposed to be
23 designed to service the farmers in general. All at the
24 same time, you'll find that in most cases after the
25 bill is passed and after certain things are put in

1 place and they're passed down to the local level then
2 to be carried out by the local agency is when people
3 really find out about it. So, the education process
4 and the outreach program should deal with what is going
5 ~~to happen or what will happen and how it's going to~~
6 affect them as well as once the policy has been put in
7 place, how it should be carried out. But you don't
8 have much participation and you don't have a structure
9 or system established as I see it right now to really
10 look at drawing that participation.

11 MR. WILLIS: Mr. King, I just had a question
12 I wanted to raise. This fallout that you have
13 presented to us of the small, and in particular, the
14 black farmer, what impact do you feel the trend toward
15 corporate farming today has played in that versus
16 racism; just the move away from the small family farm
17 to corporate farming? Do you think that has had some
18 impact on that as well, that fallout process?

19 MR. KING: Well, sure. I think it definitely
20 has, and that in itself was a racist-motivated move.
21 When you talk about corporate versus the total farm
22 population because everybody was not a corporate
23 farmer. So, it's obvious, I think, that the policy and
24 research in their programs were designed toward a
25 segment of the population that would establish

1 since that's the majority of this population, one, what
2 do you see as the impediments at this point to minority
3 access to AIDC funds? Two, what has AIDC done to make
4 sure that that portion of the population that has been
5 ~~historically disenfranchised is familiar with what the~~
6 resources are? And three, what kind of support is
7 given to helping them access those funds once they know
8 about them?

9 MR. PUMPHREY: Okay. Let me see if I can
10 remember all those questions.

11 DR. WHITE: The first part, the perception
12 that there is not access. What do you see as the
13 impediments to overturning the perception?

14 MR. PUMPHREY: I think that one of the things
15 that needs to be done and could be done a great deal
16 better would be that of marketing the program. There
17 is an investment on the part of the state in the
18 minority business office, okay, of which James Hall is
19 the director. He has the responsibility for working
20 with all communities and in particular minorities
21 throughout the state in getting the word out that these
22 funds are available. I think, however, there can be
23 more done there in terms of marketing the program. The
24 perception, I'm not sure -- I'm really just not sure
25 about it. I think that often times it may be a

1 question of those individuals that we see and their
2 level of understanding of business and how business
3 operates, and what is needed and what is necessary to
4 access funds. We are the lender of last resort so that
5 ~~when you come to AIDC, you should already have some~~
6 other kind of funding in place, or at least have some
7 commitment that others will participate, i.e., a bank
8 or the planning development district or the Arkansas
9 development, Arkansas Capital Corporation, or, you
10 know. I don't know if --

11 DR. WHITE: All right, that gives me a fourth
12 question in that the population that we're talking
13 about, you're already heard testimony that these
14 institutions that you refer to already have turned them
15 away, so what advice would you give to those who have
16 an interest in economic development of how they can
17 access the resources before coming to you or put
18 together the proper package?

19 MR. PUMPHREY: Well, first of all, let me try
20 and answer that question this way: You know, I think
21 that the local -- one of the impediments -- one of the
22 biggest problems that we have here that's been my
23 experience -- I'm speaking personally to your question
24 here -- is that in terms of trying to work deals with
25 the local banks in the Delta, you run into a mind set

1 that pretty much says, "If it's not
2 agricultural-driven," if it's not something with crops
3 and what-have-you, we don't want to hear about it. If
4 you start talking about fixed-asset financing, if you
5 ~~talk about factoring, if you talk about these kinds of~~
6 things at other banks outside of the Delta, you've got
7 banks in this area without that kind of sophistication.
8 There is, I think, a great deal of wealth and money
9 here in the Delta in these banks. It's a question of
10 whether or not they want to commit those resources to
11 bring about some economic development activities in
12 their communities. We cannot and should not finance
13 anyone or any company 100 percent. There should be
14 local participation on the part of the banks and
15 savings and loans and other lending institutions in
16 those communities. And I think that's part of the
17 problem, getting them away from that mind set and
18 getting them to think in terms of business and getting
19 them willing to make that kind of investment. I have
20 experiences in St. Francis County where I've gone in to
21 talk to bankers about a loan guarantee, the AIDC
22 guaranteeing a loan, ninety percent -- guaranteeing a
23 loan ninety percent -- and because they would not take
24 the time or had the interest, they don't want to do the
25 deal. I really don't know what more we can do.

1 MR. PATTESON: Mort is next.

2 MR. GITELMAN: This may just take a minute or
3 two because I don't know if you're the right one to ask
4 this, but you were talking about AIDC and getting
5 ~~involved in the infrastructure, sewer projects and~~
6 things like that. Back 15, 18 years ago it seemed that
7 any community that wanted to improve itself for the
8 purpose of attracting industry or business would do it
9 partly through the use of such devices as improvement
10 districts which frequently impacted much heavier on the
11 poor and the minority population. In fact, St. Francis
12 County is one of the sterling examples of that in
13 Forrest City where the minority population was stuck
14 with a sewer improvement district which -- since they
15 had very little political influence -- was primarily to
16 benefit the people, shall we say, on the other side of
17 the tracks. Does AIDC get involved in those kinds of
18 uses of things like improvement districts which can
19 work to the disadvantage of much of the poor
20 population? I don't know if that's your part of the
21 AIDC.

22 MR. PUMPHREY: That really is over in Ron
23 Middleton's shop. I know that we have financed
24 improvement districts in the past, but I'm not prepared
25 to speak to that question.

1 MR. PATTESON: I'm committed to taking two
2 more questions and I think we need to cut it off.

3 DR. LEVY: The nature of AIDC itself, I know
4 a couple of months ago I was reading something in the
5 ~~paper about some internal problems within it. What is~~
6 the nature of race relations within the AIDC, the
7 people who work in the Commission itself? Isn't that a
8 place to start? This is my hobby horse. It's the same
9 kind of thing I asked the previous speaker.

10 MR. PUMPHREY: Well, let me try and speak to
11 that. Just the other day, Wilbur Peer, a black,
12 intelligent, articulate young man from Marianna was
13 just appointed to the AIDC Commission. I think he is
14 the first Afro-American person from Eastern Arkansas to
15 be appointed to the Commission. That makes the second
16 black person on the Commission. In addition to that,
17 in the next two or three days, there will be another
18 announcement of another Afro-American to the AIDC
19 Commission. Your question is the internal?

20 DR. LEVY: Yeah, because that affects, I
21 think, some of the -- you know, the loans for the -- in
22 other words, there has to be some internal agreement
23 and cooperation amongst blacks and whites before there
24 can be any external improvement, I would think. That's
25 where I'm coming from.

1 MR. PUMPHREY: Well, first of all, I -- let
2 me speak to this personally because I am on the loan
3 committee. I look for deals. I bring those deals to
4 the loan committee. Each deal brought to the loan
5 ~~committee, be it black or white, must stand on its own~~
6 merits.

7 DR. LEVY: I understand that.

8 MR. PUMPHREY: You run into a real problem, a
9 very real and serious problem when a loan,
10 development-financed deal, finds its way to the loan
11 committee and all that it has behind it is politics.
12 Okay. That's the only thing driving it. Ninety-eight
13 percent of deals like that are going to fall flat on
14 their faces. Okay. So, you've got to have a business
15 plan, you've got to have a marketing plan, you've got
16 to have all of those things that anyone would ask you
17 to have. After all, we're dealing with the Federal
18 dollar. We have some fiduciary responsibilities to
19 protect those funds and we must make the best possible
20 decisions we can, based on the information we have in
21 terms of loaning these funds. I think that the public
22 would be very upset if we were making 100 percent loans
23 without any equity, without any guarantees of any kind.
24 So that while we can be different and we are different
25 than banks, we do have responsibilities for the funds.

1 Now, to speak to the issue of race at AIDC, I think
2 that AIDC, like a lot of other institutions or agencies
3 out there, may be, in fact, the microcosm of the
4 society at large. We have a racial problem in this

~~5 country, period. AIDC is not an exception to that. We~~

6 have racial problems in the schools and racial problems
7 in hospitals. We have racial problems across the
8 board, you know. I think that we are undertaking some
9 steps presently and looking at ourselves internally and
10 making decisions so that we can improve our public
11 image and at least make a difference, you know. And I
12 believe that there's a commitment to do that from the
13 top down.

14 MR. PATTESON: One final question.

15 MR. WILLIS: Mr. Pumphrey, I've got a
16 question for you and it strictly relates to some of
17 those statistics that Mr. Slater rattled off during his
18 presentation. I wrote them all down because they're
19 very important. I live here in the Delta and I'm
20 raising a family here in the Delta, so I'm very much
21 concerned about what's going on here in the Delta
22 region. And there's something real strange about these
23 numbers, and it's all geared towards Eastern Arkansas.
24 And I believe in my heart the reason for these numbers,
25 the reason for these stats are due to industrial

1 redlining. I'd like to know what is AIDC doing about
2 that. Every county where you have -- I was in Atlanta
3 when I was going to graduate school. This is not
4 nothing new, industrial redlining. It's a known fact,
5 ~~but it just made its way over to Arkansas. They were~~
6 talking about it in Atlanta back when I was in graduate
7 school in '80. Manufacturers do not like to locate in
8 areas where you have a percentage of 15 percent greater
9 in terms of minority population. That's a known fact.

10 MR. PUMPHREY: Fifteen percent?

11 MR. WILLIS: Yeah. It might be lower than
12 that now. But they stay away from those areas. So, in
13 order for your group to do its job, I think you all
14 need to address that and I just want to raise the
15 question. Are you all doing anything about it as of
16 this time or in the future?

17 MR. PUMPHREY: Well, my total commitment is
18 to the Delta, to counties and communities in the Delta.
19 I think, though, to try and speak to that question that
20 you raised, one of the things that needs to be
21 happening here is a concentration -- a recruitment
22 strategy should be sort of multi-disciplined in the
23 sense that you should focus as much attention on trying
24 to bring industry into the state as you do to taking
25 care of those industries that are already here, and

1 making sure those industries are in a position to
2 expand and to prosper. There are roughly 2,500
3 industries in this country on a yearly basis that are
4 looking to locate a plant someplace. There are
5 ~~probably several thousand, if not hundreds of~~
6 thousands, of industrial recruiters out there trying to
7 convince those industries to move to their particular
8 state. There's no science to industrial recruitment,
9 and often times, we have our industrial recruiters go
10 out and tell communities that you must have your
11 infrastructure in place, you must have a trained work
12 force, your education system must be, you know, ready.
13 You must have all these things in place, but yet, we
14 turn around and we see what General Motors did over in
15 Tennessee with the Saturn plant where two cars couldn't
16 go down the same street at the same time. I mean, how
17 do you explain that? My focus has always been to tell
18 communities to concentrate on the industries that are
19 there, try and develop those industries that are there
20 because that is the economic backbone of Arkansas, not
21 the companies that you're going to bring in because
22 you're not going to find any of those. You're not
23 going to bring companies into Arkansas that are going
24 to employ 1,000, 2,000 or 3,000 people.

25 As far as the 15 percent, I'm not sure of. I

1 have heard that when a community, that is, a
2 neighborhood reaches 51 percent black, you do have
3 outright flight taking place. That's evidence that's
4 been documented that that does occur. I have not seen
5 ~~any literature or research to suggest that redlining is~~
6 taking place if it's 15 percent or over. I think CEO's
7 make decisions about where they put their companies
8 based strictly on their profit, what they perceive
9 their profit is going to be. You find that low-tech
10 industries tend to gravitate towards areas where people
11 have low skills and are willing to work for less. I
12 mean, how do you deal with that? We've got to invest
13 in our people, we've got to train our people, we've got
14 to increase their skills, we've got to make them
15 competitive. People in this State of Arkansas are no
16 longer competing with people in Lee County or Phillips
17 County. We're competing on a global level with people
18 from all over the world, and we've got to become more
19 sophisticated and we've got to be able to take risks,
20 begin to take risks. We've got to say, "Well, okay, if
21 we put a billion dollars into training our people, and
22 we lose some of our people because we don't have the
23 jobs for them to take today, well, so be it." We're
24 still better off as a state, but that's the decision
25 that communities are going to have to make. We're

1 going to have to decide to invest in our people. The
2 work force for the year 2000--something is right here
3 today. It's born. It's right here now. You know,
4 it's a sad commentary when you see McDonald Douglas
5 ~~having to put --- and I worked at McDonald's when I was~~
6 in college at UAB -- having to put symbols of Big Mac's
7 and fries on the cash register because the kids can't
8 read and count. That's sad. That's real sad.

9 MR. COLEMAN: Our politicians help us do
10 that.

11 MR. PUMPHREY: Sorry?

12 MR. COLEMAN: Our politicians help us do
13 that, don't they?

14 MR. PATTESON: I'm sorry, but I'll have to
15 call time. We appreciate it, Mr. Pumphrey, very much,
16 particularly the initial brevity of your presentation
17 since you ended up having so many questions. You also
18 did an excellent job of fielding those questions.

19 We were next scheduled for Robert L. Hankins,
20 the State Director of the Farmers Home Administration,
21 and here representing him is Ms. Cherry Smith. Please.

22 MS. SMITH: To the U. S. Commission on Civil
23 Rights, Arkansas Advisory Committee, I am representing
24 Mr. Hankins who is unable to be here this afternoon.
25 I'd also like to acknowledge the presence of the

1 corporate farms and the expansion of such versus a
2 diverse program designed that dealt not with get large
3 or get out, but with farmers in general. I think
4 corporate farm has definitely had a major role. I
5 ~~think also that the resources targeted and where those~~
6 resources ended up, those benefiting from the resources
7 for the most part was corporate. And when you look at
8 the large corporate segments of the farm population,
9 you'll find that they happen not to be black. You
10 know, they're white.

11 MR. PATTESON: I'm going to allow just two
12 more questions. Ms. Poindexter?

13 MS. POINDEXTER: Yes, Mr. King, my name is
14 Linda Poindexter. You alluded to the county committees
15 being able, in essence, to overturn national decisions
16 which have been made. What percentage of those county
17 committees are made up of minorities and how does one
18 become a member of a county committee?

19 MR. KING: Well, the committee process of the
20 Farmers Home Administration, and I'm sure you have a
21 representative that will talk about that. There's an
22 appointment process with Farmers Home Administration.

23 MS. POINDEXTER: Who makes the appointment?

24 MR. KING: That -- Who actually makes -- I'm
25 going to let her respond. Who actually makes the

1 appointment of that committee?

2 MS. SMITH: Elections and --

3 MR. KING: Elections and one appointment.

4 MS. SMITH: On ASCS, the Executive Director

5 ~~makes at least two. There is one, I believe, elected~~

6 from each county and the State Director designates, and

7 we do have a minority on each committee in each of the

8 75 counties whether it be a female, black, Hispanic,

9 American Indian, or Asian.

10 MS. POINDEXTER: One out of how many?

11 MS. SMITH: We have a total of three -- We

12 have four members, I believe, per county. It may vary,

13 but I believe it's four.

14 MR. KING: That wasn't directly on Farmers

15 Home Administration either. You have Farmers Home, you

16 have ASCS, you have SCS. SCS is an election process

17 that dealt with in requirements that you have to be

18 elected in order to participate in that which

19 automatically leaves a certain segment of the

20 population out. ASCS is an election process also.

21 You'll find that there's very little minority

22 participation on ASCS committees in most cases, even

23 where you have counties where there is a majority of

24 black population.

25 MS. POINDEXTER: Will reapportionment address

1 any of that?

2 MR. KING: No. No, it will not.

3 MR. PATTESON: Mr. Coleman?

4 MR. COLEMAN: I've observed in your county

5 ~~and some of the other counties~~ in the Delta where the
6 money that I must have to farm with, I must have at a
7 certain month to be successful, or a certain amount of
8 days. Now, the Federal agency where I'm going to get
9 my money later said, "Okay, you're good for ten or
10 twelve or thirteen thousand dollars," whatever the case
11 may be, but in order to get started, I need an interim
12 loan. So, I go to the bank and say, "Well, you know,
13 I've already been approved. Just let me have the ten
14 or whatever until my money comes from my main lending
15 source." Is that a serious handicap among black
16 farmers, that they can't get the local banks to do what
17 they need to do?

18 MR. KING: Well, among farmers in general --

19 MR. COLEMAN: Yes --

20 MR. KING: -- or among black farmers?

21 MR. COLEMAN: Among farmers in general.

22 MR. KING: Yeah. Farmers in general I think
23 you'll find that you have not much of a problem in some
24 cases with those farmers who are well established and
25 the larger farmers and the larger land owners. But

1 doing business with more than one lending institution,
2 doing business with the bank, with Farmers Home
3 Administration, farm credit services, when it comes
4 down to a limited resource farmer, in general, black
5 ~~and white, and particularly with blacks, you're going~~
6 to find that they're less inclined to provide that type
7 of belief to that particular segment of the
8 population. The other thing I would say on that as
9 far as the loans and the time that they would get it,
10 many of them received in the past loans late, you know.
11 Many of them apply late also. But the application
12 process, I think we should understand that in a number
13 of cases, people were discouraged from applying in a
14 timely manner.

15 MR. COLEMAN: Is my observation just wishful
16 thinking that those black farmers, large black farmers,
17 the ones that I know could lose their farm, but I know
18 white farmers who lost the farms that they had since
19 the Civil War, and they lost them because the brakes
20 were not put on them at \$100,000.00 by Metropolitan
21 Life Insurance or wherever they got the money. The
22 brakes were not put on them, so payday finally came
23 and, you know, they didn't have any other source to get
24 the money. They had swimming pools, they had big
25 tractors. Now, the black boy, he didn't get that. If

1 he had 500 acres, he just couldn't get that kind of
2 money under any source. So, he consequently, he held
3 on to his. Is that a fair assessment of what --

4 MR. KING: I think you'll find that there
5 ~~were less investments into the black farmers and~~
6 limited resource farmers. There was less investment on
7 the part of lending institutions in general. Farmers
8 Home Administration was serving as the lender of a last
9 resort in previous years until the national
10 administration and certain changes that was made and
11 they shifted more towards both directions. Now, the
12 Farmers Home, I think, also has served as the bail-out,
13 not as much for limited resource farmers as it has for
14 some of the larger farmers because as a lender of the
15 last resort, you'll find that farmers who had been
16 receiving financial from farm credit services, from a
17 bank, from other institutions, would come over to
18 Farmers Home Administration, and Farmers Home was the
19 bail-out for that. That became more the get large or
20 get out of the target area for the investments. Blacks
21 have not been able to hold on because foreclosure
22 actions have taken place even if it was 500 acres, 100
23 acres or whatever. And you'll find that they may have
24 gotten fewer breaks and definitely had no other
25 alternative lender to go to, period.

1 MR. PATTESON: Mr. King, thank you very much.
2 I hate to break in at this point, but I am passing up
3 the opportunity to ask a couple of questions myself. I
4 drove from Jonesboro last night and it took me two
5 hours. ~~Our next presenter -- I think we're lucky we~~
6 don't have to bail him out of jail. If he, indeed,
7 left Jonesboro at 12:30, he came with wings. I'm
8 pleased to welcome a fellow Jonesborian. You may claim
9 him in Marianna and in some areas, but we claim him in
10 Jonesboro. Mr. Slater is the Director of Government
11 Relations for Arkansas State University. He also, as
12 you know, serves on the Highway Commission and he is
13 the liaison for the East Arkansas Higher Education
14 Development Consortium. We're delighted to have you
15 here.

16 MR. SLATER: Thank you, Chairman Patteson.

17 Let me just say that it is my distinct
18 pleasure to be here. To you and to the other members
19 of the Arkansas Advisory Committee to the U. S.
20 Commission on Civil Rights, it is my pleasure to
21 commend you for having such a forum today that we might
22 come together to discuss one of the most important
23 issues facing not only the Delta but the Nation as a
24 whole, that of race and human relations.

25 This is an issue of particular interest to me

1 because as Director of Government Relations at Arkansas
2 State University, the second largest resident
3 institution of higher education in the State, the only
4 public four-year institution of higher education in the
5 ~~First Congressional District, and also an institution~~
6 where typically our undergraduates attending ASU are
7 first-generation college students and they come from
8 low to moderate income families. Almost 84 percent of
9 the students come from families where neither parent
10 has earned a college degree. Now, this is an
11 institution that is 85 percent white, roughly ten
12 percent black. The average family income for high
13 school seniors planning to attend ASU in the fall of
14 1987 was almost \$3,000.00 less than the State average
15 for families of college-bound seniors. More than 50
16 percent of our undergraduate students receive financial
17 aid. And while ASU is a comprehensive, multi-racial
18 institution, drawing students from 75 of Arkansas'
19 counties -- really, all 75 of the counties -- from some
20 40 states around the United States, and from some 40
21 foreign countries, most of our students come from the
22 Arkansas Delta. Most of our students come from the
23 area that is the region of focus here today.

24 Again, I want to underscore that only ten
25 percent of those students are African American.

1 Roughly 85 percent white. The point I wish to stress
2 there is whites as well as blacks are crippled by
3 under-development, are crippled by inadequate training
4 opportunities, are crippled by limited job
5 opportunities in the Arkansas Delta.

6 I'm also interested in being before you today
7 because I, too, am one who wears a hat that deals with
8 the issue of infrastructure. We at the Arkansas
9 Highway and Transportation Department let contracts
10 throughout the course of a year totalling hundreds of
11 millions of dollars. Most of the contracts that have
12 been let in the Arkansas Delta of major dollar amounts
13 have occurred on our Interstate system, not on the
14 highways that lead from one city to another in the
15 Arkansas Delta. Some of the largest contracts have
16 been for, say, the Helena Bridge deck replacement, \$3.9
17 million, or a recent contract let in Marianna to do
18 curb and gutter work on Highway 44 for roughly \$1.3
19 million. But, most of the major contracts occur on the
20 Interstate system, not on Highway 1 which I would like
21 to see four-laned because there is not the economic
22 development, there is not the economic activity to
23 warrant such an investment.

24 So, I'm very pleased to be here today to
25 argue that we must deal with an investment in our human

1 capital in this region, that we might come to justify a
2 greater expenditure in infrastructure development in
3 this region. I would also like to make the point that
4 the lives of both blacks and whites as well as all
5 ~~others who make up the fabric of the Delta, that those~~
6 lives are inextricably tied. President Carter who
7 served as an honorary Chair along with former President
8 Ford of a commission on minority participation in
9 education in American life stated it succinctly when he
10 said: "Full participation by citizens of every race
11 and ethnic origin in all aspects of American life, and
12 particularly in education is essential to the growth
13 and well-being of the Nation." It is not a matter of
14 just insuring them a fair share in the American dream.
15 It could well affect our economic and social survival,
16 making the case that the lives of all residents of the
17 region inextricably tied. He does it on the National
18 level. You know it to be true on a regional level.

19 Also, I'd like to make the point that the
20 cost of racism is a cost to economic development. We
21 spend too much money in this region in court. We spend
22 too much money in this region fighting against each
23 other and not investing that money in human capital
24 development, natural resource development, community
25 development. We spend too much time and money in this

1 region trying to create a positive image that can only
2 be created through a greater working relationship and
3 a greater understanding among all of the races of the
4 region. And I would like to make one point regarding
5 ~~the terms of "minority" and "majority."~~ I would argue
6 that they are inappropriate, inappropriate on the
7 national level and inappropriate in this region.
8 Nationally, we really have no majorities. We are a
9 nation of minorities. We are a nation of immigrants.
10 The strongest ethnic strand in America, those of
11 British ancestry representing only 15 percent of the
12 nation's population. The second strongest strand,
13 those of German ancestry, representing only 13 percent
14 of the nation's population. And then thirdly, those of
15 African ancestry representing some 13 percent of the
16 nation's population. The thing that makes the majority
17 is a collective understanding that our lives are
18 inextricably tied, that no man is an island, and that
19 the strength of one adds to the strength of the others.
20 It is only with that understanding that everybody would
21 be alarmed by a report that was recently in "Money"
22 magazine, December, 1989. Therein, it noted that black
23 households with an annual income of \$24,000.00 to
24 \$48,000.00, that a black household with that monetary
25 amount has a net worth that is only one-third that of a

1 white household with the same earnings; that African
2 Americans earn ten to twenty-six percent less than
3 whites with similar educational backgrounds; that the
4 median income for black male college grads in 1987
5 ~~lagged behind that of whites similarly situated to the~~
6 tune of about 26 percent; that graduates -- that black
7 graduates with college graduate degrees, while they
8 would raise their median earnings to roughly
9 \$35,000.00, it was still less than 15 percent of that
10 earned by college graduating whites with graduate
11 degrees. And even though we sometimes focus on that 31
12 percent of the black community that is labeled the,
13 quote, "Underclass" because they live in poverty, this
14 article went on to say that the black middle-class is
15 tittering, if you will, on that issue of poverty
16 because it noted that a layoff, a loss of one or two
17 paychecks will put a middle-class black family in the
18 same position and the same boat as those we sometimes
19 termed "The Underclass."

20 It goes on to note that the break-up of black
21 families is also an issue, that in 1988, 42 percent of
22 black families were headed by females in comparison to
23 a figure of some 29 percent in 1968.

24 Moving along, I'd like to make this point in
25 getting specific about the Delta region which is unique

1 in that it has some of the greatest populations, if you
2 will, and percentages of blacks in anyplace in the
3 United States, in anyplace in Arkansas. Recently, the
4 "Arkansas Democrat," in June of 1988, did a series of
5 ~~articles on prejudice and poverty in the Delta. And it~~
6 noted that in three of the poorest counties in Arkansas
7 with high concentrations of African Americans that in
8 1978, some 22,525 jobs were available, whereas in 1987,
9 that figure had lessened to some 16,700 jobs. It also
10 goes on to state that that was the case even though
11 Arkansas at the time ranked fifth in the nation in the
12 number of new manufacturing jobs attracted to the
13 state. Then it went on to say that welfare dollars,
14 including AFDC and food stamps and Medicaid, totalled
15 about \$36.3 million dollars in 1987 for these three
16 counties alone. It also noted that in 1987, some 1,888
17 HUD-assisted housing units were available, but there
18 were more than 1,400 people waiting in line. Again,
19 the economics of race impact the economics of the
20 region.

21 Recently, Governor William Winter, former
22 Governor William Winter of Mississippi, came to this
23 very site, and he said something that I think was most
24 profound and most appropriate as I talk a bit more
25 about specifics as relating to the Arkansas Delta. In

1 speaking of the Delta region as a whole at that time,
2 he said: "We see in microcosm here the strengths and
3 the weaknesses, the successes and the failures, the new
4 opportunities and the old-age problems of the South,
5 and for that matter, ~~the nation as a whole. The~~
6 paradoxes abound. It is a place where great pride is
7 taken in family and personal relations, yet it is also
8 a place where live the greatest number of
9 under-developed and uneducated human beings in the
10 country. It is a region that combines an abundance of
11 all of the basic natural resources, productive land and
12 energy, water and timber. Thus, it should be one of
13 the nation's richest areas. It is, in fact, one of the
14 country's poorest. It is a section that has most
15 fiercely resisted change, yet it is a region that has
16 in recent years been most significantly affected by
17 change."

18 He was dealing with all that we have which
19 could make this region rich, but he was also dealing
20 with what we must deal with if we are to correct those
21 things that have made the region poor; that of, an
22 inadequate investment in human capital potential.
23 Deciding that one life is worth more than another
24 simply because of the basis of one's skin. He also
25 suggests that by dealing with that, we will improve the

1 quality of life for all, much like Carter was saying in
2 his statement as quoted earlier, and much like John W.
3 Johnson of Virginia stated in his book when he talked
4 about the emancipation of Southern whites, noting that
5 ~~whites as well as blacks were victims of the slave~~
6 system, that blacks were the property of whites but
7 that whites were the victims of the system, a system
8 that would not allow them to see the value of investing
9 in people, a system that would not allow them to see
10 the value of investing in a region, building towns,
11 building roads, building a diverse economic system.
12 And then, we came to rely on agriculture and we came to
13 rely on an under-educated populous to support the manual
14 labor for that system. We knew that an illiterate
15 worker was potentially more productive, but to give him
16 education was almost like giving him a ticket to leave
17 the region. Thus, this low investment in education was
18 justified, based on economics. Again, the economics of
19 race impacting the economics of the region.

20 The lower Mississippi River Delta Commission
21 recently dealt with this issue, and talked about this
22 region of America being the poorest and the most
23 under-developed in America, even poorer than the
24 Appalachian region, a region that received national
25 attention in 1965 and resulted in the establishment of

1 the Appalachian Regional Commission.

2 And let's take a look at the counties in
3 Arkansas with the highest black populations and look at
4 some of the characteristics of those counties. First

5 ~~on the list would be Lee County. It has a total~~

6 population of 15,539. This is based on the 1980
7 Census. Of that total, 8,682 are minority,
8 representing some 55.9 percent of the population.

9 Phillips County would follow with a total population of
10 34,772. Of that total, 18,818 or 54.1 percent would be
11 minority. Chicot would be third, 17,793 total, 9,542
12 minority representing 53.6 percent of the population.

13 St. Francis would be fourth, 30,858 total, 14,421
14 minority representing 46.7 percent of the total
15 population. Crittenden County, total, 49,499, 21,689

16 minority representing 43.8 percent of the total.
17 Desha, 19,760 total, 8,530 minority representing 43
18 percent of the population. Monroe County, 14,052,

19 5,846 minority representing 41.6 percent of the
20 population. And then three more, Jefferson, 90,718

21 total, 37,512 minority representing 41 percent of the
22 total population. Lincoln, 13,369 total, 4,814

23 minority representing 36 percent of the population.

24 Woodruff, the last, 11,222 total, 3,502 minority
25 representing 31 percent of the total population.

1 Now, let's look at those same counties as
2 relates to the percentage of their residents that live
3 below poverty. Again, we're talking about the ten
4 counties in Arkansas with the highest African American
5 ~~populations. Lee County ranks first with 44.3 percent~~
6 of its citizens living in poverty. And let me just say
7 that while I'm pleased to be before you as a member of
8 the staff at ASU and a member of the Highway
9 Commission, I'm also pleased to be before you as a
10 resident and native of Lee County, one of the ten
11 poorest counties in America and a county with a per
12 capita income lower than that of Tunica County,
13 Mississippi, recognized as the poorest county in
14 America.

15 Again, the percentage of residents with
16 incomes below the poverty level, Lee County ranking
17 first, again, the county with the highest African
18 American population. Forty-four percent of its
19 residents live in poverty. Phillips County, 39.8
20 percent of it's residents live in poverty. Chicot, 40
21 percent of its residents live below the poverty level.
22 St. Francis County, 33.8 percent below the poverty
23 level. Crittenden, 31.4 percent below the poverty
24 level. Desha, 27 percent below the poverty level.
25 Monroe, 34.7 percent below the poverty level.

1 Jefferson, 22.7 percent below the poverty level.
2 Lincoln, 26 percent below the poverty level. Woodruff,
3 32.9 percent below the poverty level.

4 Then, looking at per capita incomes, ranking
5 ~~them with the 75th county representing that county with~~
6 the lowest per capita income, to look at those figures,
7 you find again Lee County, the county with the highest
8 number of black residents percentage-wise, ranking 75th
9 in per capita income. You find Phillips County ranking
10 69th. You find Chicot County ranking 74th. You find
11 St. Francis County ranking 67th. You find Crittenden
12 County ranking 54th. You find Desha County ranking
13 62nd. Monroe County ranking 66th. And only Jefferson
14 County not ranking in the top third, ranking 23rd.
15 Lincoln County ranking 75th. Woodruff County ranking
16 57th. Again, underscoring the point, both blacks and
17 whites live in those counties and both are adversely
18 affected by policies made based on race that have an
19 adverse impact on the economic well-being of all who
20 live in the region.

21 Looking at persons over 25 with less than a
22 high school education, again, dealing with the issue of
23 the devaluation of education or the under-valuation of
24 human capital development. Lee County, 68.1 percent of
25 its residents, 25 years or older with less than a high

1 school education. Phillips County, 58.3 percent.
2 Chicot County, 58 percent. St. Francis County, 54
3 percent. Crittenden County, 53 percent. Desha County,
4 53 percent. Monroe County, 60 percent. Jefferson
5 ~~County, 40 percent. Lincoln County, 58 percent.~~

6 Woodruff County, 61 percent. More than half of the
7 residents, 25 years of age or older, of those counties
8 with the highest black populations in the state,
9 highest percentages, all of them have 50 percent of
10 their residents who don't have high school educations
11 if they're 25 years of age or older, all but Jefferson
12 County.

13 Let me just move to a close. I think the
14 figures have made the case, if you will. But, there is
15 a direct correlation between economic development and
16 activity and the percentage of minorities in a region.
17 Now, what do we do about it? Well, you can push them
18 out. That's been suggested. Or, you can find common
19 ground. You can change attitudes and you can realize
20 that your futures are inextricably tied. You can deal
21 with the issue of education and hopefully come to
22 realize that man can rise and conquer and achieve by
23 lifting his thoughts as stated by James Allen, and
24 hopefully come to realize that the mis-education of any
25 person can leave that person to finding his or her

1 place at the back doors of life, as stated by Carter G.
2 Woodson in his book, "The Mis-Education of the Negro."
3 I submit that we can ill-afford to do the latter and we
4 must be committed to the former. Educating all of the
5 ~~citizens, investing in human capital development, that~~

6 all of us might benefit from the good that one can
7 create if given the abilities necessary to be creative.

8 Now, let me close with this statement, and
9 then I'll be done. You may have read something in the
10 paper a little while ago that sounded somewhat like
11 this: It said, "The world is too big, its problems too
12 great, too much is going on, too many crimes, too much
13 violence and excitement. Try as you will, you get
14 behind in the race in spite of yourself. It's an
15 incessant strain to keep pace and still you lose
16 ground. Science is emptying its discoveries on you so
17 fast, you stagger beneath them in helpless
18 bewilderment. The political world and its news is
19 changing so rapidly, it's hard to know who's in and
20 who's out. Life is so pressurized, human nature can't
21 endure much longer."

22 Now, that wasn't in the "Gazette" or the
23 "Democrat," and it wasn't used as an introductory
24 paragraph to talk about the importance of this meeting
25 here today. That was not in the paper last week or

1 last month or last year. That was in the paper June
2 16th, 1833. You see, every age has had its challenges
3 and every age has had its opportunities. Sure, some
4 decisions were made in the past to place us where we
5 ~~are now. But, with this kind of activity, with this~~
6 kind of gathering, we can be about the business of
7 making the decisions of today in preparing for the
8 future to get us where we must go.

9 And finally, the words of William H. Gray,
10 the first black elected to the Arkansas House of
11 Representatives, who, by the way, was from Helena. He
12 said: "Our future is sure. God has marked it with his
13 own finger. We have lived and suffered and fought and
14 bled and many have died. We will not leave the graves
15 of our fathers, but we will rear our children here. We
16 will educate them here. We will educate them to a
17 higher destiny here. Yes, Americans in America, one
18 and indivisible."

19 I think we can do it here. All of the good
20 that can be done anyplace with the kind of committed
21 judgment evidenced by those of you and those of us who
22 are gathered here today to deal with these very
23 important issues of our time.

24 Thank you for the opportunity to appear
25 before you.

1 MR. PATTESON: Mr. Slater, before I entertain
2 -- and I'm only going to entertain one question because
3 of our time limitations, but I would like to thank you
4 not only for your very excellent and substantive
5 presentation, but ~~for your very valuable assistance in~~
6 working with Mr. Muldrow in setting this forum up.
7 He's told me several times the conferences he's had
8 with you and how valuable you are. We appreciate it
9 very, very much.

10 MR. SLATER: My pleasure.

11 MR. PATTESON: I'll entertain one question.

12 (No Response)

13 MR. PATTESON: Your presentation was such
14 that it didn't really leave room for questioning.
15 Thank you very much.

16 MR. SLATER: Thank you. My pleasure.

17 MR. PATTESON: At this time I would like to
18 call on Mr. -- Mr.? I'm not sure. Tracy L. Steele.
19 Mr. Steele from the Office of the Governor. Thank you
20 very much. I get in trouble that way all the time.
21 We're very pleased to have you.

22 MR. STEELE: Thank you.

23 On behalf of the Governor's Office, I would
24 like to welcome the U. S. Commission on Civil Rights to
25 Arkansas, and the Advisory Committee to the U. S.

1 Commission on Civil Rights.

2 I would just like to add that I think your
3 mission is more important now than ever before. With
4 the dramatic changes that have occurred in the past
5 ~~several months over the world, it is more important now~~
6 that we as a people be able to live together, work
7 together, learn together, and prosper together. People
8 all over the world are now embracing our free
9 enterprise system, and we are not only competing
10 domestically, we're also competing worldwide.

11 Being born in 1962, I can only vaguely
12 remember the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King,
13 but I know at that time we made great strides in civil
14 rights. But, for our country's moral well-being now in
15 1990 as we enter a new decade and move on in to the
16 next century, we must make additional strides in civil
17 rights, not only for our moral well-being, but, as
18 Rodney Slater so eloquently addressed, also our
19 economic well-being.

20 On behalf of Governor Clinton, I would like
21 to welcome this Commission and say, "God Bless You."

22 MR. PATTESON: Thank you very much. You were
23 doing beautifully with me until you said you were born
24 in 1962. I hated you then.

25 We're going to try to go back now and get

1 back on schedule. I understand that Ms. Pamela Moore
2 is here, is that correct? Ms. Moore is the Manager of
3 the race relations portfolio, so to speak, for the
4 Lower Mississippi Delta Development Commission. We're
5 ~~very pleased to welcome you at this time. Thank you.~~

6 MS. MOORE: Good afternoon.

7 I'd like to apologize for my delay in the
8 program. The Delta Commission is in the process of
9 completing its final report and today we were trying to
10 get a first draft out to all of the Commissioners. So,
11 unfortunately, I had to push my departure from the
12 office back by another hour. But, nevertheless, I am
13 glad that I have the opportunity to appear before you
14 today to talk about race relations in general. I
15 brought with me a couple of copies of the Commission's
16 interim report. I'm sorry I couldn't bring more, but
17 we're down to our last box. I also brought with me a
18 brochure. Recently, the Director of the Census Bureau
19 was in the region to highlight the importance of taking
20 an accurate count. Within this brochure there is a map
21 of the Lower Mississippi Delta region that shows the
22 percentage of the slave population in the mid-1800's.
23 And if you look at the map, you will see a striking
24 similarity between that part of this region that had a
25 high concentration of slave population and the current

1 Lower Mississippi Delta region. Unfortunately, I could
2 only bring one packet with me. And in addition, I have
3 a few packets of information that talk in general about
4 the Delta Commission and its mandate in the Delta
5 ~~region.~~

6 I'd like to begin today by first making some
7 personal observations and reflections, and then I'd
8 like to talk a little bit about the work of the
9 Commission and the degree to which race relations in
10 general has had a profound impact upon our work and the
11 task that lies before us.

12 As was stated to you earlier, I am the
13 Portfolio Manager for race relations with the Delta
14 Commission. I am also responsible for business and
15 commerce and I also serve as a member of a three-person
16 staff team on regional economic development models. As
17 a member of the team on regional economic development
18 models, I have been involved in looking at various
19 approaches toward regional economic development, and
20 thinking about the degree to which those approaches can
21 be applicable to this region as we think about the
22 implementation of the Commission's ten-year plan.

23 As a Portfolio Manager, I'm responsible for
24 interacting with contractors, thinking about the issues
25 that lie before us, and I'm also responsible for

1 developing the policies and the recommendations that
2 will be submitted to the Commissioners for review and
3 final approval or disapproval for inclusion into the
4 final report. But, let me first of all just make some
5 ~~personal observations.~~

6 I am a member -- I am a resident of the Lower
7 Mississippi Delta region. I hail from Greenville,
8 Mississippi. I'm 30 years old, and at the time that I
9 was a child in Greenville, segregation was still pretty
10 much a part of the law of the land. At the time that I
11 was a small child in Greenville, I had no real
12 consciousness of segregation as a way of life because
13 my sister, my brother, and I were very much protected.
14 But, I do remember going to the local theater and
15 always going upstairs to the top and asking my parents,
16 "Why is it we always go to the top?" And they never
17 really told us the truth. By the time I did develop an
18 appreciation for segregation as a way of life,
19 fortunately segregation had ceased to exist. So, I
20 didn't have -- did not grow up with a sense of being
21 limited and constrained. And, fortunately, due to the
22 hard work and the persistence of a number of courageous
23 people, I think that I am -- particularly my
24 generation, did benefit from the Civil Rights movement.

25 My mother, as a child growing up in Northeast

1 Mississippi, didn't have the opportunity to go to law
2 school. But, fortunately, one generation later, she
3 had a daughter who not only went to law school, but who
4 is fortunate enough to graduate from Harvard Law
5 ~~School, as well as the John F. Kennedy School of~~
6 Government. I've now been in the region for three
7 years and I came home because it was important for me
8 to somehow use my skills to make a contribution to the
9 community that gave me my foundation. And so, after
10 being in the region for three years, I think it's been
11 interesting to think about -- it's been interesting to
12 think about life as I knew it as a child. By the way,
13 I was more or less out of the region ten years,
14 attending college and graduate school. So, when I came
15 back, I really had been away for quite a while.

16 I think that when we think about race
17 relations and how it impacts upon economic development,
18 and if we look specifically at the African American
19 community, a significant number of strides have been
20 made over the years. And as a result of those changes
21 in the law, African Americans have had greater access
22 to certain educational opportunities. And we've also
23 had greater access to the resources of the larger
24 society in general. But, if I look at the school
25 systems in the Delta now and compare them to those days

1 when I was a student, I would say that although we
2 gained the resources, somehow we lost the kind of
3 community commitment and community spirit that enabled
4 us to produce students who could achieve, even in spite
5 of the odds. My mother and father, as school teachers,
6 would often take clothes to school. I remember them
7 talking about teachers who sometimes paid the bills,
8 the heating bills of a family that couldn't afford it.
9 My father often transported students to college who
10 otherwise wouldn't have gotten that extra push. And
11 as a consequence, even though we were incredibly
12 resource-poor, we were somehow able to instill a sense
13 of motivation and a sense of desire to accomplish in
14 spite of those disadvantages.

15 So, as I look at our community structure, I
16 can see the tremendous progress that's been made as a
17 result of the hard efforts and the diligence and the
18 courageous efforts of a number of people who were here
19 during the sixties. By the same token, the adversarial
20 relationship that has persisted because of the
21 confrontation -- the confrontation that is a result of
22 African Americans seeking greater access into
23 mainstream America, that adversarial relationship has
24 made it that much more difficult for the kinds of
25 community cooperation, the kinds of bonds to be

1 established on the local level that place primary
2 importance on the life of a human being. And so, when
3 we think about -- when decisions are made regarding
4 "Shall this particular city increase taxes in order to
5 ~~provide a better public school system?" in some of our~~
6 communities, that issue becomes one of "Well, should I
7 as a white parent pay greater taxes to support the
8 education of black kids?" because in many instances,
9 although public school segregation no longer exists, we
10 do have a private public school system. So, resources
11 are channeled in different directions and people do not
12 see the education -- the education of a black child is
13 not viewed as the education of a child that can be
14 become a productive citizen, who can make this
15 community a better place for all. But, it's viewed
16 within the historical context of black versus white, of
17 the black versus white issue.

18 So, I think now more than ever there is a
19 real need for the kind of courageous community
20 leadership on the local grass-roots level that
21 challenges people to lay aside the weapons of the past
22 and to develop a new vision of what is Southern and
23 what is the South, and a new vision of what kind of
24 society that we would like to see in existence in the
25 21st century.

1 I've probably spent most of my time making
2 personal reflections, but I would like to say a few
3 things about the Commission. I think it's obvious to
4 most people who live in the region that race has had a
5 ~~major impact upon the work of the Commission.~~ The idea
6 of the Commission to create this regional entity that
7 would galvanize the resources to develop a ten-year
8 plan is a very progressive idea. Unfortunately, when
9 the composition of the Commission became all white and
10 all male, it created a stigma that the Commission has
11 had to consistently struggle against in order to gain
12 credibility as an entity that really can promote and
13 push economic development in the region.

14 As far as race relations that's dealt with in
15 particular, the Commission voted by resolution to
16 address race relations as an aspect of the economic
17 development which I think is important because if we
18 look at the ethnic tensions in Easter Europe and the
19 ethnic tensions in the Soviet Union, I think as a world
20 community, we have to appreciate the extent to which
21 ethnicity really has and does play an impact. And not
22 only the economic development of regions, but the
23 economic development of entire nations. So, I think
24 that is significant and it's something you probably
25 wouldn't find in any traditional textbook on economic

1 development.

2 But, besides dealing with race relations
3 directly, race relations is a theme that emerges in
4 every aspect of the report. So, in agriculture there
5 is an ~~emphasis on minority/limited resource farmers.~~

6 In the business and commerce section, there is an
7 emphasis on minority business development and minority
8 access to capital. So, even though race relations may
9 be dealt with specifically, it's also a theme that will
10 be played throughout the Commission's final report.

11 I cannot be very specific right now about the
12 substance of the recommendations that will be in the
13 final report because they're still in the process of
14 being drafted and being reviewed. And the Commission,
15 as a body, has not formally voted or adopted the
16 policies and recommendations in the final report that
17 is in the process of being presented to them.

18 Finally, I should probably add that as a part
19 of my work with the Commission, I was the principal
20 writer and editor of our interim report. So, if there
21 are some things in there that you don't like or
22 disagree, I may be, in part, responsible for that.
23 Although, it definitely reflects the views and the
24 opinions of numerous more people than myself.

25 Thank you.

1 MR. PATTESON: Thank you. May I ask, before
2 we open up for questions, is that -- I know that
3 report is out. Is it widely-circulated? Is it
4 available?

5 ~~MS. MOORE: Yes. I should say it was~~
6 available. We're down to a few copies now. Members of
7 the public can simply call the office and request a
8 copy. There is no charge. And there has been some
9 discussion of doing another printing.

10 MR. PATTESON: All right. We'll open up for
11 questions now then.

12 MS. POINDEXTER: I have one. My name is
13 Linda Poindexter and I'm a public school teacher. You
14 talked about the Delta Commission Report. When we deal
15 with race relations, you talked about the limited
16 resource farmers, the black farmers. I'm wondering, in
17 education I know that there are large numbers of
18 private schools here. But you also have the recreation
19 of aisles of segregation within the public schools and
20 we call that tracking. Does the Commission address the
21 issue of tracking as it has impacted minority students,
22 whereby we're creating some students who are capable of
23 reading Socrates while others are limited to reading
24 Superman? This has got to have a negative impact.
25 Does the Commission deal with that issue?

1 MS. MOORE: I'm not responsible for the
2 section on human capital, but as of now, I do not think
3 that that issue has been addressed specifically. But,
4 I would be more than willing to raise that issue and to
5 ~~present it to the persons responsible for that section.~~

6 MS. POINDEXTER: I would certainly appreciate
7 it. Thank you.

8 MS. MILLER: My name is Marie Miller. It
9 seems, in listening to Mr. King and listening to Rodney
10 and yourself, there are programs that have been set up,
11 outreach programs, financial programs that have been
12 set up that are supposed to be of assistance to limited
13 resource farmers, minority farmers, but our problem
14 seems to be -- so far in what I'm hearing -- that even
15 though we have these programs and we have developmental
16 systems set up to assist in bringing about progress,
17 they are still being manipulated and used negatively to
18 the disadvantage of minorities in this region,
19 specifically, but, of course, throughout the state.
20 Then you talk about education and the devaluation, as
21 Rodney mentioned, of education. The question always
22 seems to come up, "Should a white person be willing to
23 vote for a tax increase in order to insure the
24 education of a black person?" It appears from what has
25 been said that all the programs, all the outreach,

1 developmental systems that could be stated in this
2 region will not help solve the problem, that we are
3 really now looking at attitudinal problems. How does
4 the Commission -- How is the Commission going to
5 ~~address that problem? You can put in all the programs~~
6 that you want, educational and agricultural, and in
7 looking at the -- change the law enforcement system,
8 the political system, but the attitudes of the people
9 who are actually in charge are not changing.

10 MS. MOORE: Well, I'd like to respond to that
11 by saying that I think there is a distinction between
12 focusing on minority development or African American
13 development and focusing on race relations in general.
14 You'll find that a number of people who advocate a
15 certain civil rights policy or certain programs and
16 procedures have a vision of an America that is a
17 diverse America. But, often those policies and those
18 programs, they open the door of opportunity to a limited
19 degree, but they do not necessarily create mechanisms
20 within a particular community for that group to
21 galvanize its own resources, culturally, socially, or
22 economically. I think when we talk about race
23 relations, we may have to look at that picture on two
24 levels. No. 1, I think it's important that African
25 Americans vote and that we advocate for policies and

1 and for elected officials who will promote financing
2 programs and minority development, policies and
3 programs that are good in general. On the other hand,
4 however, I think it's also necessary that those of us
5 ~~who are members of an ethnic community recognize that~~
6 there are some aspects of the problem that may have to
7 be dealt with on a local institutional level. And we
8 may even need to begin to think creatively about the
9 role of our churches. When my parent was a child and
10 when I was a child, the school was a social institution
11 and it was like a safety net, so those children who
12 came from families that didn't get adequate support
13 often received education beyond education in the school
14 system. But, it's difficult for that to happen for a
15 number of reasons because now that we operate in an
16 integrated society, no one community can say, "This
17 school exists to promote our social agenda," although
18 that agenda may be important in that when a number of
19 immigrants came to this country, schools provided a
20 mechanism for socializing them into the way of life.

21 So, I think what we have to do is think on
22 those two levels. No. 1, how do we promote a vision of
23 diversity that allows people to have equal opportunity.
24 But then, No. 2, how do we use our community resources
25 to instill a sense of self-respect and instill a sense

1 of -- to provide mechanisms to inspire our young people
2 to become productive. And I know I'm being somewhat
3 general, but I think the role of the local community
4 institution is very important and you can't just focus
5 on broad policies.

6 MR. PATTESON: Excuse me. Dr. Levy, you had
7 a question?

8 DR. LEVY: It's really a continuation of Ms.
9 Miller's which was the question that I wanted to deal
10 with. In the public schools in Little Rock, with all
11 the problems going on there, they've focused on a
12 couple of things that hopefully will get to the heart
13 of the attitudinal problem. One is a multi-cultural
14 study program and one is a prejudice-reduction program
15 with teachers and students. Based on these models of
16 getting to the heart, and that is changing attitudes
17 and getting, you know, blacks and whites together to
18 reduce prejudice, wouldn't that be -- wouldn't or
19 shouldn't that be a major focus in what's going on? As
20 she said, the programs are wonderful, but if the
21 attitudes don't change, you know, you're going to have
22 all programs and no ultimate change in the situation.

23 MS. MOORE: Yes, I would agree. As a matter
24 of fact, my mother became a principal of an elementary
25 school in Greenville. At the time, it was the school

1 that nobody wanted to go to. It was principally
2 an African American school in a low income area. And
3 she implemented a program by which self-esteem was
4 integrated into the curriculum as the approach. And
5 she mobilized her PTA and ~~they painted the school and~~
6 she conducted workshops in which her emphasis was on
7 the teacher because she had a number of teachers, white
8 and black, who were not equipped to function in that
9 kind of cultural context. The tendency was to say,
10 "Oh, poor little so-and-so. His mother is an
11 alcoholic." And the response of my mother was "Your
12 responsibility is to teach the children, regardless of
13 his circumstances." So, I think there was a
14 combination of effective teaching, a combination of
15 self-esteem, but I think part of her challenge was to
16 get the system to accept those ideas as an integral
17 aspect of the curriculum. It wasn't easy for her to
18 simply say, "This is how we're going to teach
19 children." But, as of now, Weddington is the model
20 school in Greenville and everybody wants to go to
21 Weddington. So, that is an example of how you can
22 implement those kinds of ideas and really affectuate a
23 180-degree turn.

24 MS. POINDEXTER: Is your mother Helen Moore?

25 MS. MOORE: Yes.

1 MR. MULDROW: Ms. Moore, I think you've
2 indicated pretty strongly that the Lower Mississippi
3 Delta Development Commission is very interested in race
4 relations and that theme or that concern permeates all
5 of their work. ~~Could you just focus a little more or~~
6 give us a little more of an idea of what kind of
7 importance it places on that? We have heard from
8 several of the speakers already that minorities,
9 blacks in this area are severely disadvantaged in many
10 ways, either by discrimination or by other factors.
11 Does the Commission see overcoming that disadvantage as
12 essential to putting in place the success of programs
13 that it is recommending for this area, or is it simply
14 another concern among many that they're wrestling with?
15 What degree of importance do they place on that and to
16 what degree will they address this in their
17 recommendations?

18 MS. MOORE: Well, I cannot speak for the
19 Commission per se because in all honesty, I think that
20 different Commissioners look at this issue differently.
21 I think it's easier to at least talk about my views as
22 a member of the staff and perhaps the views of other
23 staff members because we have the responsibility to
24 generate the recommendations that will either be
25 approved or disapproved by the Commission. And I think

1 on the staff level, there really is a firm belief that
2 the issue of race has to be addressed forthrightly in
3 thinking about the longterm development of this region,
4 not only in terms of substantive issues, but also in
5 ~~terms of the mechanisms that you create to address~~
6 those issues. Now, I cannot say 100 percent that if
7 the Commission stays in existence or if some other
8 entity is brought into existence, I cannot say 100
9 percent what the composition of that entity will be.
10 But, I can say that there is considerable concern that
11 that entity be an entity that allows broad
12 representation because I think -- simply looking at the
13 issue from the standpoint of a technical, economical
14 development perspective, it's very difficult -- if I'm
15 a member of one cultural group, it's very difficult for
16 me to go to another cultural setting and develop a plan
17 of action and implement it and bring about economic
18 development. And we see that happening on an
19 international level all the time in that the U. S.
20 attempted in many instances to export its form of
21 economic development. I think you have to have a
22 model, an implementational model that allows you to
23 accomplish substantively what you think needs to be
24 accomplished, and that model has to be able to tie into
25 the wealth of resources so that you can develop a

1 wholistic picture of all aspects of the problem. But,
2 if you're model only allows for certain perspectives
3 and understandings to prevail, you never have the
4 potential to develop a full package of solutions.

~~5 That's a little general, but it's hard for me to be~~

6 more specific because I can't really officially speak
7 in behalf of the Commission.

8 MR. PATTESON: I'm going to take one more
9 question. I would like to say this: The reason we've
10 been so generous in allowing you -- and you've done
11 such a beautiful job of fielding the questions -- is
12 because our next presenter had not arrived, and you
13 have done a most professional job. All right. Mr.
14 Coleman?

15 MR. COLEMAN: Being a member of this
16 Commission for I don't know how many years now, there
17 seems to be a tendency on all of our parts to think
18 about race relations in terms of blacks. And I contend
19 that -- Or, do you see that there's another dynamic
20 that we have not taken into consideration, and that is
21 the poor whites? One white student told me just as I
22 was leaving -- you know, I was questioning him, "Why
23 you don't take lunch?" "My momma and daddy told me
24 never to" -- it was a free lunch and I knew he wasn't
25 able to pay for it. And he said something, you know,

1 just kind of shocked me. He said, "You know one thing.
2 White people are now becoming the new niggers." In
3 other words, "We are the ones who get sent home along
4 with blacks," because nobody know how to deal with
5 ~~that.~~

6 MS. MOORE: That's true.

7 MR. COLEMAN: "Black teachers don't know how
8 to deal with us because they consider us poor white
9 trash," and vice versa. There seems to be an attitude
10 on the part of teachers who supposedly have been
11 trained to just deal with children before we start
12 dealing with status and all of these other things. Do
13 we leave out that segment of our society in the Delta,
14 or how much are we doing that in the Delta? Just
15 thinking about blacks alone, and part of our problem is
16 being -- there is as much poor whites that keep us from
17 doing the kinds of things that we need to do to develop
18 the kinds of race relations that we ought to be talking
19 about. For example, I can count five people who have
20 been as fortunate as you are. Harvard took you because
21 of brains. I can very well tell that. Or, in the Pine
22 Bluff High School, for example, I can count less
23 probably than three whites, poor whites who -- you
24 know, Harvard, Yale, Ivy League schools have taken. I
25 wonder, do we kind of miss whites as we go by, as we

1 emphasize our plight, not really recognizing the fact
2 that we're going to have to have some poor whites to do
3 some different kinds of thinking and developing kinds
4 of attitudes also.

5 ~~MS. MOORE: Well, I want to respond to your~~
6 comment about why Harvard accepted me, first, simply by
7 saying that the admissions rate for African American
8 students rose significantly those years in which those
9 of us who were African American students were most
10 vocal and vociferous about admissions matters. So, I'm
11 sure brains does count to some degree, but there are
12 other factors.

13 As far as looking at the situation of poor
14 whites, I think in general you're correct, that that
15 does not figure as prominently in our thinking about
16 economic development as it should. In Mississippi, for
17 example, the State Government has developed an economic
18 development task force and initially there was a great
19 deal of talk about focusing on those parts of the state
20 that are easiest to develop. Well, one of the persons
21 who challenged that approach was an African American,
22 but his point was that you're also excluding other
23 parts of the state that may have -- that are very poor
24 but may have very low African American populations.
25 So, to some degree, the strategies that lead to African

1 American areas being neglected also results in poor
2 white areas being neglected as well. And, I think we
3 do need to develop a framework for understanding that
4 the economic development process doesn't just take
5 ~~place on one level, but that we may needs different~~
6 kinds of strategies, depending upon the history or the
7 populations of a particular area. But, in general I
8 would agree with you. I don't think we have taken that
9 into account as much as we should have.

10 MR. PATTESON: I'm going to end on that note,
11 if I may. I would like to ask you one question. I was
12 interested in your personal observations at the
13 beginning of your talk for several personal reasons.
14 Are you just so wise that you can wing a talk like that
15 or do you have minutes? I mean, do you have notes, by
16 any chance? If you do, I would like to have a copy.

17 MS. MOORE: I don't have any notes. I really
18 thought that this was one of my poorer presentations.

19 MR. PATTESON: You never know how you affect
20 other people. Thank you very much. You did an
21 excellent job. Are there any other presenters here?
22 All right. If you will, Mr. Pumphrey, we'll call on
23 you now. Mr. Pumphrey is the Manager of the Governor's
24 Rural Development Program which -- is it a subsidiary
25 of AIDC?

1 MR. PUMPHREY: Yes, it is. Right.

2 MR. PATTESON: Welcome.

3 MR. PUMPHREY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and
4 members of the Commission.

5 Let me ~~preface~~ my comments ~~by~~ ~~first~~
6 recounting some history here today. The discussion and
7 dialogue we're having here today, particularly on
8 economic justice, could not and would not have been
9 taking place had it not been for black tenant farmers
10 and sharecroppers who tried to organize the farmers
11 cooperative called the Progressive Farmers Household
12 Union of America. These black men and women put their
13 lives on the line to break the chains of economic
14 exploitation in what is now called the Elaine Riot. It
15 is important to remember these brave and courageous men
16 and women and to use the so-called Elaine Riot as a
17 measuring stick for economic justice today.

18 It would also not be possible to discuss
19 economic justice without some discussion and analysis
20 of segregation and integration. I believe integration
21 has hidden costs that blacks never bargained for.
22 Prior to integration, we had more black businesses than
23 we do today. Blacks could not stay at white hotels so
24 we built our own hotels and housed our travellers. We
25 could not eat at white restaurants so we built our own

1 restaurants and fed our people. We could not go to
2 school with whites so we built out own schools and
3 educated ourselves. I ask you today, where is that
4 entrepreneural spirit and that community attitude.
5 ~~Today, here in the Delta and across America, we are~~
6 witnessing the growth of a generation of Afro-American
7 young people who will be less educated than their
8 parents, earn less money than their parents, and have a
9 quality of life which is less than that enjoyed by
10 their parents.

11 When we talk about economic justice, we must
12 remember that next door in Marianna, a group of black
13 males found more reality in pretending to be Scarface
14 and sell drugs than to identify with any positive role
15 model. This is not surprising, though, when you think
16 about the Bolesky's and the Oliver North's of this
17 world today. It's not surprising that that's happened.

18 Let me sort of shift gears here now and do
19 what I was supposed to do, what I came here to do, and
20 that is to tell you something about what we do at AIDC.
21 Let me say, first of all, that the AIDC, I believe, is
22 very committed to the Delta and to economic development
23 in the Delta. Over the past six years, through the use
24 of our community development block grant funds that we
25 receive, roughly about \$18 million a year from the

1 Federal Government -- there are two pools of money for
2 that money. Roughly about \$12 million goes into what
3 we call category grants and are given out on
4 competitive basis. Another \$6 million is awarded on
5 ~~the basis of -- disbursed for development-financed~~
6 deals and infrastructure deals. Roughly, about \$5
7 million of those funds for 1983 to the present have
8 gone to communities and companies here in the Delta.
9 In addition, the AIDC has funded over \$2.5 million in
10 minority loans. Of the 15 total loans made between
11 1983 and 1990, seven have gone to businesses here in
12 the Delta. I'm very proud of the low cottage industry
13 that we provided assistance for over here in Lexa. Ms.
14 Graffie Jackson there makes quilts. Also, people in
15 their homes make quilts and bring them to her and she
16 sells them. And she's doing a very good business over
17 there.

18 I think the future of Arkansas and the Delta,
19 and Arkansas, in particular, is very bright. I think
20 some of the things that we see -- and someone else
21 referenced that earlier -- some of the things we see
22 happening in Eastern Europe is going to make a
23 difference and impact on us here in Arkansas. But I
24 think that we've got to be prepared and ready for that.
25 Of course, we know that some of the keys, and probably

1 the most important key is that of education. But not
2 just liberal education. I think that we need to begin
3 to focus more attention on the trades and get our
4 children involved in learning trades. We've missed out
5 ~~on that, I believe. That's something that we should~~
6 pay a great deal more attention to. The things that
7 are happening in Canada with the eliminating of the
8 tariffs, opening up new opportunities here in Arkansas.
9 It is predicted that in 1992 there will be a labor
10 shortage across the board in this country. When there
11 is a labor surplus here in Arkansas, we should be able
12 to participate and gain some advantage in that.
13 However, I think that attitudes here in the Delta that
14 permeate and pervade the entire social order must
15 change. The antebellum attitudes that are heaped in an
16 investment in keeping people ignorant must change if we
17 are to position ourselves with the great things that I
18 think are available to us in the future.

19 I thank you.

20 MR. PATTESON: Questions?

21 MR. GITELMAN: Mr. Pumphrey, can you tell me
22 to what extent the communities in the Delta region have
23 availed themselves of the enterprise zone legislation
24 that Arkansas has?

25 MR. PUMPHREY: We find that for the most

1 part, the companies that are coming to us for
2 development-financed -- for financing have, in fact,
3 taken advantage of those, but I can't tell you
4 specifically those that have done that.

5 ~~MR. GITELMAN: Are the cities in the Delta~~
6 cooperative in that respect?

7 MR. PUMPHREY: Yes. James Hall, our minority
8 business director, literally beats his head against the
9 wall on a day-to-day basis trying to find minority
10 deals, particularly in the Delta, to provide financial
11 assistance to. I'd like to say that we've been
12 successful, but I don't think that we've done as much
13 as can be done. We'd like to do more.

14 MS. POINDEXTER: Mr. Pumphrey, you said, if
15 I'm correct, that \$5 million of your funds have gone to
16 communities in the Delta, is that right?

17 MR. PUMPHREY: Now, there is a overlap -- let
18 me sort of clarify that, okay? There is an overlap
19 between those counties that are designated -- counties
20 out of the Delta -- out of the Delta Commission and
21 those counties that are targeted by the Governor's
22 Rural Development Program. You will find some counties
23 in the Governor's Rural Development Program that are
24 not designated as Delta counties in the Delta
25 Commission.

1 MS. POINDEXTER: Let me get to my question,
2 and I do appreciate that additional information. But,
3 we have had testimony here that although monies were
4 available, they're seldom getting to those individuals
5 ~~most in need of them.~~ What constraints are put on the
6 funds to make sure that they get to the black farmer or
7 to the low income farmer? What constraints are put
8 there to make sure that the monies do not get just to
9 the communities, but get to the individuals within the
10 communities who most need them?

11 MR. PUMPHREY: Okay, if you couch that
12 question in terms of farmers, I don't know that I can
13 respond to it in terms of monies getting out to farmers
14 because I don't work in that arena. But, if we're
15 talking about benefit, if you talk about doing a
16 sewer project in a community that's going to benefit an
17 industry, that sewer project is also going to benefit
18 the residents of that community. If you talk about any
19 type of infrastructure, the sewer project, the gas
20 project, if it's a housing project, or whatever else.

21 MS. POINDEXTER: Are there set asides to make
22 sure that minority businesses --

23 MR. PUMPHREY: No. Let me put a comment on
24 that. In 1983 to 1987, we set asides in AIDC \$1
25 million a year for minority economic development

1 activities. HUD discovered that we were doing that and
2 came in and said, "Hey, that's a no-no. You can't do
3 that. That's reverse discrimination." So, that was
4 something that we had to stop. There are no set
5 ~~asides.~~ Now, I think it's a misnomer. A lot of people
6 believe that there are these special programs out there
7 of set asides and that if you get the business, you can
8 get these minority contracts, you get these contracts,
9 there's preferential treatment given to minorities.
10 That is not necessarily true.

11 MS. POINDEXTER: So, there are no guarantees
12 that any of the funds from your area will get to any
13 minorities at all?

14 MR. PUMPHREY: There is -- I would -- I could
15 not say there are guarantees. I won't say that. I
16 will say -- I'm not trying to avoid your question.

17 MS. POINDEXTER: You're being political with
18 me, Mr. Pumphrey.

19 MR. PUMPHREY: I'm not trying to be. I will
20 say that we are doing everything possible to finance
21 minority deals. All right. However, we have targeted
22 our funds to wholesale distribution and manufacturing.
23 That, in and of itself, tends to eliminate a lot of
24 minority-type businesses because the traditional
25 minority business happens to be outside of that realm,

1 generally speaking.

2 MS. POINDEXTER: Well, let me reverse my
3 question. What oversight do you have -- What oversight
4 practices do you have to make sure that there is not
5 ~~discrimination against minorities?~~

6 MR. PUMPHREY: We have -- We require that
7 each community hold public hearings. Each project is
8 monitored. There have been, you know, recommendations
9 to review the fair housing practices of communities.
10 We look very carefully at a variety of different kinds
11 of things to determine what's going on in the
12 community. However, we do not and have not withdrawn
13 or not given that community a grant once we found that
14 that very fact, the community has, in fact, been
15 discriminating. Okay?

16 MS. POINDEXTER: Thank you.

17 DR. WHITE: We've talked about accessibility
18 of minorities in the Delta or blacks in the Delta to
19 funds for economic development. There is the
20 perception on part of the minorities that there is not
21 that accessibility. I have about a three-part
22 question. Since AIDC operates very closely with the
23 Lower Mississippi Delta Commission whose aim is to deal
24 with economic development, and especially to look at
25 some of the issues of African American development

1 District Director for the Delta area which is District
2 IV, Mr. Theodore Eldridge; the Phillips County County
3 Supervisor, Cliff Russell. They will be here to take
4 all my slack.

5 ~~As far as race relations, we get involved~~
6 with race every' day. We have applicant borrowers of
7 all races. When it comes down to discrimination, it's
8 mostly when they feel that we have not given them what
9 they want. What I plan to do this afternoon is give
10 you some insight as to what Farmers Home Administration
11 does or go back and tell you when we got started. We
12 are referred to -- I heard someone else say they were a
13 lender of last resort, but I always thought Farmers
14 Home Administration was the lender of last resort. We
15 are a credit agency for agricultural and rural
16 development under the Department of Agriculture, and we
17 have been in existence since 1935. In 1935 we started
18 out as the Reserve Administration until '36. We then
19 became Farm Security Administration from '37 to '47.
20 From '47 to the present time, we have been known as
21 Farmers Home Administration.

22 The mission of Farmers Home Administration is
23 to provide supervised credit assistance through our
24 various loan and grant programs to rural Americans by
25 first encouraging and supporting family farm ownership

1 and operation to provide an economic and social base.

2 Secondly, providing adequate housing.

3 Third, installing needed community
4 facilities.

5 ~~Fourth, providing economic support to farmers~~
6 affected by disaster.

7 And, five, fostering economic rural
8 development.

9 The original agency was created for making
10 loans and grants to depression-stricken families. Our
11 primary concern has been with credit and counseling
12 services. Beginning the 1960's, Congress authorized
13 local offices to deliver programs to benefit families
14 and communities throughout the rural population. We
15 have administered programs to assist in bringing rural
16 housing, water and sewer systems and other community
17 facilities up to standards for the rural people. Our
18 existing system of personal contact across the county
19 has established us as a lead agency for rural
20 development.

21 FMHA loans and grants supplement the amount
22 of credit and capital directly available from
23 commercial lenders in rural areas. In most programs,
24 the agency makes loans to qualified applicants who
25 cannot obtain their financing from other lenders. Our

1 agency cooperates with state, regional, and local
2 bodies and community organizations and with other
3 Federal agencies. A brief listing of the loans
4 administered by Farmers Home Administration we have
5 ~~under the farmer program, farm ownership, operating,~~
6 soil and water, and emergency. Under the housing we
7 have Section 515 commonly referred to as Rural Rental
8 Housing, and we have single-family housing, 502 and
9 504. I will briefly explain these. Under community
10 and business programs, water and waste disposals,
11 community facilities, business and industrial loans.
12 Under the single-family housing referred to as 502
13 loans, our objective is to provide decent, safe, modest
14 and sanitary housing. These loans are not to exceed 33
15 years and are presently 8.75 percent. Without Farmers
16 Home Administration, many of the families in the Delta
17 would not be able to afford decent, safe and sanitary
18 housing. Under the 504 program which consists of
19 repairs, they are for eligible, low income owner or
20 occupants for repairs. These homes must also be
21 located in rural areas. The repairs are to modernize
22 the home, make it safer and more sanitary, or to remove
23 health and safety hazards. To obtain a grant which
24 comes under this program also, the individual must be
25 62 years of age or older, and unable to repay any

1 portion of a loan, to repay a Section 504 loan. The
2 rates are one percent and the loan term cannot exceed
3 20 years. A mortgage is taken if the amount of the
4 loan exceeds \$2,500.00. In this area, we have stopped
5 ~~many leaky roofs, we stopped the rattling windows, and~~
6 we've removed the little house for many elderly people.

7 Under the Rural Rental Housing Program which
8 is 515, we provide housing to tenants which are
9 economically designed and constructed. The loans
10 cannot exceed 50 years and are currently 8.75 percent.
11 In this area, we have Lakeview Estates which is a
12 33-unit project at approximately \$1,003,558.86. There
13 are 40 rural loans in this area of which we have six to
14 minority owners. They're in Cross, Lee, and St.
15 Francis. Some of them are Booker Apartments, Ron West,
16 Lakeview Estates, Foster, Collins and Gordon, Poplar
17 Grove, and Whittaker Manor which is in Madison.

18 During fiscal year 1990, District IV has led
19 the state in the number of loans that have been
20 obligated to provide housing under the 515 program. We
21 have community facilities loans. These loans are made
22 to public bodies and non-profit corporations for
23 community facilities for public use in rural areas and
24 towns where the population is under 10,000. This
25 includes hospitals, clinics, nursing homes, recreation

1 facilities, fire and public protection, industrial
2 parks, and other facilities that provide essential
3 services to rural residents. The loan rates average
4 from five percent to seven percent and cannot exceed 40
5 years.

6 Water and waste disposal grants. Here we
7 install, repair, and improve or expand rural water and
8 waste disposal systems. The terms and rates are five
9 to seven percent, not to exceed 40 years. In this area
10 of the Delta, Cotton Plant, Crawfordsville, Earle,
11 Hughes, Marvel, and Southland are some of the
12 communities that we have provided assistance to. The
13 most talked about program in this area, Farmer Program.
14 We have insured and guaranteed loans. Farm ownership,
15 operating loans, S & W, and emergency. This district
16 is second in dollar amount of loans made in the State
17 of Arkansas. This area is where we have the majority
18 of our minority loans located. Phillips County in
19 fiscal year 1989 received approximately 100
20 applications which was the second in the state for
21 Farmer Program loans.

22 We have a B & I Program. These loans are
23 made to public bodies, private businesses,
24 organizations, individuals, and Indian tribes or tribal
25 groups to improve, develop, or finance business and

1 industrial enterprises to improve the economic and
2 environmental climate in rural communities. These
3 loans are guaranteed and the rates are negotiated by
4 the lender and the borrower.

5 ~~All of our programs come under Title VI of~~
6 the Civil Rights Act and we assure compliance through
7 our periodic inspections which are conducted by our
8 state, district and county office personnel to assure
9 that the borrowers are complying with the assurance
10 agreements that they signed at the time of loan
11 closing.

12 Recently, we have placed special emphasis on
13 minorities and women getting into contracting of
14 services such as appraisal services and interest credit
15 that we have within our agency.

16 We have a cooperative agreement with the
17 University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff which serves
18 farmers in Lee, Monroe, Phillips, St. Francis,
19 Woodruff, and Jefferson Counties. These six counties
20 are some of the counties that have the highest
21 unemployment rate and a shrinking farm market. The
22 objective of this program is to develop plans for the
23 enhancement of Arkansas agriculture for minorities and
24 small and -- small farmers or limited resource farmers.
25 These farmers are provided assistance to develop

1 alternative enterprises, markets, management,
2 record-keeping, and traditional crop production
3 practices. The first agreement was executed March 1st
4 of 1987. During the period March 1st, 1987 to
5 ~~September 30th of 1988, the accomplishments were as~~

6 follows:

7 Of the 69 farmers participating in the
8 program, they had a net income of \$1,029,124.00. There
9 were 47 delinquent farmers in the program that paid
10 off. There were two who graduated. And when I say
11 "graduated," they were able to go to other lenders for
12 their source of financing.

13 At the present, we have 64 farmers
14 participating on the co-op agreement. The counties
15 involved and the number of participants are Jefferson
16 County, nine farmers; Lee County, 15 farmers; Monroe
17 County, ten farmers; Phillips County, 14 farmers; St.
18 Francis County, eight farmers; Woodruff County, eight
19 farmers, for a total of 64.

20 We have what is known as the
21 socially-disadvantaged program where we are targeting
22 our farm ownership program to individuals who are
23 black, Hispanic, American Indian, Alaskan native,
24 Asian, or Pacific Islanders. We had a total of six
25 applications in '88, 29 in '89. In 1990, 27. In 1988,

1 three were approved for \$335,000.00. Six in 1989 for
2 \$780,720.00. In 1990, four for a total of \$316,900.00.
3 These were farm ownership loans. In conjunction with
4 these loans, we also had OL loans approved in 1989, one
5 for \$61,710.00. ~~In 1990, two for a total of~~
6 \$133,900.00. Phillips County has three
7 socially-disadvantaged loans. We have 16 targeted
8 counties and of these 16, there are five counties that
9 have inventory properties in them.

10 MR. WILLIS: Thank you, Ms. Smith. At this
11 time we'll entertain questions from the Commissioners.
12 Start on the end.

13 MS. POINDEXTER: Can the end finally get
14 something first?

15 Good afternoon. I notice that you said where
16 we have a problem is where they don't get what they
17 want. Is that the only problem that FHA has?

18 MS. SMITH: Basically, when an applicant
19 comes in and is rejected for assistance from the
20 Farmers Home Administration, we are -- have a problem
21 there. A lot of times they say race, or it could be
22 sex, and it could be income or anything else. Or, I
23 have had cases where it has been income, falsification
24 of information. But the individual has said it was
25 because of her race and sex.

1 MS. POINDEXTER: Never do these come into
2 play?

3 MS. SMITH: There has been no merit as of
4 this time.

5 MS. POINDEXTER: ~~In how long?~~

6 MS. SMITH: Three years I can say.

7 MS. POINDEXTER: Three years. Okay. Well,
8 you said you want qualified applicants. Could you give
9 me an example of what a qualified applicant is?

10 MS. SMITH: Okay. It varies from the
11 different programs. There are eligible requirements
12 for each program.

13 MS. POINDEXTER: Are they clearly delineated
14 in writing?

15 MS. SMITH: They're clearly in our
16 guidelines. We have a procedure for each of our loan
17 programs and it is specific in the procedures. For a
18 rural housing loan, the individual has to have
19 repayment ability or reliable income.

20 MS. POINDEXTER: What I'm getting at -- I
21 don't want you to delineate each one of the
22 qualifications. What I want to get at is, we have
23 people with limited resources and also limited
24 education.

25 MS. SMITH: Education has nothing to do with

1 it.

2 MS. POINDEXTER: Let me get my question.

3 MS. SMITH: Okay.

4 MS. POINDEXTER: When we say "qualified
5 applicant," you say you clearly delineate what those
6 qualifications are. Are they in writing or do you
7 sometimes sit with the individual and explain to that
8 individual what those qualifications are? Is there a
9 counseling program in place so that they will
10 understand, not only be able to read it, but to hear it
11 from you?

12 MS. SMITH: Yes. The answer to that is yes.
13 Take, for instance, on our 502 Program, each applicant
14 is counseled. We sit down, we do a budget. There is
15 an exhibit where all of the requirements from day one
16 through the loan closing is explained, and the
17 individual, he or she, has to sign this exhibit that
18 she acknowledges that everything has been covered with
19 her from rates and terms, her responsibilities in
20 occupying the house and everything.

21 MS. POINDEXTER: One last question, if I may.
22 You alluded to a number of facilities which have been
23 set up to address the issue of housing, limited
24 housing, is that not right? You read off a list of
25 places where people with limited resources can get

1 housing to address the housing deficiency in the
2 community, right?

3 MS. SMITH: Yes.

4 MS. POINDEXTER: Could you please tell me how
5 many blacks or individuals of limited resources own
6 these facilities and what are we doing in order to
7 increase that number?

8 MS. SMITH: Okay. Of the 40 projects that I
9 referred to in this area, there are six minority
10 owners, if I make no mistake, in --

11 MS. POINDEXTER: (Interposing) By
12 "minority," would you please define that?

13 MS. SMITH: Blacks. Six blacks.

14 MS. POINDEXTER: Okay. Thank you. One other
15 question. I see that there is a 2 to 1 ratio here from
16 FHA. Is that true throughout the FHA system, or is
17 this just for this Delta presentation?

18 MS. SMITH: We are well represented
19 throughout the state.

20 MS. POINDEXTER: What percentage of
21 minorities are part of FHA is more of what I'm speaking
22 of than anything else.

23 MS. SMITH: We have -- Out of 353 employees,
24 there are 53 or somewhere in that number.

25 MS. POINDEXTER: Thank you.

1 DR. WHITE: You mentioned a number of loans
2 that are available under Title VI. Do these grant
3 applications also require the signature of the County
4 Judge or any elected official in order for that grant
5 to be submitted?

6 MS. SMITH: No. Our documents are executed
7 between Farmers Home Administration officials and the
8 borrower, the individual that is receiving the
9 assistance from our agency.

10 DR. WHITE: All right. I have another
11 question. Information in my county is that programs
12 that operate under the FHA often are not made -- the
13 information about these programs are not made -- there
14 are general announcements in the paper, yes, but that
15 there are often direct contacts made by those who are
16 in leadership or powerful positions similar to what Mr.
17 King said, and that very little effort, if any, is made
18 to really contact those who have been historically
19 disenfranchised to help them to be knowledgeable about
20 what programs are available and how to access those
21 programs. Can you tell me what kind of efforts you are
22 making in terms of reaching people for these programs
23 who have historically been disenfranchised,
24 particularly the large African American population in
25 these counties?

1 MS. SMITH: Okay. I would like to say that
2 under the 515 Program, our Rural Rental Housing
3 project, every borrower has an outreach program. He or
4 she has an affirmative fair-housing marketing plan that

~~5 is presented to Farmers that they have to provide to~~

6 Farmers Home Administration prior to the loan being
7 approved. Here, it contacts are community contacts
8 that they must make with minorities, individuals who
9 are least likely to apply. If it was an all-white
10 project, then the least likely to apply would be our
11 blacks, American Indian, Alaskan natives or Hispanics.
12 So, they have to provide us with evidence that they
13 have made contacts with minority organizations,
14 churches in the forms of letters, documentation in the
15 file. They are also required to advertise in minority
16 media of the 515 Program, that being the "Arkansas
17 State Press" which most of them are required -- they
18 are all required to advertise and provide us evidence.
19 We are provided evidence of their outreach.

20 DR. WHITE: May I ask another question in
21 regard to that? Many people -- Most people in the
22 Delta don't have access to the "State Press" and other
23 minority papers --

24 MS. SMITH: (Interposing) Flyers are --
25 Okay, like in this area in some of the smaller

1 communities, there are flyers or by word of mouth.

2 DR. WHITE: Let me ask a question. I'm not
3 talking about policy. I'm talking about what actually
4 happens in terms of practice.

5 ~~MS. SMITH: We have a public relations plan~~
6 also.

7 MR. ELDRIDGE: We do have a public relations
8 plan which it is -- directs the County Supervisors to
9 get involved in the community, that they must attend
10 the black churches in these black rural areas to get
11 out and advise them of these programs. And we do have
12 a policy twice a year to make sure they're doing their
13 job. And this is where a lot of contacts can be made
14 in the rural areas. And also get in contact -- and it
15 specifically refers to the NAACP meetings, the local
16 president and other people that they must get in
17 contact with.

18 DR. WHITE: Well, I am sure there are some
19 people here from the Delta, specifically Lee County,
20 Phillips County, St. Francis County, those counties I'm
21 most familiar with, who would want to tell you that
22 that is not occurring in our counties.

23 MR. ELDRIDGE: Where are you from?

24 DR. WHITE: I'm from Lee County.

25 MR. ELDRIDGE: I thought I knew everybody in

1 Lee County. I don't know you, though.

2 MR. PATTESON: You will. Ms. Miller?

3 MS. MILLER: First of all, you said there are
4 353 FHA employees?

5 ~~MS. SMITH: Statewide. We have 75 county~~
6 offices and eight district offices.

7 MS. MILLER: And you're saying that out of
8 the 353 FHA employees, there are 53 --

9 MS. SMITH: (Interposing) Approximately
10 50-plus, right.

11 MS. MILLER: Blacks?

12 MS. SMITH: Right.

13 MS. MILLER: And you say that's well
14 represented?

15 MS. SMITH: Yes.

16 MS. MILLER: Okay. My next comment --

17 MS. SMITH: (Interposing) Excuse me.
18 Compared to the number of employees that Farmers Home
19 Administration has in the other states and other
20 Federal agencies, AG agencies, we are well represented.
21 We have a state director who is a staunch supporter of
22 EEO and EO.

23 MS. MILLER: Okay, but not in comparison to
24 the number of blacks who make up the rural areas in the
25 state? Or, let's just say in the Delta. There are

1 over 50 percent black composition here, correct?

2 MS. SMITH: Okay. We have to look at the --
3 To get into some of the Federal jobs, there are certain
4 requirements, criteria that the individual must meet,
5 ~~and we find in recruiting minorities which I do~~
6 recruit, I have a problem getting individuals to take
7 the Civil Service Test to get on the register for
8 clerical employees. When we go out to recruit
9 agricultural management specialists, they do not rate
10 high on the register. They have to go through the
11 examining unit in Washington in getting a score. This
12 is why we don't have a higher number of minorities.
13 Many of the females or persons that could get into the
14 clerical field are reluctant to take the test because
15 they don't feel they can score high enough. If they do
16 go take the test, it takes two or three times for them
17 to get above 85.

18 MS. MILLER: Well, let me address this.
19 We've talked about the clericals. What is the
20 composition of the Board or whoever approves
21 applications? What's the racial composition of the
22 people who actually -- these applications that come
23 through have to go through to be approved?

24 MS. SMITH: Okay. As far as the agricultural
25 management specialists, that examining unit is in

1 Washington and I do not know the composition of that
2 staff.

3 MS. MILLER: Okay, what about here locally?
4 What has to happen locally -- What kind of board or
5 ~~group determines to send this on to Washington, D.C.?~~

6 MS. SMITH: Okay. The individual who is
7 interested in employment as an agricultural management
8 specialist, prepares a form that is referred to as
9 Standard Form 171. He or she completes that himself.

10 MS. MILLER: No, I'm not talking about
11 applications. I'm talking about if I wanted to make an
12 application for a loan, I'm a farmer, and I'd like to
13 make an application for a loan because I've been turned
14 down by all of these other institutions out here. What
15 group of people -- What's the composition of the people
16 who determine whether my application is approved or
17 not?

18 MS. SMITH: Now we're talking about a loan.
19 You're talking about a loan now. Okay. If you were to
20 make a loan, apply for a loan, say, in Phillips County
21 where Mr. Russell is the County Supervisor, he has --

22 MS. MILLER: (Interposing) Who is Mr.
23 Russell?

24 MR. SMITH: To my right here (indicating).

25 MS. MILLER: Okay.

1 MS. SMITH: Okay. He is the County
2 Supervisor and if I make no mistake, he has two
3 assistant county supervisors under his supervision.
4 One of the three would work with you. They would work
5 ~~with you up to loan approval as far as telling you~~
6 everything that is required from you. And they would
7 present it to Mr. Russell after it had gotten up to the
8 point of approval for his review.

9 MS. MILLER: Okay, now, who are those two
10 other county personnel?

11 MS. SMITH: Do you want the names?

12 MS. MILLER: No. I just want to know are
13 they black or white.

14 MS. SMITH: We have one black female and one
15 white male.

16 MS. MILLER: Okay, so we've got a two to --

17 MS. SMITH: (Interposing) In this office
18 here, Mr. Eldridge, we've got --

19 MR. ELDRIDGE: Three whites and two blacks.

20 MS. SMITH: In Lee County you've got -- we
21 have a personnel list. Oh, you want county committee
22 composition, too?

23 MR. ELDRIDGE: One black, one female and one
24 white.

25 MR. PATTESON: If you're through with that

1 question, we need to move on. I thank you all for
2 being here. I do apologize that during your talk that
3 all of us had to get up and run around. It had nothing
4 to do with the quality of your presentation. I simply
5 ~~should have declared a five-minute break.~~

6 MS. SMITH: I have some literature on FHA and
7 the disadvantaged programs.

8 MR. PATTESON: I understand that Mr. Michael
9 Bennett has arrived, is that correct? Mr. Bennett is
10 the Vice-President of the Shore Bank of Chicago which
11 is a partner of the Southern Development Bank
12 Corporation located in Arkadelphia, Arkansas, and which
13 is dedicated to economic development in this state, is
14 that correct?

15 MR. BENNETT: Yes.

16 MR. PATTESON: We would be very happy to
17 receive your presentation at this time.

18 MS. POINDEXTER: Can we take a short break?

19 MR. PATTESON: All right. Let's take a
20 five-minute break then.

21 (Short recess)

22 MR. PATTESON: Mr. Bennett will make another
23 stab at it. Thank you for waiting.

24 MR. BENNETT: Good afternoon.

25 I was remarking to Mr. Patteson that as I

1 came in, I heard what I thought might be some lengthy
2 testimonies, and mine will be quite to the contrary.
3 What I hope to do is a couple of things here. I am
4 from the Shore Bank Corporation in Chicago, Illinois
5 ~~where we have developed what we think is a complex of~~
6 economic development entities, and we were invited
7 about three years ago to come to Arkansas and see if we
8 could duplicate some of the successes that we've had in
9 Chicago. So, what I'd like to do is take a couple of
10 seconds to structure the Shore Bank Corporation and
11 then to talk about the structure the Southern
12 Development Bank Corp which we are managing partners
13 of, and then to spend a couple of minutes talking both
14 about the performance and the plans as we look at these
15 entities.

16 In 1973 there were about five principals that
17 came together in Chicago with an idea of developing a
18 complex of instruments that could provide credit
19 capital and managerial talent towards redeveloping
20 neighborhoods. The notion was that the market was not
21 working in various neighborhoods, not just in Chicago
22 but throughout the county. And the market wasn't
23 working conspicuously for people of color. What we
24 recognized was that the dominant institutions, for a
25 variety of reasons, had great difficulty in providing

1 loans, technical assistance, and providing what we
2 thought was management training for minorities in the
3 inner city, particularly blacks. So, we thought that
4 one thing that we needed to do was to leverage the
5 ~~kinds of experiences that we had had in business~~
6 development. Most of us had been at the Hyde Park Bank
7 in Chicago and in '73 we formed the Shore Bank
8 Corporation and purchased the South Shore Bank which at
9 the time was a \$40 million bank, had lost money, and
10 had redlined the South Shore neighborhood. A year
11 prior to our purchase of that bank, it had made one
12 real estate loan in the area, in a 2.2 square mile area
13 which is called South Shore. It had redlined its own
14 neighborhood.

15 What we thought was that if you got to know
16 your community, you got to know the networks, you got
17 to understand the entrepreneurial energies that existed,
18 you could make prudent loans in these areas and you
19 could make money. You could develop a complex of
20 entrepreneurs that would provide spin-off effects for
21 the neighborhoods. They would be role models. They
22 would get involved in civic activities. The schools,
23 for example, which was one of our major concerns. They
24 would hire people. They would provide employment
25 resources. And it, -- as you might imagine, it didn't

1 happen overnight, but we can say after, now, 17 years
2 of toil that there have been some significant results.

3 We purchased the South Shore Bank and, of
4 course, thought that the bank could do just about

5 ~~everything if it was proactive. But, a bank can only~~

6 be so proactive. A bank is basically, as you all know,

7 a very passive institution. If people don't come in

8 and ask for loans, they can't do any development. So,

9 we had to establish actually three non-bank affiliates

10 to assist in this development effort, the first of

11 which was City Lands Corporation. City Lands

12 Corporation is a for-profit, real estate development

13 company with the primary objective of being just that,

14 a developer. It's a separate entity, although it's a

15 sister corporation of the bank. It has its own staff

16 and so forth. City Lands' largest project to date on

17 the real estate side was a \$29 million development of

18 221 apartments in 22 separate apartment buildings which

19 literally turned around a portion of the South Shore

20 community. On the commercial side, City Lands just

21 completed a 110,000 square foot mini-shopping mall, and

22 we had played around with a lot of small strategies in

23 terms of commercial development in South Shore. None

24 of them really were working, so once again, we knew

25 that you had to invest a lot of capital and managerial

1 talent and get enough land that you can actually change
2 the face of the commercial side of the community, and
3 that what City Lands Corporation did.

4 The third entity was something called the
5 ~~Neighborhood Fund. And the Neighborhood Fund is a~~
6 minority enterprise, small business investment company,
7 a MESBIC which is a venture capital company, licensed
8 by the SBA to do minority deals. In other words, deals
9 in which the MESBIC, in vast, has to be 51 percent
10 women or minorities. What we had discovered is that
11 entrepreneurs were loaned up to here. They had all
12 kinds of debt. They were at a point that if they were
13 to grow at all, they needed an equity source. And
14 unlike other immigrants who had the history of buying a
15 home and gaining some equity in it, and then being able
16 to get a second mortgage to launch that business, many
17 of the minority residents that we had encountered had
18 no such capital base. So, they needed some kind of
19 investment mechanism and that's exactly what the
20 Neighborhood Fund is. It invests in small minority
21 businesses.

22 The fourth entity was a non-profit called the
23 Neighborhood Institute. Both the bank and the MESBIC
24 deal with people who have some money. They have to be
25 able to have some money. City Lands is a for-profit

1 housing development corporation, and although it can
2 use Section VIII to limit displacement and to service
3 low income residents, it still has to make a profit.
4 The fourth entity, the Neighborhood Institute, is a
5 ~~non-profit 501-C-3 organization. Its primary focus is~~
6 poor people. We euphemistically always talk about low
7 and moderate income, but we have challenged the
8 Neighborhood Institute to concentrate its program on
9 people whose incomes are less than 75 percent above the
10 median family income for the standard metropolitan
11 statistical area for Chicago. The Neighborhood
12 Institute does housing. Its housing is co-op housing
13 primarily because what it's interested in is providing
14 an ownership stake for lower income residents in their
15 housing. They are limited equity co-op's and there's a
16 lot of argument about limiting the equity opportunities
17 for low income and poor people, but we were concerned
18 about ownership access and control. And that's what
19 co-op housing does.

20 The other portion of the Neighborhood
21 Institute is concerned with job training and job
22 placement, and that is exactly what it does. And what
23 we try to do is coordinate all of these entities. We
24 try, when City Lands has a construction project, to
25 find out if the Institute can either train people in

1 the construction trades -- they have a program -- or
2 find people, primarily minority contractors to work on
3 these projects. So, we try a coordinated approach. If
4 we find people -- We have a self-employment program.
5 ~~If we find people who need bank loans, we shepherd them~~
6 through the bank. So, we try, as I indicated, kind of
7 a comprehensive approach there.

8 Three years ago -- We've been fortunate
9 enough to get positive publicity about our efforts. At
10 another setting and another time, I'll tell you about
11 all the hardships of trying to do what we do and some
12 of the realities of reaching those numbers. But, you
13 know, if you see all this activity on paper, it
14 definitely looks good and we have had some moderate
15 success.

16 The Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation came and
17 asked if we would attempt a similar model in Arkansas,
18 and at first, we said, "Definitely not." Even though
19 the mission of the bank and the holding company is to
20 test this model and to see if it is mobile, if it's
21 replicable, our notion was to see if it was replicable
22 in Chicago. We have just selected another one to put
23 on the west side and we're trying to gear up operations
24 there. But, the Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation and
25 the Ford Foundation, which is an investor in our

1 holding company, put enough pressure on us -- gentle
2 pressure -- that we took a careful look at
3 opportunities in Arkansas and decided that, "Yes, with
4 the close assistance of organizations and institutions

~~5 in the State of Arkansas, we would attempt to~~

6 facilitate a process." There was no way that we felt
7 that we could transport ourselves into the State of
8 Arkansas and miraculously develop a system. So, in
9 1988, we purchased the Elkhorn Bank which is \$55
10 million bank in Arkadelphia, Arkansas, and began the
11 slow and tedious task of trying to transform it into
12 what we call a development bank. What is a development
13 bank? Well, it tries to do something that
14 uncharacteristic to bankers. It tries to take a look
15 at a deal and ask the question, "How can we make it?
16 How can we do this loan?" Now, when I was in loan
17 officer training, what they told me was the first thing
18 you try to do is test people by discouraging them, that
19 this loan should not be made. We tried to do a
20 different approach and to say "How can the loan be
21 made? Let's really try to think through some various
22 strategies and alternative types of collateral, really
23 taking a look at experience and see if we can make that
24 happen." Now, that takes serious types of training and
25 retraining for people who have been bankers for a long

1 time. So, we're still molding the Elkhorn Bank into a
2 development engine.

3 In addition to the Elkhorn Bank, there are,
4 like in South Shore, non-bank affiliates. There's the

5 ~~Arkansas Enterprise Group, and the Arkansas Enterprise~~

6 Group consists of Southern Ventures which is similar to
7 the Neighborhood Fund. It is a venture capital company
8 licensed by the SBA. Southern Ventures is not a
9 MESBIC, however. It is not a minority enterprise,
10 small business investment company. It is simply a
11 SBA-licensed venture capital company.

12 We also have something called the Good Faith
13 Fund, and if you saw "60 Minutes" on Sunday when they
14 did a review of the Grameen Bank, they mentioned at the
15 end of that that Shore Bank Corporation was involved
16 with Southern and they mentioned the Good Faith Fund.
17 The Good Faith Fund is patterned off of something
18 called Grameen Bank, affectionately called the Poverty
19 Bank in Bangladesh. The idea is to get small amounts
20 of credit into the hands of people who want to be
21 self-employed. The average loan is approximately
22 \$2,000.00. They range from 75, 50, 100 to \$5,000.00.
23 And the notion is to develop a self-employment strategy
24 because there are people who, due to the change in the
25 economy, due to their various skill levels, will not be

1 employed in the conventional market, the labor market.
2 So, we thought that this might be an entity that will
3 assist in that. It is a revolving loan fund. The way
4 that it operates is a little bit cumbersome but we
5 ~~think that it will be successful. An individual has to~~
6 find four other people to form a borrowing group, and
7 the basic notion is that the group will work with each
8 other for mutual support and peer pressure. The
9 Grameen Bank's repayment rate is 98 percent. That's
10 unheard of, of course. But, it is the peer pressure
11 and peer support that does that in Bangladesh. We're
12 finding that the Good Faith Fund which is getting off
13 the ground slowly, the characteristics are definitely
14 the same. If you can find people who have mutual
15 interests and can support one another, we find that
16 loan repayment is a much easier process.

17 Also, in the Arkansas Enterprise Group is
18 what we call a C-Capital Fund. C-Capital Fund is
19 targeted right now to try to look at people who are
20 interested in light manufacturing, people who are
21 interested in expanding or saving their businesses and
22 needs certain kinds of capital injections to do that.
23 C-Capital Fund can make either loans or equity
24 injections into early-stage businesses.

25 The other entity which is like the City Lands

1 Corporation for Shore Bank is Opportunity Lands
2 Corporation which is for-profit real estate development
3 company. The for-profit real estate development
4 company has two interests. One is residential housing
5 ~~and the other is to look at commercial real estate~~
6 development. Its first project in Arkadelphia was what
7 is called a Enterprise Center. They're also known as
8 incubators but since we're not sure that some of these
9 businesses will ever leave and move out, we termed this
10 one an Enterprise Center. And, the second project that
11 Opportunity Lands is looking at is a major housing
12 redevelopment effort that they're scoping out in Pine
13 Bluff.

14 So, that's basically the structure. The
15 Southern Development Bank Corp structure parallels very
16 closely the Shore Bank Corporation function and
17 structure that we have in Chicago.

18 Interest in the Delta, what we had decided
19 was that one of the keys to what we think is our
20 success is targeting, and the Elkhorn Bank and Southern
21 decided to target first of all the area right around
22 the bank, a 13-county area right near Arkadelphia.
23 However, we have on our board who are residents of the
24 Delta and people who have great interest in the Delta
25 and we all know that the Delta is really the challenge

1 for economic development. So, I have been commissioned
2 to do some beginning work in the Delta, and that work
3 at this point has taken two directions. One,
4 Opportunity Lands is looking at housing development in
5 Helena, and really trying to think about leveraging the
6 state resources which are going to be utilized for the
7 cultural district planning and trying to develop some
8 strategies to rehab low income housing in Phillips
9 County, but particularly in the Helena area.

10 The other initiative is a business
11 development initiative, and what we're attempting to do
12 is channel equity resources from a variety of sources
13 throughout the state and actually throughout the county
14 into business development in the Delta. We will do
15 this through special lending programs and through
16 equity injections. Again, the tone is kind of twofold.
17 One, we're trying a proactive stance with people who
18 are actually seeking out deals, and then trying to
19 match those deals with needed resources. The second
20 piece of it, however, is to be what we would called
21 role models in a sense, and work with banks and other
22 financial institutions in the area to try to
23 demonstrate that with prudent lending and careful
24 knowledge, you can make loans and equity injections in
25 minority businesses and still make money. That

1 basically is the structure, the services and the
2 activities that we've engaged in both in Shore Bank
3 Corporation and in Southern.

4 Questions?

5 ~~MR. PATTESON: Questions?~~

6 MR. WILLIS: I've got a question. Do you
7 have a timetable -- I don't want to put you on the
8 spot, but I know you indicated Opportunity Lands was
9 interested in doing a major renovation project on
10 housing over here. Is there a target date on that, or
11 are there other things that can precipitate that or
12 could move that up?

13 MR. BENNETT: We have basically a three-year
14 strategic plan to really try to look at all of those
15 activities, the business development activity and the
16 housing development activity. What will stimulate and
17 move that along, of course, is two things. One,
18 availability of resources, and the State has already
19 earmarked some money for housing development.
20 Secondly, finding what we would call a local partner,
21 trying to co-venture with individuals and institutions
22 who are existing in the Delta to try to leverage their
23 knowledge and information and experience along with our
24 technical assistance.

25 MR. PATTESON: Do you spend a great deal of

1 your time in the Arkadelphia area personally?

2 MR. BENNETT: No, I don't spend much time in
3 Arkadelphia. Most of my time actually is spent in
4 Helena.

5 ~~MR. PATTESON: All right, but I mean, you are~~
6 it in Arkansas as far as your corporation is concerned?

7 MR. BENNETT: No -- well, I am it in the
8 Delta area. We have a full loan staff which is growing
9 by leaps and bounds in Arkadelphia. The Good Faith
10 Fund is actually looking to expand in some activities
11 into the Delta. There are five staff people there.
12 So, I actually am the one who spends most of the time
13 in -- and am the Delta Connection at this point.

14 MR. PATTESON: The television program you
15 made reference to, if it's the same one I remember,
16 they showed some example of a woman who made baskets
17 and all she needed was sixty bucks. You're not
18 actually finding situations like that, are you?

19 MR. BENNETT: Well, over here people need a
20 little more than that. But you do find instances where
21 people have been baking pies in their homes and what
22 they need is a small capital injection to either do
23 advertising and marketing, or to buy materials that can
24 expand on their production. That's not a lot
25 sometimes, but those are loans that they certainly

1 couldn't go to a conventional lending institution and
2 get.

3 MS. POINDEXTER: Is there a county limit on
4 individuals who can access the fund? Is it available
5 ~~to all individuals in Arkansas, or have you limited it~~
6 to those 13 counties of which you speak?

7 MR. BENNETT: Actually, at this point various
8 facets of the organization has kind of targeted it at
9 limited counties. Thirteen counties is really the
10 target area for the bank and its lending program. One
11 reason for that is that the effort is kind of a
12 proactive effort, so people are out circuit-riding.
13 So, you have some limited designations there. The
14 second reason, of course, is because we want to measure
15 -- we want to be able to measure some impact in
16 volume. The Good Faith Fund right now is focusing on
17 eight counties, and please don't ask me to name them
18 because I don't recall, but they're focusing on eight
19 counties. But, the notion is eventually, of course, to
20 cover the state. But, the idea is to target and to
21 move kind of judiciously, learning from the lessons of
22 each of these areas.

23 DR. WHITE: I want to make a comment and also
24 to ask a question. First of all, I think that your
25 concept for the Delta brings something to a people who

1 have historically felt very helpless and hopeless, and
2 I think the kind of approach that you're using can be
3 very beneficial to people in this particular region.
4 While you have identified an area of concentration for
5 ~~your program at this time, are you available to other~~
6 counties in the Delta just to share what the
7 possibilities might be with community leadership, bank
8 presidents, and even folk who might have some ideas
9 about becoming entrepreneurs themselves?

10 MR. BENNETT: Yes. And, yes, through a
11 couple of mechanisms. One, we have through the Shore
12 Bank Corporation an entity that I didn't elaborate on.
13 It's called Shore Bank Advisory Services and that's
14 kind of our consulting arm where we've kind of staffed
15 up and pulled together information in one place that we
16 can transport to other areas. The other way is we're
17 really trying to network with local universities.
18 We're doing work right now with the Economic Research
19 and Development Center at the University of Arkansas at
20 Pine Bluff where we hope to kind of leverage skills and
21 abilities there along with what we know to work with
22 various other counties, at least, information that we
23 can provide.

24 MR. COLEMAN: I want to ask you, the first
25 time I heard about what you are telling us, other than

1 what I read in "Jet" magazine and whatever that my
2 country cousin gave me from Chicago, I was in Dr.
3 Fluker's office just on yesterday, talking with him
4 about a young man who's putting in my plumbing. He's
5 ~~doing an excellent job but he needs something like~~
6 \$3,000.00 to, you know, get really going. He can
7 really do the job. And, you know, I just didn't know
8 that existed and he pointed me to somebody in another
9 office to have him go which I thought was, you know, a
10 good thing. But, our problem, seemingly, to me, in the
11 Delta in all of these communities in Arkansas, we don't
12 communicate very well. We don't know where I might ask
13 the right questions. You go to the University and Mr.
14 Fluker is amenable enough, but you know, they talk to
15 you in terms of physics or something else when all I
16 want is a simple explanation as to how I can -- the
17 communication thing, I think, is really bad.

18 MR. BENNETT: Yeah. I think there's a
19 probably a couple of resources that are at least trying
20 to deal with that, and it's not directly out of
21 Southern. Southern Development is trying to work with
22 some of these outstanding innovations that are
23 home-grown in Arkansas, and one of those is the Delta
24 Community Economic Development Studies Program. It's a
25 fellow, Are Morretizon who is actually coordinating

1 that program and he's doing it in conjunction with the
2 Delta Community Development Corporation. And it's a
3 continuing education program through the University of
4 Arkansas at Pine Bluff. What all that means is that
5 ~~there are now a series of seminars and classes that are~~
6 being made available to talk about economic development
7 resources and business development resources that are
8 available. The other thing that Are is putting
9 together is a newsletter that talks about economic
10 development types of things. So, we're a ways off but
11 I think that our pieces are beginning to come together
12 to address some of those issues. It's a problem in a
13 variety of areas. How do you get the information
14 flowing correctly and efficiently?

15 MR. PATTESON: We'll take one more question
16 and we must move on.

17 MR. MULDROW: I'd just like to second some of
18 the comments that have been made here that I find that
19 your entire program and organization could be very
20 positive and encouraging. I mean, you're well-financed
21 and you have a good track record. You have heavy
22 involvement for minority representation at all levels,
23 and I think it's very, very meritorious that you're now
24 looking at the Delta as your next challenge. As has
25 been brought out here, and is a topic of our forum,

1 race relations is a very key component of development
2 in this area. Do you have a special approach that you
3 plan to deal with this in your plans for this area, or
4 will you use the same tactics that you have elsewhere?

5 Do you find the problems here similar in that regard,
6 or distinctive?

7 MR. BENNETT: I think what you find, and I am
8 still very much in the learning stage of the dynamics
9 of the Delta, but what you find is the same thing you
10 found -- find elsewhere but it's much more pronounced.
11 And that is a lack of opportunity. Some of that is
12 conscious by institutions who are discriminatory, and
13 some of that is simply traditional, you know, who knows
14 whom. What we try to do in our approach is separate
15 the politics from the business development strategy.
16 That's easier said than done, but what our method is,
17 we don't have any special magic, but what we try to do
18 is concentrate on providing capital and credit and
19 managerial resources to business development
20 strategies. And what we found is that there are a
21 number of entrepreneurial minds out here. There's a lot
22 of entrepreneurial energy that simply needs coaching,
23 technical assistance and, most of all, resources. So,
24 I wouldn't say we have a special thing, but that's how
25 we look at it. Let me also add one final thing. It's

1 a slow process. That's probably the most frustrating
2 thing about it. I mean, we are moving very slowly in
3 Arkansas. We are not addressing -- We should have
4 almost started in the Delta, but because of the
5 problems were as they were and ~~because investors are~~
6 still for-profit-minded, it takes a while to kind of
7 massage the interest level and confidence level of the
8 organization that it's capable of doing things in one
9 of the toughest areas. So, it's a slow process but I
10 think if we can coordinate with the existing
11 institutions, leverage some of the good experiences of
12 hard-working community development corporations that
13 have been here, I think we might be able to make a
14 contribution.

15 MR. PATTESON: Mr. Bennett, thank you very
16 much. I'm sure I speak for those on the panel when I
17 say that your presentation has been very educational to
18 me. I didn't know it existed until a few days ago. It
19 sounds optimistic for Arkansas and the Delta also.

20 Mr. Dan Dane was scheduled originally to be
21 here tomorrow and could not, but was available today,
22 and we had agreed we would see him and hear him at
23 4:45. We're a little late. We do appreciate your
24 coming. Mr. Dane is Prosecuting Attorney for Forrest
25 City, and the area in which he would be interested in

1 and had been asked to speak is about the administration
2 of justice which is a little out of the context of
3 which we've been involved today up to this point.
4 We're very pleased that he could come at this time.

5 ~~MR. DANE: Thank you, Mr. Patteson, and~~
6 members of the Committee, and particularly Mr. Muldrow.
7 I appreciate you rescheduling me here. I had no idea
8 that I would follow a man who had money to loan. Had I
9 known that to be the situation, I'm not sure I would
10 have agreed. I'm a little bit intimidated by the
11 august qualifications I see of the members of the
12 Committee, and I'm certainly not sure that I would have
13 agreed to address you had I known that my old law
14 school professor was going to be here and have another
15 chance to ask me if I had read the cases.

16 MR. PATTESON: May I interrupt and ask one
17 question? I was asked earlier when someone saw your
18 badge if you were running for office, and I said, "I'm
19 sure it's not pertinent to his being here." But, if
20 it's every two years, I'm sure he is running for office
21 in Arkansas.

22 MR. DANE: Mr. Patteson, I don't know where
23 you live, but I hope you remember my name when the
24 appropriate time comes.

25 As the Prosecuting Attorney for the First

1 Judicial District, I am the elected Prosecutor for six
2 counties in this Delta area. For a point of reference,
3 the counties in this district are Phillips County, Lee
4 County, Monroe, St. Francis, Cross, and Woodruff
5 ~~Counties. And you must forgive me if I am still a~~
6 little bit ambitious because I'm excited about being a
7 prosecutor in this district and I'm still kind of new
8 at the job. So, if some of my comments are sort of
9 rhetorical or even redundant, I hope that you will
10 remember I'm new at this.

11 It occurs to me that America has been the
12 leader of the industrial world for the last 50 years.
13 And that role is now being seriously challenged or
14 tested. And, in fact, this part of that great nation
15 is struggling for economic survival. And I've searched
16 for the secret of the greatness of America over the
17 past decades. Along with Tocqueville, I have wondered
18 if the greatness and power of America lies in the
19 fertility of her soil as we have here in the Delta, the
20 richness of the minds, or the vast natural resources.
21 I have thought maybe that the greatness of America
22 might be found in our public school system or
23 democratic form of government, or maybe even just the
24 magnificence of things like the Constitution or the
25 Bill of Rights.

1 But, really, what I have found in my limited
2 experiences is that the true greatness of America is to
3 be found in the genius of her people, a group of
4 educated, honest, healthy and productive people.

5 ~~By educated people, I mean people who can~~
6 read and write and figure with eight to twelve years of
7 public education.

8 By healthy people, I mean sober and people
9 free from drug addiction and health-conscious.

10 By honest people, I mean people who have a
11 sense of ethics, religion, or morals.

12 By working people, I mean people who have a
13 custom or a tradition of going to work every morning of
14 every week of every month for many, many years. These
15 people, these working people have measured success in
16 America by holding a job for 20 years and making normal
17 advancements in that working group; by earning the
18 respect of their fellow workers or their neighbors by
19 being honest and being dependable and self-sufficient,
20 just law-abiding citizens.

21 And this is, in my idea, where the
22 fundamental concept of equal opportunity for jobs and
23 equal opportunity for advancement, fair play, and the
24 respect for human dignity has found its expression in
25 the American experience. This is what we now know as

1 civil rights.

2 The concept of civil rights goes hand in hand
3 with ethics including the work ethic. Civil rights go
4 hand in hand with education, both equal opportunity for

5 ~~education and advancement based upon education. But,~~

6 the enforcement or the protection of these civil rights
7 can only be accomplished in a community. That is, a
8 community that's incorporated these principles into
9 community institutions.

10 Civil rights, in my view, are something that
11 we either have or we do not have, not in the abstract,
12 but in the context of the work place, or the religion
13 place, or the education place. What I'm saying is, we
14 have them in the community. To come to the point, the
15 reason that we have not had a very good experience with
16 civil rights in the Delta here, or in this part of the
17 world, is because we don't have a very strong tradition
18 of communities.

19 In 1987 when I first considered the insanity
20 of getting involved in public office, I started to talk
21 to political advisors and they just automatically
22 started to talk to me in terms of the black community
23 and the white community. That's in this six-county
24 district, and that sounded rather strange to me then
25 and it sounds kind of strange to me today because what

1 I have really learned over these last two or three
2 years is that there's not much of a community, either
3 among black people or among white people. Instead of a
4 community of people working together to provide
5 ~~education or job opportunities or governmental~~
6 services for all citizens within the area, within the
7 spirit of civil rights, we have the legacy of the
8 plantation system and we have the legacy of the welfare
9 system in this particular district. What I mean by
10 that is that we in the Delta have never really learned
11 to measure success by an educated, honest, productive
12 life. The only symbols of success that we have
13 traditionally recognized in this part of the world are
14 ownership of two or three thousand acres of land,
15 expensive automobiles, and a fancy house in the country
16 club edition with the columns in the front. None of
17 those assets necessarily embrace education, ethics, or
18 a productive life. They do embrace the traditional
19 symbols of power in our small southern towns.

20 The boys that we're raising here in the Delta
21 don't really dream of playing professional baseball.
22 They have been taught that real success is owning a
23 professional baseball team. I'm saying to you that the
24 boys we are raising in the Delta are not dreaming of
25 finding a cure for cancer from peanuts. They are

1 dreaming of cornering the peanut market on the
2 commodity exchange and becoming very rich. One of the
3 reasons for that, in my view, or in my experience, is
4 that all political power here in the Delta has been
5 ~~exactly tantamount to material wealth. There never has~~
6 been, really, a community in these areas, operating for
7 the benefit or the good of all people in a particular
8 area. There have been the rich and the powerful and
9 there have been the oppressed. That's our tradition
10 here in the Delta, and that has absolutely nothing to
11 do with race.

12 It's my view that civil rights will never be
13 embraced in this part of the South until we learn to
14 build and until we learn to live in communities;
15 communities that insist on honest government;
16 communities that revolve around ethics and religion;
17 communities that recognize the importance of education
18 and assign it an appropriate priority along with other
19 governmental services like health care, housing, and
20 police protection. I want to say to you that the
21 leaders that we elect over here in the Delta to enforce
22 these principles of civil rights are instantly tested.
23 The old system of deferring the public business to the
24 whim of the established "good ole boys" is immediately
25 presented to every school board member, city council

1 member, any elected official. To just put it as simply
2 as I can, there is no place for civil rights in that
3 system. That is a system of patronage. That is a
4 system of who you are and where you came from. So much
5 for the rhetoric.

6 The first thing that I have done as
7 Prosecuting Attorney in this district to embrace these
8 principles of civil rights is to hire ordinary, honest,
9 educated, hard-working lawyers as Deputy Prosecutors.
10 All of my Deputies live in the apartment over their
11 office or in public housing or in ordinary
12 neighborhoods. My Deputies do not represent the
13 privileged or the elite. Now, I'm not saying that one
14 or two of them might not drive a Lincoln, but we're
15 common folks. All of my Deputies recognize the
16 importance of education. Unless a youthful person
17 commits a violent crime or sells drugs in this
18 district, all that a young person has to do in this
19 district to stay out of prison is to perform on an
20 educational or vocational program. I would be quick to
21 say that we rather quickly send violent offenders on to
22 the penitentiary, or people who will not comply with
23 those programs we send on to the penitentiary,
24 recognizing the rights of victims.

25 Most importantly, I think what we have done

1 is to re-emphasize the Jury System in this judicial
2 district. It's far more effective for a Jury of 12
3 people, 12 citizens sitting as Jurors, to impose a
4 penalty on some member of their community than it is
5 ~~for me or one of my Deputies to make a plea bargain~~
6 because that comes from the community. I think that
7 the record is now clear that in the last year we have
8 absolutely stopped the practice of excluding blacks
9 from serving on Juries in this district. This is a
10 step towards involving the whole community in the
11 criminal justice system in this district. Since Dr.
12 Gitelman is here, I'll say that's the Batson Decision.

13 I submit to you that the only way that we are
14 to preserve the greatness of America, indeed, the only
15 hope for economic survival of the Delta here as an
16 area, is to preserve the spirit of these people. By
17 enforcement of the law without regard to race or social
18 status, I think that we preserve that sense of fair
19 play, that sense of human dignity, that sense of
20 equality under the law that is absolutely essential to
21 the spirit of America, essential to the spirit of civil
22 rights.

23 By stressing and enforcing the mandatory
24 school attendance laws, by making educational programs
25 a part of the sentences that are handed down by our

1 courts, by prosecuting political corruption in these
2 towns, we're trying to lay the groundwork for towns in
3 this district to start to function like communities.
4 We're trying to lay the groundwork for individuals to
5 ~~find a way to succeed. We're trying to lay a~~
6 groundwork for the true spirit of civil rights and that
7 is probably communities under God with liberty but with
8 justice for all. Thank you.

9 I will answer a few questions if they're
10 easy.

11 MR. COLEMAN: I was wondering, looking at you
12 from the Delta and listening to you, I was trying to
13 figure out whether you are the Lyndon Johnson of the
14 Delta, or I couldn't say, the Ms. Peters because you
15 are male. You're just a new thing in the Delta.

16 MR. DANE: Well, Dr. Gitelman will tell you
17 that I'm a misplaced lawyer from out in New Mexico.

18 MR. PATTESON: My question is more basic than
19 that. How long have you been in office?

20 MR. DANE: I took office in January of 1989.
21 We have been at these programs a little over a year.

22 MR. PATTESON: I don't know whose hand went
23 up first.

24 DR. LEVY: I must tell you I was very
25 impressed. You usually don't hear prosecuting

1 attorneys give civil rights talks, but I must tell you
2 that I was impressed with what you said. I'm just
3 curious to know -- I don't know if this is a loaded
4 question or not, but if blacks in the Delta share your
5 ~~view that there is this equality when it comes to the~~
6 justice system?

7 MR. DANE: I don't think that our criminal
8 justice -- Our criminal justice system, in my view, in
9 the Delta had essentially shut down. And I think one
10 of the reasons for that is because there was a lack of
11 participation of the entire -- it did not have the
12 support of the broad base of the population in this
13 area. And I think that we were facing very severe
14 problems here with credibility in the criminal justice
15 system. And I think it's clear that we cannot exclude
16 half of the population from a meaningful participation
17 in that system, both as Jurors or as lawyers or as
18 Judges and effectively enforce the criminal laws when
19 they are enforced in large measure against a large
20 percentage of black members of the population. That's
21 just essential for us to maintain civility here, that
22 we have a criminal justice system that can accommodate
23 all of the people in the Delta. I don't hesitate a
24 moment to say that I have a black Deputy in Lincoln
25 County which is a predominantly black county and that's

1 the only thing that makes any sense to me.

2 DR. WHITE: A comment and a question. I want
3 to say that I commend you Prosecuting Attorney Dane for
4 the work that I know that you are doing. You're really

5 ~~making a difference. My question is: With reelection~~
6 coming up, what do you see on the horizon for the kind
7 of strides that have been made in a very short time in
8 terms of parity for African Americans and the
9 disenfranchised in the Delta? I'm concerned about your
10 six counties particularly. What do you predict?

11 MR. DANE: You know, this is the usual
12 problem that I have with you, Dr. White. I don't
13 understand the question. You're probably over my head.

14 DR. WHITE: You are aware that there have
15 been some political changes that have occurred as
16 relate to redistricting, that there has been some
17 backlash because of some of the strides that your
18 office has made and others who think like you, and that
19 perhaps with the political tone about to change, --
20 perhaps, I don't know -- with the elections coming up,
21 what are the kinds of discussions that are going on in
22 corners that might indicate where we might be going?

23 MR. DANE: Well, you see, now I've given
24 myself about five minutes to think up an answer to
25 that. Dr. White, I believe that all people in the

1 Delta, disenfranchised or dispossessed or oppressed, or
2 the elite, have finally come to a realization through
3 this economic depression that we are suffering through
4 that we cannot continue in the ways that we have over
5 ~~the last 30, 40 or 50 years.~~ And I think our education
6 systems are very indicative of that, and I think that
7 there very well may be a backlash of the progress that
8 we have made in embracing all people in the Delta.
9 But, I think everyone has come to the conclusion that
10 not only our economic problems but that our educational
11 problems in getting these children in school and
12 getting them through school and doing something with
13 them while they're in school are problems of a
14 sufficient import that it takes the entire community
15 including the criminal justice system, the religious
16 leaders, the business community, it's going to take all
17 of us just to survive here. And I think I would put
18 survival above backlash, and that's my view of it.

19 MS. POINDEXTER: Being unfamiliar with your
20 record, Prosecuting Attorney Dane, could you share with
21 us what percentage of minorities make up your
22 prosecuting attorneys office or offices, and also what
23 are you doing to impact those individuals who we see
24 before we see you, and that's the police departments
25 because there are still negative feelings many times

1 concerning the police? It is not when we get to the
2 prosecuting attorney level, but it is usually at the
3 arrest level. So, could you share those two things
4 with me since I am unfamiliar?

5 ~~MR. DANE: I have six counties in which I~~
6 appoint a Deputy, and sometimes that job is shared by
7 more than one. Out of those six counties, one county
8 has a black Deputy. I'll try real hard not to speak
9 Spanish so you won't put me over there in the
10 minorities, too.

11 MS. POINDEXTER: Como esta?

12 MR. DANE: I am not claiming that we have
13 reached parity with 50 percent black Deputies. I'm
14 saying we've taking the first step and I'm really happy
15 to report that of all of the problems that I thought I
16 was going to have in appointing all new Deputies in six
17 new counties, the least problem that I have had
18 professionally has been with that county where I
19 appointed the black Deputy. In terms of the question
20 about the law enforcement at the local level and the
21 quality of law enforcement that we have in a rural area
22 here in the Delta, those are problems that are only
23 addressed two ways, either through the minimum
24 standards and the education programs for police
25 officers that are handled through the State Police or

1 law enforcement academy and the requirement that those
2 officers go get training. Or, the other way is through
3 prosecution of police officers when we find wrongdoing.
4 And I think you can understand how difficult a task
5 that is. If you are unfamiliar with my record, you
6 would see that I have been naive enough to try that a
7 couple of times. But, I think that we have sent a
8 message through the Prosecutor's office for this
9 district that we really do believe in the principles
10 and spirit of civil rights. We believe in fair play
11 and equal justice and we believe in honesty in the
12 investigation as well as the prosecution of these
13 crimes.

14 MS. POINDEXTER: Do you use seminars for your
15 fellow prosecutors around the state?

16 MR. DANE: No. My Deputies and I meet once a
17 month and they complain about that, to train and go
18 over problems in the district. We have our hands full
19 without doing seminars.

20 MS. MILLER: One of the reasons why we are
21 here at this time is to look back on a report that was
22 done back in 1970 regarding the blacks in the Delta.
23 One of the findings of that board under administration
24 of justice was the comment about black police officers
25 being discriminated against by having their arrest

1 powers severely restricted to blacks only. And one of
2 the comments that you made -- it's admirable and it has
3 its advantages, but what came to mind was the fact that
4 I think you said Lee County was predominantly black?

5 ~~MR. DANE: I think that there is a majority~~
6 population there.

7 MS. MILLER: Okay, and in Lee County, you
8 have a black Deputy Prosecutor. Now, of course, that
9 has an advantage but it also could be perceived to be a
10 restriction on a black prosecuting whites. Blacks can
11 prosecute blacks but we will -- not that you're doing
12 that. I'm saying it could be perceived as that in
13 terms of restricting blacks to a predominantly black
14 population. Have you -- Did you think of that or have
15 you ever thought of that possible perception?

16 MR. DANE: Well, I would be untruthful if I
17 said I had not thought about it. I've spent a great
18 deal of time in the initial stages of this
19 administration making certain that I was present with
20 Mr. Neal whenever the docket was called so that there
21 could be no perception of that. And then I came to
22 realize that I was not spending any time sending Mr.
23 Neal to the dockets in the other counties where we had
24 that same black and white or salt and pepper
25 perception. And we just came to deal directly with the

1 truth, and that is that a qualified prosecutor will
2 prosecute crimes, regardless of who the defendants are,
3 and I am just pleasantly surprised at how little
4 resistance that we have had to that, Ms. Miller. And
5 ~~I think our record there will actually be that Mr. Neal~~
6 has handled the prosecution of cases of more white
7 people than black people. It might be reversed for me
8 on cases that I have handled there for him. But, we
9 just plain and simply don't waste our time with that
10 anymore.

11 MR. PATTESON: I started to make a comment
12 and then started not to. I think I still will make it.
13 It's --

14 MR. COLEMAN: You finally got one.

15 MR. PATTESON: No, I was leaving questions to
16 you. I think the thing that's so difficult for some of
17 us is that this would be a handicap for you appearing
18 before a group like this because you say so well what
19 prosecuting attorneys have said for years, or what's
20 amazing to me is the strong support that I hear from
21 black members of this committee who know what you do,
22 and that's been interesting to me because I would have
23 listened to what you said. I was open and interested,
24 but being a native Arkansan myself, my guard goes up a
25 little bit because you were saying so well the things

1 that I heard 25 or 30 years ago when I did not see the
2 performance matching the words, and I salute you from
3 what I've heard here today, and from the response from
4 the black members who know you.

5 ~~MR. DANE: Thank you for the opportunity to~~
6 appear.

7 MR. PATTESON: I guess we'll be adjourned.
8 We'll meet again at 7:15.

9 (Recess)

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EVENING SESSION - 7:20 P.M.

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2 MR. PATTESON: The Commission will now
3 reconvene. I speculated that there would be few here
4 other than the panel and the presenters.

~~5 At this time I am very pleased to welcome~~
6 Representative Ernest Cunningham. Mr. Cunningham is a
7 West Helena businessman and State Representative from
8 District 75. We're very pleased to have you.

9 MR. CUNNINGHAM: Thank you. It's a pleasure
10 to be here tonight. I hope you don't stay as long as
11 the Delta Commission does when they met over here. I
12 think they were going until about 3:00 in the morning.

13 MR. PATTESON: I'll be asleep.

14 MR. CUNNINGHAM: It is a pleasure for me to
15 be here and address the panel. I feel that race
16 relations have improved in the Delta, particularly in
17 Phillips County. However, I certainly recognize there
18 is more that needs to be done. I really don't feel
19 that the Delta is any worse than another part of the
20 country when it comes to race relations. Here in
21 Phillips County, black and white people work together,
22 go to school together, and, yes, even fellowship
23 together. There certainly needs to be more trust
24 between the races. There needs to be more acceptance
25 of each other as people rather than as black or white.

1 The real problem that we have here in
2 Phillips County and over much of the Delta is the poor
3 economic conditions. Many of our people are either
4 unemployed or underemployed. And with this, comes the
5 ~~problem that we have with poverty. We're working very~~
6 hard to bring about a positive change in this area here
7 in the Delta.

8 Some examples of recent situations that
9 address economic development as well as show concerns
10 for race relations include, one, Arnell Willis who is a
11 young black man that serves on your panel was elected
12 president of the Phillips County Chamber of Commerce
13 and its industrial wing, the Arkansas Delta
14 Development. Mr. Willis, as you know, is a bright,
15 articulate person who brings a great deal of expertise
16 and understanding of economic development to this job
17 of his. He is working hard to create employment in our
18 area and at present, is heading up efforts to fund our
19 portion of the Slackwater Harbor. And speaking of the
20 Slackwater Harbor that is to be built here in Phillips
21 County, membership in that body was recently expanded
22 at the request of the black elected officials of this
23 county to more represent the makeup of Phillips County,
24 and it was expanded by four additional black people at
25 the request of the black elected officials.

1 Another positive thing that we have going for
2 us here in Phillips County is the Delta Cultural
3 Center. The Delta Cultural Center is a product of the
4 Arkansas legislature. Legislation was passed to insure
5 ~~that the makeup of the Advisory Committee would be~~
6 inclusive of the population of the Delta. It's an
7 11-member board, five are white, five are black, and
8 one Oriental. The Delta Culture Center is expected to
9 attract tourists to the area, create jobs, and further
10 help bridge the gap between the races.

11 That concludes my presentation. I'll be
12 happy to answer any questions.

13 MR. PATTESON: I am going to do something I
14 have not done all evening. I'm going to lead off with
15 the questions. What -- The Delta Cultural Center, of
16 what does it consist?

17 MR. CUNNINGHAM: It will be approximately an
18 \$8 million project. The first phase is underway at
19 present. It's in the lower part of Cherry Street. The
20 first building to be reconstructed is the old depot
21 that was donated to the state. It is a state project
22 that will be funded with state dollars. The Governor
23 has been very instrumental in this. It will be a
24 take-off on the Ozark Center, Ozark Cultural Center
25 that's been so successful in Mountain View. And we

1 expect it to take -- make a presentation through the
2 Center of how the different races and the different
3 cultures have contributed to the makeup of the Delta.
4 The Delta is a unique part of Arkansas. We have more
5 ~~diverse people that live here, and we feel we have a~~
6 lot offer the tourists to show how this area came about
7 and what it's all about.

8 MR. PATTESON: Will it become a museum also?

9 MR. CUNNINGHAM: It will be about six
10 different things. We'll have a visitors center, we'll
11 have a museum. We expect to have an inn, small hotel
12 there. There will be some gift shops and there will be
13 a large display area of the Delta itself. Not only
14 will it be here, but it is expected that tours will
15 leave here to visit other parts of the Delta with this
16 being the center.

17 MR. PATTESON: Questions?

18 MS. POINDEXTER: Representative Cunningham,
19 in the past legislative session, the Arkansas
20 Development Corporation came under quite a bit of
21 scrutiny, shall we say, or bad press in some instances.
22 Could you please tell me why it is perceived that the
23 Freedom of Information Act was limited in that session
24 to preclude knowledge of the public of --

25 MR. CUNNINGHAM: (Interposing) Yeah, I

1 didn't vote for that particular bill.

2 MS. POINDEXTER: And I applaud you for that.

3 MR. CUNNINGHAM: Thank you. Sometimes under
4 the guise of supporting businesses, I think mistakes
5 are made, ~~and certainly we want to have a positive~~
6 business climate in Arkansas. But, I think that was
7 maybe a little overboard to make sure it was a positive
8 climate. I think we would have been a lot better just
9 to open the records and let the chips fall where they
10 may. I honestly don't feel like there was any errors
11 there, but if there were, they should be exposed. I
12 guess it was just turf battles and protectionism more
13 than anything else. I think more than racism.

14 MS. POINDEXTER: And how do you think the
15 recent moves towards reapportionment are going to
16 affect race relations in the Delta, and perhaps, your
17 political future?

18 MR. CUNNINGHAM: Well, I recognize the need
19 for certainly more black participation. I have
20 concerns that it may tend to polarize the races and we
21 don't need that, of course. We need to be working
22 together to bridge that gap and only time will tell.

23 MS. POINDEXTER: Do you think it has been
24 handled fairly? There is some conjecture that you have
25 the Governor on one side, the Secretary of State and

1 the Attorney General on another, and we have a
2 political tug-of-war over the future of people's
3 careers.

4 MR. CUNNINGHAM: Yeah, and I think I was
5 ~~caught up in some of that. I really don't know. I~~
6 guess it would have to depend on the person looking at
7 the issue and their stand on the thing. Personally, I
8 am glad that it's being appealed. I think we need to
9 know before the next Census, "Is this the sort of thing
10 we're going to operating with from now on?" I felt
11 like that probably all things being considered, it was
12 handled as well as it could have been.

13 MS. POINDEXTER: Thank you, sir.

14 MR. PATTESON: Let's start this time with the
15 opposite end.

16 DR. WHITE: Representative Cunningham, you
17 mentioned that in this area the problem of race is no
18 bigger issue than it is in other parts of the country.
19 However, we do have some problems with economic
20 development in the Delta.

21 MR. CUNNINGHAM: We certainly do.

22 DR. WHITE: And since those two issues are
23 interwoven, what do you see as some challenges that
24 must be addressed related to race if we are to go
25 forward in the Delta?

1 MR. CUNNINGHAM: Well, I think that we, as
2 races, black and white, have to work closer together.
3 We have to understand each other better. Certainly, we
4 have to, I think, work together to see that jobs are
5 ~~created in the area. I think we can not afford --~~
6 although most of the time in Arkansas and other states,
7 most of the jobs are created within. We're so capital
8 poor in the Delta, it's going to take either an
9 infusion of Federal capital, an infusion of private
10 capital, some capital is going to have to come to the
11 Delta and that was what I was encouraged about as far
12 as the Delta Commission and Senator Bumpers' efforts.
13 However, in reading the paper later on, I've understood
14 that maybe the Federal funds wouldn't be there. But,
15 we certainly have to work together, I think, both
16 parties, both peoples.

17 MR. COLEMAN: When you said "parties," do you
18 mean -- oh, I'm sorry.

19 MR. CUNNINGHAM: I meant races. I'm sorry.

20 DR. LEVY: As the Representative of this
21 constituency down here, could you speak to two other
22 issues that might be of interest? They don't directly
23 impinge on race relations but they might indirectly.
24 One is school consolidation and the other is the
25 lottery.

1 MR. CUNNINGHAM: Well, I'm opposed to the
2 lottery from a personal standpoint. I don't think that
3 the lottery is going to really help Arkansas. I think
4 poor people will be investing their hand-earned money
5 ~~in a once-in-a-million chance. I don't think that the~~
6 way a state should go to get their funds. Now, that's
7 just personal on my part.

8 DR. LEVY: Does your constituency feel that
9 way, too, do you know?

10 MR. CUNNINGHAM: I think many of them would
11 like to have a lottery. I don't know whether the
12 majority would, but I think many of my constituents
13 would probably like to have some type of lottery.

14 DR. LEVY: What about school consolidation
15 that being proposed?

16 MR. CUNNINGHAM: In our area I don't see it
17 as being a -- my constituents probably would favor
18 school consolidation because we have a large
19 consolidated school here in Helena, West Helena.

20 DR. LEVY: It's already consolidated?

21 MR. CUNNINGHAM: Right.

22 DR. LEVY: It wouldn't be affected?

23 MR. CUNNINGHAM: It wouldn't be an issue here
24 in the city. Now, it would be in the county. We've
25 got several smaller schools out there that I'm sure

1 would be opposed to consolidation.

2 DR. LEVY: Okay. Thank you.

3 MR. CUNNINGHAM: But, I think in all honesty,
4 Arkansas has to look at that issue very carefully.

5 ~~MR. GITELMAN:~~ Representative Cunningham, I
6 was at a similar meeting in 1972, the last time this
7 Committee dealt with the problems in the Delta, and at
8 that time we saw that local communities in the Delta
9 region were opposed to such things as VISTA volunteers.
10 They were trying to close down the Lee County
11 Co-operative Clinic. There were boycotts by minority
12 people in Marianna. Local elected officials would not
13 appear before our Committee to talk about the problems,
14 and I want your impression of whether all those days
15 are really behind us or not.

16 MR. CUNNINGHAM: Well, we've come a long way.
17 I guess as long as there are black people and white
18 people there is going to be some racism, and I'm not
19 ever going to deny that. I hope that we continue the
20 road -- the progress that we've made the last 18 years.
21 Certainly, it's the only way we're going to improve the
22 life of the people of the Delta. To me, elected
23 officials are more responsive now to all races than
24 they've ever been, and certainly, I think that we
25 welcome practically any organization or group to the

1 county that would benefit the people. That's the way I
2 feel.

3 MS. MILLER: Representative Cunningham, one
4 of the comments that has been mentioned during the day
5 ~~was in relation to the Delta being infused with~~
6 different programs for loan opportunities, et cetera,
7 but that despite the fact that there have been these
8 programs instituted, the attitudes remain the same with
9 the power structures, that the power structures have
10 not really changed in the Delta, that the same people
11 are administering the new programs and, therefore,
12 nothing really -- I shouldn't say nothing -- of course,
13 there have been some changes, but that has retarded the
14 change that could have taken place here. Do you see
15 that as well and do you have any ideas about how the
16 power structure could possibly be changed in order to
17 balance the situation here?

18 MR. CUNNINGHAM: Well, I think I know a
19 little bit about what you're talking about. Some of
20 the small banks have failed to loan people money,
21 unless they had a CD for \$10,00.00, they couldn't get a
22 \$10,000.00 loan. But that's white or black. I think
23 that -- I don't know about the power structure now. To
24 me, we don't have near enough capital in the Delta.
25 The banks are under a lot of scrutiny as they should be

1 to make wise loans, not only from the people that own
2 those banks, the stockholders, but from the Federal
3 Government because there's so many bank failures
4 throughout the country. I think that we have to have
5 ~~some type of capital infusion into the Delta to create~~
6 jobs, to create small business opportunities, and we
7 just don't have that. We have some programs through
8 the AIDC but it's very limited, and those are
9 administered in Little Rock. There's no structure here
10 to administer those. We have been successful in
11 receiving some money through the AIDC for minority
12 interests. But, I think that's the real problem that
13 we have in the Delta, capital. And I don't have an
14 answer to it. I know that it is probably going to
15 take something like the South Shore Bank, something
16 like that to bring capital in the Delta, probably with
17 some Federal help.

18 MS. MILLER: Just to follow up on that, let's
19 say that South Shore Bank is here and trying to assess
20 the situation. Is there some mechanism, then, to make
21 sure that when this capital infusion takes place that
22 it won't be the same people administering that capital
23 and once again, possibly poor people, black people will
24 be left out because they're not part of the power
25 structure?

1 MR. CUNNINGHAM: I guess that would depend on
2 the institution that was set up to administer it. I
3 think South Shore has had a real successful program in
4 loaning money to poor people, and I think they've got
5 something they -- ~~you probably know more about it than~~
6 I do, but it's kind of like a team. You don't get a
7 loan unless the board approves you and the board is
8 made up of individuals just like you in many cases. I
9 see that as a concept that's working not only here --
10 or, I think it was actually in Pine Bluff, but on
11 television the other day they had a very similar
12 arrangement in Bangladesh which is one of the poorest
13 countries in the world. I would hope something like
14 that could be established.

15 MR. MULDROW: Representative Cunningham, just
16 to follow up a little bit on this power structure,
17 question: Statistics would certainly indicate that
18 there's a dirth of political leadership among the
19 minority community. I mean, there are few black
20 representative or elected officials of any kind, few,
21 relatively few appointed officials from the black
22 community; yet, this would seem to be -- their
23 participation at that level would seem to be vital to
24 any equitable development programs or plans for the
25 area. You feel that the redistricting plan which was

1 one effort to remedy that situation might result in
2 polarization of the races. How do you feel -- What do
3 you feel the answer to that is? How do you rectify
4 that vacuum at the political level for a minority
5 population?

6 MR. CUNNINGHAM: Well, I guess I don't have
7 an answer for that. I think, you know, for instance in
8 Helena and West Helena -- and Mr. Willis can correct me
9 if I'm wrong, but I believe in West Helena there are
10 four black city councilmen and four white city
11 councilmen, and I think it's the same makeup in Helena,
12 four and four. I guess my point has been, and
13 certainly I can only speak from the way I feel in my
14 heart, but I strive to represent all of the people in
15 my district, blacks and whites. I hope that they feel
16 that they can come to me with their problems. I know
17 many of them do. And I don't have an answer as to how
18 you get more representation. I don't have that.

19 MR. COLEMAN: Is it a matter, really, of more
20 representation? I'm talking about in the Delta. If
21 we're going to have in the Delta the same kind of
22 representation coming from whoever is elected, black or
23 white, it will essentially leave us where we were. Do
24 you see or can you feel a kind of thought, political
25 thought -- as a man delivered here this afternoon, the

1 prosecuting attorney -- where you talk about things now
2 that actually involve people and their lives instead of
3 the "good ole buddy" system? I guess the end of that
4 would be -- Do you agree with me that one of the things
5 ~~that has hurt us most was the one-crop system for so~~
6 long, cotton, and a one-party system for 100 years?

7 MR. CUNNINGHAM: Well, I'll agree with the
8 first. But you have to remember, I'm the Majority
9 Leader in the House. You know, I hope things are
10 changing in the Delta. I think they are. I think
11 they're changing for the positive. I think people are
12 being recognized for what they contribute and it looks
13 to me like a coalition is being established that hasn't
14 been established before.

15 MS. POINDEXTER: Even with Republicans?

16 MR. CUNNINGHAM: Yeah. But, I still -- I do
17 recognize that there is much work to be done and men of
18 good will, women of good will, if we strive to work and
19 strive to improve the life of people, we're not always
20 going to agree but we can certainly make big
21 accomplishments.

22 MR. PATTESON: Are there any further
23 questions?

24 MR. WILLIS: I just want to say, you got more
25 questions than anybody today. You must be doing good.

1 MR. CUNNINGHAM: Or bad, one or the other.
2 Thank you-all.

3 MR. PATTESON: Thank you, sir. We appreciate
4 you appearing before us. I'll say to you what I said
5 ~~to another of the participants today. One of the~~
6 reasons he got so many questions was the fact that his
7 original presentation was so brief.

8 MR. CUNNINGHAM: A man of few words.

9 MR. PATTESON: I think we'll probably take a
10 ten-minute break. One of our participants, we knew was
11 going to be delayed and he's not here yet, so we'll
12 take a ten or fifteen-minute break.

13 (Recess)

14 MR. PATTESON: We'll reassemble. We're very
15 pleased to welcome Mr. Olly Neal. Mr. Neal is the
16 Deputy Prosecuting Attorney for the First Judicial
17 District in Lee County. He's a former member of this
18 Arkansas Committee which I had forgotten you served on
19 this Committee. Was that when Irma on it then?

20 MR. NEAL: Mort Gitelman was the Chairperson
21 at that time. That was in the mid-seventies, '72, '73,
22 '74, '75, somewhere thereabouts.

23 MR. PATTESON: We'd be very pleased to hear
24 your presentation. Would you mind using that mic over
25 there, please, sir?

1 MR. NEAL: This evening I see several people
2 that I know relatively well. I know Mort Gitelman from
3 the University Law School. He did not teach me. I
4 thought I did not want to be such a serious student so
5 ~~I wouldn't go to Fayetteville. I know, of course, my~~
6 good friend and colleague and the person on whom I try
7 to put a pretty good load by telling her things like --
8 and I told that to my supervisor -- I thought he was
9 here, Dan Dane who is the Prosecuting Attorney that
10 whatever we're going to do in Lee County that relates
11 to those schools, we're going to make sure if it is
12 within our power in any way that it is something that
13 Dr. White can find acceptable. The reason for that is
14 we think she ought to have a good bit of room to try
15 and make a situation that has not been as good as it
16 ought to be better. Of course, I know Dr. Beverly
17 White quite well and I'm glad to have a chance to be
18 here. I know Mr. Willis. I've talked with Mr. Muldrow
19 on the phone a few times. Of course, I know Alan
20 Patteson from years back. Elijah Coleman and I have
21 played in politics and meddled in other folks' business
22 quite a bit together. And I'm glad to have a chance to
23 see all of you. I did serve on this Committee some
24 years ago during a different era of my life. I am a
25 much more fellowed person now, so my -- I suspect that

1 my comments will be perhaps less discomfoting and a
2 little more subtling, I presume.

3 Let me say, as I tried to prepare a few
4 remarks for you, I was reminded, having just recently
5 ~~read a book by an author named Bell, a law professor at~~
6 Harvard -- I can't think of his first name now, but he
7 quoted in his book from Jeremiah, the eighth chapter
8 and the 20th verse, and I think that's quite
9 appropriate for our circumstances today. It says quite
10 simply: "The harvest is past, the summer is ended and
11 we are not saved." A very telling commentary on the
12 attitude of African Americans towards the justice
13 system in the Arkansas Delta can be gleaned from the
14 colloquial pronunciation of "justice." It's pronounced
15 "just us." Just us in the county jails, just us in the
16 city jails, just us in the penal institutions, just us
17 among the school dropouts, just us in the unemployment
18 lines. It's interesting to note that 54.8 percent of
19 the population in Lee County, Arkansas is African
20 American. The total population of 15,539 people, 8,520
21 of them are African Americans. Of that total
22 population, if you limit it to the persons who are 18
23 years old and above, 50.2 percent of them are African
24 Americans. That is a voting age population in Lee
25 County Arkansas of 4,916 people. Now, it is also

1 interesting to note that within that county, of the six
2 -- of the six Constitutional offices for County
3 Government, not one of those persons is black. It is
4 also interesting to note that until this most recent
5 ~~election in 1988, until January of 1989, there had not~~
6 been in Lee County an official involved in an
7 authoritative way in the criminal justice system who
8 was black since 1873 when W. N. Furbush gave up his
9 office as Sheriff of Lee County and returned to the
10 Arkansas legislature. That's a long time, a long dry
11 spell. You will see how that's relevant, I think, as I
12 come into some different parts of my comments.

13 Let me go on with a few more statistics. In
14 the First Judicial District -- that is the district in
15 which we are located here -- includes Phillips County
16 with a total population of 34,772 people; St. Francis
17 County with a slightly less smaller population; Cross
18 County, Monroe County, Woodruff County, and Lee County.
19 In those six counties, there's a total population of
20 126,877 people. 43.7 percent of those people are
21 African Americans or 55,416 people. There are serving
22 in the First Judicial District, five trial judges in
23 courts of record. That means courts where it is
24 mandatory that one of these people be there whenever
25 the session is going on because it is a case that is

1 reported and can be appealed to one of Arkansas'
2 Appellate Courts, the Supreme Court or the Court of
3 Appeals, and a record of the proceeding goes with that
4 appeal as made by one of these persons who do this
5 ~~business here. Of those five trial judges, one of them~~
6 is African American, an African American female whose
7 name is Kathleen Bell. And Kathleen serves in the
8 newly-created Chancery Circuit position, Juvenile
9 Division, by appointment. In the history of this
10 six-county area or judicial district, that has never
11 been an individual who was African American elected to
12 any -- either of those judicial positions. Now,
13 Kathleen Bell is a candidate for a Circuit judgeship
14 position in this term if we can raise sufficient funds
15 to make a credible race. We think she has some
16 potential. But, if she is successful, it will be the
17 first time in the history of this judicial district,
18 and it's about time.

19 There are six Sheriffs in these six counties,
20 six county judges, six Circuit Clerks, six county
21 clerks, six tax assessors, and six county treasurers, a
22 total of 36 county-wide Constitutional officials, and
23 not one is African American, notwithstanding the
24 population is 43.7 percent African American. And many
25 of my white friends are perplexed that we consider race

1 as essential in selecting candidates we support in
2 political races. They find it difficult that we would
3 emphasize race. They find it difficult that we were
4 raised with candidates, their position on certain
5 issues that ~~relate very directly to our African~~
6 American people. It disturbs them. And I say, let
7 them be disturbed. If they can deliver the votes of
8 the people who work with me, let them do it without me
9 if they expect that the only way they'll want my
10 support is that I refrain from talking about this very
11 critical issue which is probably the sole reason for
12 this area being in the economic condition it is in.
13 Race.

14 Lee County is said to be among the ten
15 poorest counties in this nation, and the poorest county
16 in the State of Arkansas. Yet, more than 50 percent of
17 its population have no participation in determining its
18 political direction. Can Lee County afford to
19 disregard more than 50 percent of its population, more
20 than 50 percent of its potential leadership, more than
21 50 percent of its potential contributors of ideas,
22 concepts, experiences, and so on? I suggest to you
23 that what we've done is we're destroying ourselves. We
24 can't built up -- We can't -- A wagon team of two mules
25 cannot move forward if one of the mules is sitting on

1 the tongue. Now, I know many of you people are young
2 and from the urban areas, and a tongue is the device on
3 the wagon that tends to guide it and the mules are
4 hooked to it at the back of it, and if one of those two
5 ~~mules sits down on that tongue, I assure you that that~~
6 other mule is going to have great difficulty moving
7 forward. Now, what we got here is more than half the
8 population in that county, and in this county, Phillips
9 County, sitting on the tongue. Now, I'm not here to
10 berate and say all white people are all the problem
11 because the fact of the matter is that we, African
12 Americans, must insist -- not request -- must insist
13 that we participate at every level in every way. I
14 don't mean that we should just say, "Why don't you-all
15 let us have some of this or some of that." If you're
16 not willing to let us have it, we must demand it and
17 take it. There is no way around it because we
18 represent half of the population and we have both a
19 responsibility and we must assume some authority to go
20 with that responsibility. We cannot carry our
21 responsibilities unless we have some authority to make
22 some things happen. And this county, these counties
23 cannot afford to drag 50 percent of its population.

24 They tell us that the primary obstacle to our
25 economic progress is the lack -- or one of the primary

1 obstacles is the lack of access to four-lane highways.
2 The Governor's Rural Development Action Program -- some
3 of you may be familiar with that -- developed reports
4 for individual counties and in Lee County, that is one
5 ~~of the items that's cited very high up on the list. If~~
6 my memory serves me correctly, it is also an item
7 listed in Phillips County.

8 The interim report of the Lower Mississippi
9 Delta Development Commission cited the lack of access
10 to four-lane highways as a substantial and significant
11 problem. Now, that is said, notwithstanding,
12 Interstate 40's broad thoroughfare through Forrest City
13 and St. Francis County, and that county has lead the
14 state for several months during the last two years in
15 unemployment, with its four-lane highway. The
16 four-lane highways will not solve our problems.

17 The statistics show that the northwest part
18 of the state is a frontrunner in economic growth,
19 development, and progress. And if any of you have been
20 to Fayetteville, and we've got Mort Gitelman here, I
21 know that Mort can tell you that his driving -- he can
22 certainly be a little more relaxed in his driving
23 coming from Marianna to Helena than he can going from
24 Alma to Fayetteville. And maybe some of you have never
25 made that route, so you could agree that the four-lane

1 highway might change our circumstances. But, that area
2 has had tremendous economic growth and yet, there's no
3 four-lane highway. There's no river port. You have
4 there people who understand that everybody must carry
5 ~~his or her share of the load. The Delta will not move~~
6 forward until we all do what we should do. And for my
7 white friends, that is to insist upon a sharing and not
8 just a sharing of a few jobs, but a sharing of the
9 ownership and control and a sharing of the political
10 leadership because that's the most visible leadership
11 we have and it sets the tone for too many things. And
12 it will not move forward until we as African Americans
13 say, without biting our tongues, "Mr. Candidate, I
14 cannot actively support your candidacy until you
15 recognize and show that recognition by taking some
16 positive steps to bring about that situation. And that
17 is, where African Americans participate in this
18 government in the activities of our community in every
19 way, in every way that you participate."

20 I serve as Deputy Prosecuting Attorney and I
21 guess it's kind of unusual -- I think it is unusual.
22 Dan Dane is an unusual young man himself. It take some
23 credit or responsibility or blame for having pushed Dan
24 Dane into running for Prosecuting Attorney. He used to
25 say to me and a couple of other people over here, he

1 did not understand why we would challenged the powers
2 that be. At that time, the powers that be was the
3 Chairman of the Board of this institution and that was
4 Gene Ralph. And I said, "If Gene Ralph is wrong, then
5 ~~I shall announce that he's wrong and he can do what he~~
6 has to do." I have never been rich. I don't expect to
7 be rich. I have got two or three little backup systems
8 for buying groceries, for getting groceries into my
9 house. I am not uncomfortable about living conditions
10 that would not necessarily befit the office of a senior
11 law enforcement person in my county. That is other
12 folks' problems. It is not a problem for me. But I
13 will not allow us to unmindful of what is happening to
14 us and why we can't move forward, and the reason why
15 we're not going forward over here is not the lack of a
16 Slackwater Harbor, it is not the lack of a four-lane
17 road. It's the fact that we have more than half of our
18 population riding on the tongue.

19 Thank you, ladies and gentlemen. I will take
20 any questions you have, and I've been in this business
21 long enough that if you have any controversial
22 questions or questions you think will make me
23 uncomfortable, ask me anyway.

24 MR. COLEMAN: It sounds like they let you out
25 with Mandella.

1 MR. NEAL: Yes, ma'am, Ms. Poindexter?

2 MS. POINDEXTER: Mr. Neal, I'm concerned
3 about the reapportionment issue as it has affected
4 individuals here, but even more importantly, I'm
5 ~~concerned about black participation in the voting~~
6 process. If reapportionment takes place, do we have
7 blacks registered in sufficient numbers in this area in
8 order to impact that system so that minorities can be
9 elected, or are we going to have to go through that
10 process again? What will be the result, and are you in
11 favor of the reapportionment as it has come down, or
12 are you, as Representative Cunningham, in favor of the
13 appeal?

14 MR. NEAL: Well, I differ from Representative
15 Cunningham. He and I have differed on a lot of points.
16 When I cross-examined Representative Cunningham during
17 the trial of this cause, I reminded him of something he
18 said both at the trial and something he had said
19 earlier, and that was that he always believed that
20 Helena and West Helena could be a part of one
21 legislative district. Now, I remember that
22 Representative Cunningham said in 1980 when Jimmy
23 Linder was living over in West Helena, "We ought to
24 divide the two up," so Jimmy could keep his seat and
25 Ernest could keep his seat. That's all right. Ernest

1 and I get along, but I'm not going to back up off of
2 what we take and I don't expect you to give me no room
3 either. That doesn't mean I dislike Cunningham because
4 Ernest Cunningham is a fairly progressive legislator.

~~5 But I will not let him play one side of the road~~

6 against another for the purpose of beating me in my
7 lawsuit. I think in that lawsuit that we got all that
8 we asked for, even the things -- the two things that we
9 missed were not considered by me and the other lawyers
10 involved to be very critical or very serious. We
11 missed on two things. One, we missed getting a
12 district that would be majority African American in
13 Pulaski County and that was because the individuals in
14 Pulaski County testified -- made the kind of comments
15 that caused the judges to believe that there was a
16 substantially different circumstance and did not
17 require the intervention of the Court to create an
18 opportunity for African Americans to elect candidates
19 of their choice. So, we lost that one legislative
20 district there, and that is perhaps all right. Perhaps
21 Pulaski County is different. I don't see it, but I
22 accept it if the legislative people over there, the
23 elected officials over there, the African Americans
24 over there believe it is. That's fine with me. I'm
25 not a state organizer.

1 Secondly, we lost on the issue of increasing
2 the senatorial district in Jefferson County from 58
3 percent to 60 percent voting age population, African
4 American voting age population. That was not terribly
5 ~~critical but we really accept the position of Judges~~
6 Arnold and Howard took when they said that that will be
7 a district without an incumbent and incumbency is worth
8 at least two percentage points. So, that was not
9 terribly bad.

10 The only other issue that may look like we
11 lost, and we did not lose on that issue, we won on that
12 issue, was the senatorial district in the Delta here.
13 That district, we had drawn it in such a way that it
14 would have a 60.5 percent African American voting age
15 population. Of course, the reapportionment board
16 including our good friends Bill Clinton and my good
17 warm friend Steve Clark and my no-so-good friend Bill
18 McQuen all believed that they didn't have to go that
19 far, and when the Court said, "We're going to reject
20 what you drew for that district over there and adopt
21 what the Plaintiffs drew," then they came back and
22 said, "Listen, Court, you got us wrong. We mean to do
23 right. We'll draw it with a greater African American
24 percentage." And they drew one that had a 61.5 percent
25 African American voting age population, but they

1 allowed Clarence Bell to have his district by himself
2 and we don't have no problem with that. That was fully
3 acceptable to us. As a matter of fact, our response to
4 their petition on that regard was that "Judges, we know
5 ~~why they're doing it. They're doing it to save~~
6 Clarence Bell, but what they're doing looks like it
7 makes good sense and we ain't fighting it."

8 Now., of course. P. A. Hollingsworth used
9 much sweeter language than that.

10 MS. POINDEXTER: I've not known him to.

11 MR. NEAL: My job is to do some things out
12 here in the community. P. A. writes the flowery
13 language. I am extremely pleased with what the Court
14 did in that thing and I think that the potential for us
15 doing something is fairly good. It is fairly good
16 because many of our people have been thoroughly
17 convinced -- many of our African American people have
18 been thoroughly convinced that we should not take race
19 into consideration when we're talking about elected
20 officials. They have bought the notion that the use of
21 the word "black" or "African American" is divisive when
22 talking to white people. And so, in order to -- this
23 is many of our people at higher levels, unfortunately,
24 what they do then is to show that they are advanced in
25 their political growth and have put race aside some

1 time ago, they will then make a real good effort to
2 make certain that any white official who is good enough
3 to speak nicely to you -- that is, who does not talk
4 like Paul Benham -- gets re-elected. So that we would
5 ~~have some difficulty, and in one of the districts,~~
6 unfortunately, I don't believe there's going to be an
7 African American candidate, and that's the district
8 down in southeast Arkansas. Now, I know Bynum Gibson
9 and Bynum Gibson is a fairly decent person. But, Bynum
10 Gibson does not have a God-given right to represent
11 that district down there where 58 percent of that
12 population, voting age population is African American.
13 And Bynum Gibson does not have the same kind of
14 sensitivity to the problems that African Americans
15 experience that a well-qualified, well-intentioned
16 African American would have because Bynum Gibson ain't
17 never been in the situation where somebody causes him
18 to get off the sidewalk. And I'm 48 years old and I've
19 had to get off the sidewalk in my lifetime. So, I'm
20 not talking about something that happened in the
21 1800's. I'm talking about what we've had in Eastern
22 Arkansas in the last 25 or 30 years. Now, I would not
23 get off the sidewalk when I came back home in 1970. If
24 they wanted me off the sidewalk then, what they had to
25 do was find some mechanism to put me in a posture where

1 they'd have to carry me off.

2 So, I'm very pleased. The potential is
3 fairly good. I believe there's high likelihood that we
4 will elect an African American from the district up in
5 ~~Mississippi County, District 38. There is a so-so~~
6 possibility we'll elect an African American from the
7 district that serves my county and a part of St.
8 Francis County. Bob McGinnis is a Representative who
9 is easy to talk to. I don't think that Bob has done a
10 lot to improve the lot of our community because Bob
11 does not understand that this race thing is something
12 that has to be dealt with, that it has to be brought
13 out in the open and dealt with. Until it does, half of
14 the population is riding on the tongue. But, Bob is
15 friendly and easy to talk to and you can call him on
16 the phone. I could call him now and he'd say, "Hey,
17 Olly." He's very friendly so he's going to get a lot
18 of African American votes who just believe this is a
19 nice man and we ought not to offend him. So, it's a
20 so-so chance there.

21 Going on down to Southeast Arkansas in the
22 Chicot/Desha area, I think we're lost there. I think
23 that Bynam has does his homework well and he will be
24 re-elected.

25 Coming over into the Pine Bluff area, there

1 are two districts over there. The newspaper talks
2 about three, but as a matter of fact, there are only
3 two because you see -- what's the professor's name,
4 Elijah? Henry has been a legislator for years. The
5 ~~newspaper is playing games when they say we got three~~
6 there. We didn't. But, I think there is some high
7 likelihood that some African Americans will be elected
8 to both those new legislative districts. I think
9 there's high likelihood that an African American will
10 be elected to the Senate district down there. I think
11 there's high likelihood that an African American will
12 be elected to the Senate district in East Arkansas
13 even. Paul Benham will say whatever comes to his mind
14 including some things, some references to our best
15 nationally-known politician Jesse Jackson -- referring
16 to him as a "coon." Now, I'm not offended by it. I
17 just remember it. A lot of things don't bother me
18 anymore that used to bother me when I was 20. Now, I
19 just got to figure out how to deal with him.

20 I think there is high likelihood that -- at
21 least there's a good possibility -- put it like that --
22 that an African American will be elected in the
23 district down in Quachita County. That's kind of a
24 summary of where we're at.

25 I think in terms of whether we have the folk

1 registered, most of these areas have folk who are
2 sufficiently sophisticated to know that we've got to do
3 that registration. We're doing a total of ten -- in
4 Lee County which has only 15,000 people, we're doing
5 ~~ten local meetings where we're trying -- we've had~~
6 three of them already -- and we're trying to convince
7 our folk of the importance of this election. I might
8 point out, though, that as crazy as it sounds, I am
9 equally as committed to trying to get a Justice of the
10 Peace elected in Lee County because I think we
11 represent the majority of the population there and I
12 believe that we ought to influence in a very heavy way
13 which way they spend our money there, which direction
14 we take in politics. So, yes, I think we'll see some
15 improvement. Not see nearly what I want, but we'll see
16 some improvement. I think that it will make a
17 difference. I think what will happen is, just as -- I
18 hope this does not make you uncomfortable, but I say
19 this: In Lee County there were those who when I became
20 president of the school board in Lee County in 1979,
21 being the first African American to ever serve as
22 president of the school board in the history of the
23 school district, it was said that the district is going
24 to hell in a handbag. And I think that a look at the
25 record will show that that district did about as well

1 during that period as it's ever done. And there were
2 those, though there was the good fortune of having a
3 great deal of enthusiasm, some fine white friends of
4 mine, and some who I can't claim as friends but I
5 ~~recognize as real good people -- I can't claim as~~
6 friends, I just don't have no contact with them but I
7 recognize them as being very good people -- joined in
8 at the time Dr. White was selected as superintendent
9 here. There was a warm reception, but out there among
10 my folk that I see in my capacity as a prosecuting
11 attorney, there were those who said, "This district is
12 going to hell in a hand basket because that woman don't
13 know what she's doing." Ms. White, they call her.
14 Now, I hate to say that. I know that Beverly would
15 like to think that everybody in Lee County loves her
16 and she does have the majority because she was able to
17 do something that I don't think a white superintendent
18 would have done, and that is, she came there and within
19 -- July, August -- within two, two and a half months of
20 her becoming superintendent, she caused, led, in my
21 opinion, the passage of a millage, and that was no
22 small thing. So, she has received, I think, an
23 excellent reception. But, the point I want to make on
24 that is that the school district has not gone -- the
25 school district probably has -- looks like it is in the

1 best mode for progress substantially since Dr. White
2 has been superintendent as ever. And that is good for
3 everybody because white folks say, "Listen, we can
4 trust some of these colored people sometimes," and
5 ~~black folks say, as my aunt said to me when I ran for~~
6 municipal judge in 1986 -- no, 1984 -- it was a hot
7 race and it looked like I had a chance and I ran
8 against Dan Felton whose daddy owned about fifteen or
9 twenty thousand acres of land in Lee County, and little
10 Danny Felton was a decent person. I'm not talking
11 about him being a terrible person because he's not.
12 He's a municipal judge in Lee County. I ran against
13 him and he took some steps I didn't like and when I
14 don't like something, I do something about it. I'm not
15 one of those who say, "Well, maybe it'll get better
16 next year." It ain't going to get no better unless we
17 make it better. I ran against him and had a pretty hot
18 race and my aunt who loves me dearly -- she is -- my
19 mother was the oldest in the family and she was next to
20 my mother and when my mother died in '68, my aunt
21 figured she became my momma. As a matter of fact, she
22 threatened to slap me about -- oh, I guess in about '84
23 or '85 because she said I was sassing her. I was 42 or
24 43 then, so she knows she's momma. What she asked me
25 when I was running for that office and it looked like I

1 had a possibility of winning, she said, "Olly, if you
2 got elected, do you really think you'd know how to be
3 a judge?" It was hard for her to conceive that
4 somebody of my color with my hair and my nose could, in
5 fact, ~~sit up there and judge the whole -- everybody in~~
6 that county that come before me, and treat them fairly
7 and justly. We do that, I think, in my capacity as
8 Deputy Prosecutor. I compare my record as Deputy
9 Prosecutor in Lee County with that of any Deputy in Lee
10 County and with any Deputy in the First Judicial
11 District. And I have no problem with you getting those
12 references from those folks who didn't necessarily
13 approve of my selection initially, and that is many of
14 my white friends. Of course, Dan Dane had good reason
15 to select me. One, I paid Dan Dane's filing fee in
16 Marianna when he got ready to run. I was the one that
17 pushed him to run and he knows that. I thought I saw
18 his name on the list but I guess he's not here. Two,
19 in Lee County there are only ten lawyers -- it was 11
20 -- ten lawyers, seven of them in what is called the
21 Daggart Law Firm, and the Daggart Law Firm generally
22 opposed his candidacy. Of the others, one was Roy
23 Lewellen who, as some of you may have read about, was
24 at that time still under indictment, criminal
25 indictment. Another was Danny Felton who is municipal

1 judge and has made it clear that he ain't going to try
2 no cases for nobody. He don't try cases for his
3 clients. because he doesn't like trial work, and if I
4 was rich enough, I wouldn't either because it's a lot
5 of hard work. ~~And there was Carroll Ray who was~~
6 extremely ill at the time and has since died. And me.
7 So, he had a choice. He could select me or import him
8 somebody, and I'm the one paid his filing fee.

9 Now, it is good for us to get African
10 American people in all these offices because we will do
11 a job that will be about equal to our white
12 counterparts. We're not necessarily better.
13 Generally, though, we may have an edge because we come
14 into it knowing that we've got so many hours, we have
15 to be a little better. But, as a general rule, the
16 population of black is no better than it is in the
17 white community. But, nor is the population of the
18 white community better than the black community. And
19 we must serve in all these because our children must
20 grow up to think -- they must not think like my Aunt
21 Estelle Barnes. They must think, "If you can get
22 elected, you can serve."

23 Mr. Coleman?

24 MR. COLEMAN: You know, I recall that we
25 talked some fifteen -- ten years ago about probably the

1 dangers in having a lot of people registered to vote
2 and no education -- no political education to go along
3 with the ability to vote. Do you see -- I'm asking
4 that because it appears that's what's developing in our
5 ~~district, this new district with ten or fifteen people~~
6 running. Without the kind of political sophistication
7 and I don't mean it in the true term of sophistication
8 either, when you register, where your districts are,
9 and all of the other things that you're supposed to
10 have a general knowledge of, is there a danger that
11 those new registered voters could become a liability
12 instead of an asset?

13 MR. NEAL: Yes, it is, in my opinion. I
14 think it is because I think that what we do when we
15 create these districts that have a substantial African
16 American voting age population, majority voting age
17 population, we've also created with them an
18 expectation, we create with them a heavy review of what
19 we're doing by all the powers that be, those who attend
20 to assist us are all looking. And when we fail to take
21 full advantage of those opportunities, I think it makes
22 it harder for us to get them a second time. It is
23 interesting, Elijah, when we started this lawsuit --
24 really we started working on it back in '87, and folk
25 up in Crittenden County, some friends of mine, got the

1 jump on us and they filed one just for that district, a
2 two-member district up there. And then once that was
3 filed, we sort of waited to see how it was going to go
4 and they got a good set of judges, so we tried to
5 ~~file a pigtail and the judges denied us, so we ended up having~~
6 to file ours independently. But, when that lawsuit was
7 filed, basically there were two communities, as I
8 remember it, and I did most of the legwork, that
9 believed that the lawsuit was going to be successful in
10 a very strong way. They began some organizing then.
11 Now, it doesn't always completely solve all the
12 problems but that was the folk in the area where -- in
13 East Central Arkansas here where we're located and the
14 folk up in Northeast Arkansas and Blytheville or North
15 Crittenden County and so forth. And I think we're
16 going to have less -- There's going to more than one
17 candidate in a number of those seats, and that's
18 probably acceptable, you know, if you've got a couple
19 of candidates running. When you got everybody running,
20 it creates a little confusion. What we had was -- at
21 least, for people who lack some sophistication, as you
22 described and I'm using sophistication, I think, in the
23 same way you're using it. So, we had, at least in the
24 beginning, very early in those two areas, people
25 saying, "Listen, we're going to have this opportunity.

1 Let's sort of prepare ourselves. Let's understand that
2 it's more than just an opportunity. It is a -- It
3 becomes an example, it becomes a - a first shot that
4 will be looked at by everybody, and we have to be a
5 ~~little more careful than you have to be when you always~~
6 control. It's unfortunate we have to say that to our
7 white friends, but we can't do what they do all the
8 time. We have too short a history of participating at
9 that level, and until our history grows such that it is
10 a normal and reasonable and expected thing, any little
11 minor thing can cause us to become so divisive that it
12 no longer reflects our lack of commitment to -- it no
13 longer reflects our dissatisfaction with what we've
14 already had representing us, but reflects our anger,
15 some personal anger at somebody who's close to us. And
16 as any of you know, you can get more angry at your wife
17 than you will at some lady out in the street. I mean,
18 it's just a natural thing.

19 Yes, sir, Mr. Levy:

20 DR. LEVY: Let's suppose in the best-case
21 scenario that a few of the black candidates are
22 elected, and what do you see beyond that? I mean, it's
23 more than just electing blacks to the State
24 Legislature. Now they have to work with whites, and
25 they have to bring race relations and economic

1 development to this area. This is what we're dealing
2 with. What do you see, given two or three or four or
3 five would be elected?

4 MR. NEAL: Okay, let me tell you what I see.

5 ~~One, I see that if reasonable and intelligent people~~
6 are elected, we will have the same kind of reception
7 that Dr. White has in the public schools in Marianna
8 and Lee County. I dare say that you will find very few
9 except those who are completely uninformed who will not
10 tell you that Dr. White is good for our district. I'm
11 going to sound a little vane here but I've got to say
12 it. I dare say, if we elect good people that you will
13 have the same kind of receptivity for their work that I
14 have for my prosecutorial work and I talk the same
15 language. You see, I have a group of sheriffs and
16 other people out here -- I talked to the Kiwanis Club
17 down here in Forrest City not too long ago, and they
18 don't like this legislative redistricting and stuff we
19 did. They'd rather things be like they were, but they
20 accept the fact that I do a decent job as prosecutor.
21 That's important, first, for them to see that we can do
22 a fairly decent job. It is important for our people to
23 see that we can do a decent job, and it makes it easier
24 for us to work together. You see, you wouldn't share
25 something that's important to you with somebody who's

1 going to fall down and drag it in the mud. But you
2 would share it with somebody you respected as being
3 close to as intelligent as you are. And the only way
4 you know that is if you see me perform because if the
5 ~~only thing you've seen is people who look like me,~~
6 either in the welfare line or earlier chopping cotton
7 or pulling a ten-foot sack, then how can you expect
8 that I can be equal to you when you were the man who
9 stood up at the air-conditioned shop and paid off these
10 gunsters when they came in in the evening and caught
11 them putting mud in their sack to get the weight up on
12 you, and caught them slipping off and hiding during the
13 day trying to get a little time on you during the
14 chopping day while you were paying them 30 cents an
15 hour. You see, you've got to see me in the same
16 capacity as you're in, and then you'll come to respect
17 me and we can do business together. I came to this
18 town -- I'll just give you an example. I came to this
19 town last week and I had a meeting with the county
20 judge, Kenneth Stoner. And my meeting with Kenneth
21 Stoner was for the purpose of selling air filters -- I
22 have a company -- I own 20 percent of a little company
23 that makes air filters, industrial heavy-duty air
24 filters. We don't make them automobiles. If we did,
25 I'd be twisting all of you-all's arms. But, we make

1 them for the big equipment, off-road equipment,
2 construction equipment, big transport trucks or buses,
3 transit buses. And the three of us who own the company
4 all are native Arkansans. One of us, a woman from
5 ~~Little Rock, who worked with me years ago in Marianna~~
6 at the health center owns 60 percent of the company,
7 and she bought the company and thought she needed some
8 additional finances and additional other assistance.
9 She brought me and Wilbur Peer into it. Wilbur Peer at
10 that time was a big dean of this college right here,
11 the only African American dean they've ever had, and
12 maybe they're looking trying to get another one here
13 now, I understand, but they ain't had none since. Peer
14 gave up that job in order to go with this company
15 because he said, "We've got to take some risks." Now,
16 we spent two years trying to show Kenneth Hunter who is
17 the county judge in Lee County, we said, "You ought to
18 look at our stuff. What you ought to do is take a
19 little bit. We've got a guarantee here so you can get
20 some coverage. See what we do with service, see what
21 our stuff is like in terms of quality, and I'll
22 guarantee you you'll know up on the front whether or
23 not our prices are better than you can get and they
24 will be." He wanted to know, "Wonder what would Danny
25 Felton think?" That wasn't because Danny Felton was a

1 mean guy. It was because he looked to Danny Felton to
2 keep him in office and he wasn't going to cross Danny.
3 But, what Kenneth Stoner told me, he said, "Hell, Olly,
4 if you-all are going to sell me some filters that are
5 the same quality ~~I'm buying and you-all are going to~~
6 have them here as quickly as I want them," -- and we
7 explained to him how we'd do that, and he went down a
8 list of filters with a little piece of paper up to him
9 like that (indicating), and he said, "What would you
10 charge me for filter number-whatever?" And as Wilbur
11 Peer and my people who keep up with that stuff real
12 well would quote him and he said, "That's \$2.30 less
13 than I'm paying. What would you charge me for
14 filter number..." and he went through about a dozen
15 like that and each one of them we beat the prices
16 because our people know what these filters cost. We
17 know what the other folk got to charge when they move
18 them through a distributor and we know he's buying from
19 the distributor, and we manufacture and sell directly.
20 He said, "I'm going to buy them all and if it's like
21 you say it is, I'm going to tell the other judge I'm
22 buying them from you." That's basic intelligence.

23 I'm not down here to bill Kenneth Hunter, but
24 I'm going to tell you that -- I would say that about
25 Kenneth Hunter anywhere because I think he's an

1 intelligent man. But, now with regard to -- I mean,
2 Kenneth Stoner. With regard to Kenneth Hunter, well,
3 I'll tell you quite simply, and Kenneth Hunter knows I
4 feel this, I'm his attorney as County Attorney and I
5 ~~have to do papers for him but I think he's dumb. You~~
6 say, "Well, you ought not to say that. You got to work
7 with him." Well, see, somebody has to get out here and
8 break this stuff up so that somebody else will come
9 along -- maybe my little boy who is now 11 years old
10 might not have to do this when he gets up and talks
11 before a group. He may be able to say, "Well, we must
12 all try to find a way to work together." But, I'm
13 going to create a circumstance where he does not have
14 to do exactly what I have to do, or I'll die trying.

15 So, you see, that's what I'm talking about,
16 Mr. Levy. We have to -- We can't do it just because an
17 organization like yours will say, "It is important for
18 the races to work together." It won't happen because,
19 you see, you ain't going to adopt me if you think all I
20 know how to do is being a grease monkey or chop your
21 cotton or pull your sack or drive your tractor. You
22 won't associate me in your important business until you
23 say, "Hell, that boy has got sense to know how to make
24 a dollar and keep one." Or he has sense enough to know
25 how to put together a political thing. And you'll say,

1 "Come on in here, Neal. Let's do this together." And
2 it ain't friendship based on the fact that you just
3 like colored people. It's friendship based on the fact
4 that you respect me as an intelligent man or woman.

5 ~~And when you do that, you'll take me in in a real way.~~

6 It ain't good enough just to be friendly just because
7 you want to improve race relations. That ain't good
8 enough. For me it ain't. It may be good enough for
9 you, but it ain't good enough for me. It has to be
10 that kind of equality of respect for each other. That
11 sort of reception comes because we recognize each other
12 to have something to contribute, more than just -- for
13 a politician -- more than just every two years, a vote
14 thing, where you got out and go in the church and do
15 like Bill Clinton does now and preach better than the
16 Baptist preacher does. Now, Bill is good at that.
17 Bill is probably the best thing we got going because
18 he's certainly done an excellent job of appointing
19 African Americans to boards and commissions. But, I'm
20 not impressed with Bill as a person who wants to bring
21 about -- I mean, maybe politics require that of you
22 when you're in a state where only 16 percent of the
23 population is African American. But, Bill has not
24 taken the kind of stands that say, "What we've got to
25 do is bring these folk up to the same level I, Bill

1 Clinton, am on so we're dealing as equals." I mean,
2 Bill appointed my friend Wilbur Peer the other day --
3 some of this stuff I ought not to tell but it's got to
4 be told -- appointed him to the AIDC, to the Arkansas
5 Industrial Development Commission, Now, three years
6 ago we told him quite clearly, "Don't call us for
7 service on no health plan advisory thing. We want to
8 be on something -- we deliver votes for you over here."
9 Ninety-five percent of the votes, African American
10 votes in Lee County go for Clinton every time he runs.
11 Same thing in this county and we relate to the folk in
12 this county. We send Wilbur Peer and Calvin King --
13 the reason why I know it is because I gave them the
14 money to pay it. That's when I was making a little bit
15 more than I'm making now. They have gone to two of his
16 big functions where you had to pay \$500.00 to get in
17 the door. I ain't never been there because I'm
18 officially a Republican. That's another subject.

19 But, what I'm telling you is we told Bill,
20 "We don't want these appointments you give to your
21 black folk. We want the same kind of appointments you
22 give to" -- what's that boy's name they just put on the
23 Supreme Court? "We want those kind of appointments.
24 We want the Racing Commission, we want the Highway
25 Department." The Highway and whatever that thing is

1 called. "We want AIDC." Well, Bill lost a good man,
2 they tell me, the other day. They tell me that Richard
3 Mays, and some of you know Richard Mays, a lawyer in
4 Little Rock, and Richard is not one of those people who
5 ~~support by delivering some votes. He supports by~~
6 delivering some votes and some money. He raised some
7 serious money for Clinton. Now, I don't raise no money
8 for candidates because the little money I raise, I try
9 to give to these local candidates. They ain't got no
10 other resources or no other opportunities, so I give it
11 there and I don't make no bones about it. I'm not
12 ashamed of the fact that I may support a candidate for
13 Governor and never give him a dime. But he lost
14 Richard. Richard says, -- I'm told now, I have not
15 verified this with Richard, so I'm telling you this is
16 gossip. But I hear that Richard is going to go with
17 Jim Guy Tucker. Now, Bill needs to reenforce his
18 support. He needs to make certain it's strong because
19 if he loses that thing, then he is going to have to
20 make up for it among what he sometimes has said, "Among
21 the redneck population."

22 Now, he has a good following in the more
23 reasonable, liberal population, if you will, the larger
24 group. But he's got to share some of that, depending
25 on if somebody reasonable runs and when he shares that,

1 he's either got to have us at 95 to 100 percent, or
2 he's got to get some of those rednecks, as he called
3 them.

4 So, we have to be -- All of us got to be
5 ~~grown. That's all there is to it. We just got to be~~
6 grown folks.

7 MR. PATTESON: One more question.

8 MR. COLEMAN: If any party got 95 percent of
9 the votes, I wouldn't give you nothing. You don't
10 deserve anything if you got 95 percent. What incentive
11 do I have?

12 MR. NEAL: I agree and that's part of why he
13 put Peer on the AIDC as part of his gang there because
14 we have said to him, "Bill, you may get these votes but
15 you won't get them because we're spending no time
16 trying to deliver them for you. We ain't going to
17 fight you because you're still about the best we see
18 out there. But we're going to spend our time trying to
19 elect these local candidates and you may or may not
20 appear on our list of approved candidates." We put
21 them out, no question about it. We take race into
22 consideration when we put them together. Just in case
23 there's any confusion, I don't want to tell you here
24 that I'm race blind. I am very race conscious. I know
25 that many of my black friends will get up and tell you,

1 "I have long since put race behind me. It is no longer
2 a matter of relevance. What we must do now is join
3 hands and go forward together." Well, we ain't went
4 nowhere in all these years, so I'm making it very much
5 a part of my front thing. ~~We may not go nowhere like~~
6 this, but we'll try something new.

7 MR. PATTESON: I found you very educational
8 in 1970. I find you no less so in 1990. And your
9 enthusiasm has not been diminished one iota.

10 MR. NEAL: I'm almost 50 years old and I've
11 slowed down to a walk.

12 MR. PATTESON: Thank you for coming. We
13 appreciate it very much. I understand we have a person
14 who has asked to appear at the open session, so at this
15 time -- if I'm reading your handwriting correctly,
16 Linda Shelby.

17 MS. SHELBY: First, I want to cry "Foul
18 Play." See, when I volunteered to speak at the Open
19 Session, that was before I even knew Olly would be
20 here. If I had known Olly was going to be here, I
21 would have said, "You need to have the Open Session and
22 then Attorney Neal."

23 My name is Linda Shelby and I'm speaking as a
24 private citizen, one of those confused and intimidated
25 and disenfranchised majority, silent majority. I

1 really don't have a statement to make and I think I
2 said that to Mr. Muldrow when I was talking to him.
3 What I did want to do at that time, and maybe a little
4 less so because some of those things have been brought
5 ~~to you, was present to you just a series of questions~~
6 that I don't have the answers to, that I don't expect
7 that you will have the answers to, but I think in
8 putting together your report and before you close any
9 kind of docket on this report that you might want to
10 consider.

11 Some of them are just basically things like
12 in looking at your agenda, not just today's but also
13 tomorrow's agenda, I just -- I see a lot of omissions
14 that you wouldn't know about because you're not all
15 from here, but whoever assisted you in pulling together
16 an agenda to speak to the problems in the Delta,
17 perhaps, inadvertently or perhaps deliberately left
18 some gaps there. I do not see those parents, those
19 community leaders who I would hope that you would want
20 to hear from in discussing economic development, jobs,
21 education, any of the -- economic justice, and just
22 justice in the Delta. I don't see representatives,
23 people from that labor pool of just ordinary citizens
24 listed here to give testimony. Maybe that's what the
25 Open Sessions are for, but even so, I don't see that

1 effort. Being on the receiving end, I read it in the
2 newspapers once. This is not an area where the local
3 newspaper is a good medium for communicating to the
4 general public, especially the general black public,
5 ~~"Come out. This is something that affects your lives."~~

6 I did not hear -- Perhaps it was, but I did
7 not hear this session once mentioned on the local black
8 radio which is one medium of attracting the local black
9 audience, but not necessarily the only one. I don't
10 claim to attend all the black churches in the area, but
11 over the last three weeks since -- I don't know when
12 the information started to get out regarding this, but
13 I've attended at least four different black churches
14 and I haven't heard it mentioned, even in some places
15 where they were talking about the Census which should
16 be getting the kind of coverage -- I mean, is not
17 getting the kind of coverage in those same areas.

18 So, those kinds of things I think should be
19 taken into consideration. People like the Plaintiffs
20 or the Plaintiff pools for the several, several -- in
21 the last six years even, -- civil rights lawsuits that
22 have been filed and won and lost, and some are on
23 appeal and some have been won out of the Delta, I don't
24 see very many of those Plaintiffs or their counsel
25 represented here. And I would hope that this panel

1 would be the panel that would want to hear from them.

2 We don't have many black elected local
3 officials, especially local, city, county, but I don't
4 see them represented here either, and that concerns me

5 ~~greatly. Some of the questions that I heard addressed~~

6 to some other people, I would hope that this panel
7 would want to put to them. How do you get more local
8 black elected officials? I certainly wouldn't have
9 asked Representative Cunningham. I think I would ask
10 some people who are trying to replace him with a local
11 black elected person.

12 Again, these are just questions that I would
13 hope that you would consider, and if no one has brought
14 them up to you, I think they should be brought up to
15 you.

16 Another question is why is there such a poor
17 turnout among blacks here. Is it just the
18 communication problem, or are there other things? I
19 know it was '70 or '72 when you had hearings here
20 before, some of the reasons why blacks were not coming
21 to these kinds of sessions were talked about then. I
22 would hope that they would be talked about, at least,
23 this time around.

24 I got real tickled -- tickled is the wrong
25 term. I would be amused if they were talking about

1 Lithuania and the Gorbachev government and their
2 dealings. I start to get amused and then I remember
3 that we're talking about where I live and things that
4 affect my life. So, in the middle of a chuckle I get

~~5 cut off, but when different ones have been talking~~

6 about 18 years of progress and in 18 years of progress
7 in race relations in this area, you know, how rosy
8 things have gotten, and I've been here. I've been here
9 all my life. I've been in and out getting -- acquiring
10 an education that I have, for time to time, been
11 reminded that I should use, and the best way for me to
12 use it would be to leave the area.

13 So, some of these things I'm really missing.
14 These 18 years of progress, if we've had all of this
15 great improvement in race relations in civil rights,
16 then why are we still having and winning so many civil
17 rights lawsuits just directly related to civil rights?
18 And why, if we have come such a long way that we still
19 have this chronic out-migration, forced out-migration
20 of the most educable, those who do acquire that
21 education, those who are most productive, those who are
22 the ones who would probably be the basis of support of
23 this community? And if we've had all of this progress,
24 including coming away from the one-crop system of
25 cotton, why is it now that we're still on a one-crop

1 system? It's just that now our on-crop system is
2 transfer payments. We've replaced chopping cotton and
3 picking cotton with welfare checks and Social Security
4 or Social Security disability or Social Security SSI

~~5 and food stamps. We still have that same -- it's just~~

6 a transfer over to the same thing in more sophisticated
7 and subtle way. And why, with all of these 18 years of
8 progress, do we still have -- why have we progressed
9 only to token numbers in our local elections? We have
10 one black on our Helena/West Helena school board.
11 We've got five school districts in the county and on
12 those various boards -- Marvel this year has -- not
13 this year -- last election which was last year --
14 finally got to a 50/50 parity. But the other four
15 districts range from 1 to 2 token representation. Our
16 cities are basically the same thing. I thought it was
17 interesting that a local elected official couldn't
18 quite get all the numbers right. In West Helena we do
19 have four black city councilmen and four white city
20 councilpersons, but that was by virtue of a lawsuit,
21 not because of any kind of active, hand-in-hand
22 cooperative empowerment of half of the population. Why
23 do we not have -- and not that there's not been attempt
24 after attempt -- any, in Phillips County, black,
25 county-wide elected officials?

1 I don't really have the answers to those
2 questions. I don't expect that this council will have
3 -- this panel would have the answers to those
4 questions, but I do think that those questions and some
5 ~~others that I had down here -- except I got so~~
6 engrossed in Mr. Neal's presentation that I forgot to
7 transfer them over so that I could read them clearly.
8 Those questions, I think, should be addressed seriously
9 or considered seriously by this panel before you close
10 the book on these hearings.

11 That's my statement.

12 MR. PATTESON: For someone who did not have a
13 statement, you did very well. If you'll stand for
14 questions, I'll open it up to questions. I'll explore
15 just a little bit as you did, shooting from the hip, as
16 I say, not with the style that Mr. Neal does.

17 I think you raised some very valid questions.
18 Probably each one of the topics that you mentioned, we
19 could be here all day and do a separate forum on either
20 one of those. A lot of the selections had to be
21 judgment calls, but I would speculate -- and then I'll
22 let Mr. Muldrow address it if he likes or I'll let
23 anyone else comment, but if I were shooting from the
24 hip, I would say the biggest question or the biggest
25 obstacle in addressing some of these you wanted are

1 dollars and cents. And this -- First of all, we are an
2 advisory group only to what is itself, only an advisory
3 group to the president of the Federal setup. And our
4 budget for the whole setup was slashed incredibly.

~~5 They closed how many different offices, regional~~
6 offices?

7 MR. MULDROW: It was seven.

8 MR. PATTESON: They closed seven out of ten.
9 So, there are only three existing. You cannot come in
10 with limited budgets and limited people and do the kind
11 of indepth studies that they could do formerly. We've
12 been limping along for the last -- well, however many
13 years, hoping that the thing would improve and they
14 would reinstitute what we ourselves feel is the
15 integrity of this Commission and these advisory groups
16 are entitled to have. I frankly -- If you said those
17 things individually to me, I would say to you, "You've
18 picked the wrong person for an argument." I couldn't
19 give you an argument. I agree with the many, many
20 things that you've said. Would anyone else care to
21 address it?

22 MR. COLEMAN: I'd just like to ask her, how
23 old were you when you started coming to these kinds of
24 meetings with your father? I can remember back as far
25 as '65 or '66.

1 MS. SHELBY: When I was 14, you and dad got
2 together and put me on that board, the Council for
3 Human Relations because I was always there and I had a
4 bad habit of piping up because I was a slightly
5 indulged child. ~~They would let me speak and then knock~~
6 me down. So, that would have been '64, '65, somewhere
7 in there.

8 MR. PATTESON: It wasn't wasted.

9 MR. MULDROW: Just briefly, Ms. Shelby, I,
10 too, would second Mr. Patteson's remarks. I think part
11 of the purpose of this whole forum is to bring out such
12 questions as you're raising so that we can get them out
13 where we can begin to analyze them and look at them and
14 seek answers. You don't have the answers. None of us
15 seem to have the answers to these specific things, but
16 you go right to the heart of the matter, the issues
17 that we're trying to deal with. So, I appreciate that.
18 We will have some other representatives here tomorrow.
19 I hope that you will stay with us through tomorrow and
20 I would like to talk with you further about your
21 reactions to this because I think it would be very
22 helpful to us in the next things that we undertake.

23 MS. POINDEXTER: May I ask Linda a question?

24 MR. PATTESON: Yes.

25 MS. POINDEXTER: Linda, when last I was at

1 Phillips Community College I was here delivering a
2 commencement address for the Marvel graduating class,
3 and I found it very interesting that in a 95 percent
4 black graduating class, there was a white
5 ~~superintendent. He decided I couldn't speak because I~~
6 had to leave a meeting and drive from Little Rock here.
7 I was about ten or fifteen minutes late and as I told
8 Marie, being a very, very shy, diffident person, I
9 spoke anyway, even after I'd been told I could not.
10 Could you tell me -- and I'm sure I could ask Bev, and
11 I will be asking her questions tomorrow because she
12 will be doing some things here -- Dr. White -- I call
13 her Bev -- How many superintendents besides Dr. White
14 do we have in this region who are black?

15 MS. SHELBY: Who are black?

16 MS. POINDEXTER: Uh-huh.

17 MS. SHELBY: Oh, we can count those in a
18 hurry. I can't recall one. Oh, I'm sorry, that's
19 right. I'm so used to Leon. Right, we have one.

20 MS. POINDEXTER: Leon Carson.

21 MS. SHELBY: And again, that's a majority
22 black district. It's in Lakeview.

23 MR. PATTESON: I just ask to be certain -- I
24 thought I knew the answer, but I want to be correct.
25 Mr. Muldrow, if the notices of these meetings also went

1 to the communications, radio and TV as well as to
2 newspapers, and it's my understanding that he answered
3 yes, that they go not only to all newspapers in the
4 state, but all the radio and TV stations. So, I don't
5 ~~know how you address who uses them, whether your local~~
6 radio station used them or not. I did see it in our
7 local paper in Jonesboro and I did see it the "Arkansas
8 Gazette," I think.

9 MS. SHELBY: I saw it in local papers, but my
10 point was that that is not a medium that has
11 traditionally gathered or alerted masses of black
12 people in the Delta, to my knowledge.

13 MR. PATTESON: What network would you address
14 or how would you reach...

15 MS. SHELBY: Black radio stations and word of
16 mouth. You know, if more community organizations had
17 had information that could explain that it was
18 important and passed the word around.

19 DR. LEVY: Linda, I noticed kind of amusingly
20 that when Congressman -- Senator Cunningham --
21 Representative Cunningham was speaking, you were
22 shaking your head.

23 MS. SHELBY: He was amazing.

24 DR. LEVY: At least, most of the time that I
25 looked at you and we were figuring out who are you, you

1 know. Would you comment on some of the things that he
2 said that caused you to just, you know, just shake your
3 head and then why he might have said that? I mean,
4 there's -- obviously, both of you couldn't be right if
5 ~~he's going like this (indicating) and you're going~~
6 like this (indicating).

7 MS. SHELBY: But maybe we are because I
8 noticed that several of the things -- oh, God, you want
9 me to go to the scribble page, and I was trying to be
10 nice and neat.

11 DR. LEVY: Just pick out a couple of...

12 MS. SHELBY: When he started talking about
13 the infusion of capital and about all of the help,
14 especially AIDC and HUD and all of the help that we're
15 getting in the Delta, and how that has really changed
16 some things and helped to develop things. What
17 immediately came to my mind was the nine-hole municipal
18 golf course that was built with CDBG money. It depends
19 on how you look at it, and some people think that that
20 is great progress. As a matter of fact, I think that
21 that was supposed to be one of the benefits in
22 attracting industrial development because those people
23 like to play golf and you need a golf course. But, it
24 was also built with -- that's something I couldn't
25 understand -- the Community Development portion of

1 those monies and based on a Census track of
2 predominantly black and all very extremely poor people,
3 that monies came in, based on that track, and then the
4 nine-hole municipal golf course went up. It depends
5 ~~on, I guess, how you look at it and from which side of~~
6 the fence you're looking at it.

7 I thought about when he talked about -- let
8 me see here, that we all get along and we have such
9 great relationships and that any of his constituents
10 feel that they can call upon him at any time.

11 DR. LEVY: That's when I noticed you really
12 shook your head.

13 MS. SHELBY: And that he moves in and about
14 and around his district. I can't ever, ever remember
15 either he or Jimmy Linder before, you know, ever being
16 in west West Helena and that's where I was born and
17 that's where I grew up. And I've seen Cunningham from
18 time to time, but it's only after I have come out of
19 west West Helena and we have made all of this progress.
20 Maybe it is progress when the railroad track in West
21 Helena -- and that's what I have to speak to -- has
22 been replaced by a bypass. You know, maybe that's
23 progress, but I live in west West Helena which is still
24 -- okay, we went from being 100 percent black to about
25 98 percent black, you know, with some of the new lines

1 drawn in political districts. And like I said, now we
2 have a bypass which has a chain link fence instead of
3 just the simple demarkation of a railroad track. So, I
4 don't know, maybe that is progress. I've still never
5 ~~seen him on my side of the bypass or the railroad~~
6 track.

7 MR. WILLIS: I think we need to get specific
8 with the time period. I think if you were to ask
9 Representative Cunningham from '84 -- Ernest does visit
10 the total district. I beg to differ with that. And I
11 think if you would have asked him the time period prior
12 to '84, he visited then but I think he has visited more
13 frequently in the last six years, and I just want to
14 make that point.

15 MS. SHELBY: The district as a whole or west
16 West Helena?

17 MR. WILLIS: The total district. His total
18 district.

19 MS. SHELBY: How about west West Helena?

20 MR. WILLIS: I live in west West Helena and,
21 in fact, I gave a picnic and he came and --

22 MS. SHELBY: (Interposing) You live in West
23 Acres. You live in West Acres. You do not live in the
24 poverty-stricken part of our district. And Ernest
25 doesn't come over in that part.

1 MR. WILLIS: Where is True Vine located?

2 MS. SHELBY: It's in west West Helena.

3 MR. WILLIS: He's been there.

4 MS. SHELBY: But, now, I don't count visits

5 ~~where you walk into the church, preempt services, make~~

6 your political pitch, and leave. Maybe that's me, but

7 I don't count those visits. I'm talking about the

8 visits after you've been elected.

9 DR. WHITE: Our emphasis has been on race

10 relations in the Delta and I would like, Ms. Shelby,

11 for you and perhaps Attorney Neal to comment to this:

12 One of the comments was made that given this progress

13 in the Delta region, the efforts toward redistricting

14 will result in racial polarization, further racial

15 polarization, or more racial polarization. Would you

16 comment to that, either one or both of you?

17 MS. SHELBY: Yeah, you comment.

18 MR. NEAL: Racial polarization is a

19 non-matter as far as I'm concerned because that's

20 exactly what you've got now. You look around and see

21 all of the African American candidates who've run over

22 the last several years, and I'll assure you, one or two

23 of them have been fairly qualified, or they've had at

24 least the kind of differences that would suggest that

25 their vote turnout ought to be different.

1 In Lee County, Joseph Perry -- I don't know
2 how many of you know Joseph Perry. Joseph Perry has a
3 college degree, but he wears his hair roustafirey, it's
4 down to about here. He does not wash his clothes too
5 often. ~~He doesn't look very presentable. He's a very~~
6 brilliant guy and I have high regards in terms of him
7 advising me about information he has, particularly
8 about Lee County matters. Joseph Perry ran for county
9 judge, a county-wide office. I ran for municipal
10 judge, a county-wide office. The municipal judge in
11 Marianna serves all of Lee County. Roy Lewellen ran
12 for State Senate which covered all of Lee County. Now,
13 I'm a lawyer and I wear these suits, these three-piece
14 suits. Joseph Perry had his hair roustafired down to
15 his back. He was wearing some blue jeans that were
16 probably greasy. Roy Lewellen is also a lawyer so he
17 has on his suit and ties. He's looking very spiffy,
18 right? We all were within 150 votes of each other.

19 So, I say that racial polarization is a thing
20 that is used by them to keep us confused. What we must
21 do is establish ourselves as being fully equal and
22 those who are reasonable will accept us, that let us do
23 that, and then once we do that, even those who are the
24 negative folk will start to give us some respect.

25 I think, Dr. White, for example, that you are

1 respected in Lee County and it's not because folk just
2 wanted to have somebody black there, but because you've
3 shown that you know what you're doing. Vanity, though
4 it may be a little bit, I believe that I have respect
5 among those folks ~~involved in law enforcement and~~
6 criminal justice, not because they was so glad to have
7 Olly Neal who will make them mad on the other hand, all
8 the time. They wanted Dan to tell me, "Don't you let
9 Olly participate in the lawsuit." Well, Dan
10 understands me. He had two choices. He could fire me
11 or he could not have appointed me. But, he's not going
12 to make me. I was a man when I met Dan Dane, fully
13 grown. But, they respect me because I prosecute in my
14 district the way that the Prosecuting Office is
15 supposed to be handled and I don't play.

16 Now, that's what we've got to do. If
17 somebody wants to call me one who is polarizing the
18 races, that's their problem. I don't consider it to be
19 a matter of any substance at all because the
20 polarization is reflected in the way folks vote. Some
21 of these folk who run for office have not been just
22 terrible people. Maybe I was, but I'm talking about,
23 you look around the whole district, and the proof in
24 the trial of that cause showed that when there is a
25 black candidate and a white candidate in any race,

1 almost anywhere in this state where that situation
2 develops, the black candidate would get 90-some percent
3 of the black vote, but the white candidate would get
4 90-some percent of the white vote, and there was never
5 ~~an occasion where a black candidate -- except for a~~
6 couple of extreme unusual instances and that involved a
7 candidate for municipal judge who was running for
8 re-election -- the boy who is a State Representative
9 down in Chicot County wanted to claim that that's how
10 Don Glover got elected municipal judge but it's not
11 true. Don's district is Durmont only and Durmont is
12 about 70 percent black. So, Don's elected by black
13 folk. I mean, he wasn't elected by Bynum Gibson's
14 friends. So, that's what polarization means and that's
15 why it doesn't mean anything.

16 MS. SHELBY: And to take that just a little
17 further because I have been active in political
18 campaigns personally and also working for other
19 candidates, and I have attempted to cross the bypass or
20 attempted to cross the railroad track, and talk to
21 whites who were involved in local political campaigns
22 and just active locally politically, and said, "We want
23 you to come out and support this black candidate." And
24 invariably -- I have never had a different answer --
25 well, I've had two answers which is a variation of the

1 same answer. One is, "I just can't do it. You must
2 understand. I have to live here and I have to feed my
3 family." And the second version of that same things
4 is, "I can't do it openly, but I'll tell you what, I'm
5 ~~going to give you \$100.00. I have to give it to you in~~
6 cash. I can't be giving you a check and I want you to
7 tell those folks that I hope you-all succeed. But
8 that's all that I can do."

9 MR. PATTESON: I need to interrupt for just
10 one minute. We're 15 minutes past what we said our
11 closing time would be, so let's allow two more minutes
12 and wind it down.

13 MR. WILLIS: Olly, I just want to make a
14 statement. You know, we've been over a lot of turf
15 together. At what point do you accept the
16 responsibility of getting folks out to vote?

17 MR. NEAL: I accept it fully.

18 MR. WILLIS: I've got a serious problem with
19 -- and Linda, too. It was communicated. It was in the
20 newspaper two or three times. I read it. I'm part of
21 this board. It was communicated. I'm not going to sit
22 here and let you say that. It's hard to get folks out
23 for these kinds of meetings. I'm just going to tell
24 the truth. Not only that, it's hard to get them out to
25 any kind of meeting now, but the communication went

1 out.

2 MR. NEAL: Arnell, I had a meeting in -- do
3 you know where Jacknash is in Lee County? Jacknash is
4 a little community that sits almost on the Mississippi

~~5 River that's got about 25 families live out there. I~~

6 had a meeting out there -- is today Thursday? I had a
7 meeting out there Wednesday -- I had a meeting out
8 there Monday night, and I had 40 people at that
9 meeting. So, it ain't -- I had a meeting at St.
10 John's a week earlier and we had 35 people there. I
11 have a meeting scheduled for next -- these ain't
12 meetings where we've got an organization with some
13 money. I want you to know, and I don't mind saying it
14 because I mean, I learned a long time ago that all
15 these banking laws that are supposed to be so secret,
16 folks figure out a way to ask questions, too. I mean,
17 my money is short. I don't send out mailings because I
18 literally cannot afford to buy \$100.00 worth of stamps.
19 I mean, literally my money doesn't come in that way.
20 This prosecuting thing has destroyed the few little
21 monies I could make because people that I prosecute
22 don't bring me their personal injury cases, if you
23 understand what I mean. But, I can still -- because
24 folk know that I'm going to bring them something that
25 makes some sense and I'm not going to bite -- I'm not

1 going to bite my tongue. I'm going to tell them the
2 real, and I expect to have 40 people with me down at
3 Aubrey on the 28th of this month. I expect to have at
4 least 40 people. These are little communities in Lee
5 ~~County, not as big as Marianna and certainly not as big~~
6 as the whole district here, and not as big as Helena.
7 I expect to have 40 people at New Hope on the 2nd of
8 April. Now, if I don't have them, you come out there
9 and check me out and say, "Olly, you just lying. You
10 ain't delivering them." Come on out there and check
11 and come back and report to these folks. I'm telling
12 you quite simply, there is work to be done and we ain't
13 doing it.

14 MR. WILLIS: Voting patters, I mean, why
15 don't people come out to vote? I'm just asking an
16 honest question.

17 MR. NEAL: That is a much more difficult
18 task. It is a more difficult task because many of us
19 have been taught that he will know how you voted and
20 many of our people still believe that. And there is
21 some truth to it. There is a mechanism for following
22 the vote and figuring out how the vote went if you're
23 close enough to it. You can do it, particularly if you
24 work on the polls. Now, you say, "No, our system is
25 secret ballot and I know that ain't true." Well, you

1 talk to some of your people you know that worked in
2 numerous elections, and folk are, one -- many folk are
3 scared of me because I talk like I talk. My friend
4 here who I just met recently said, "You must be crazy."

5 ~~The point I'm trying to make is, we have a~~
6 long way to go, Arnell, and you and me have a duty, as
7 the old saying, that those who are given much, owe
8 much. I don't know how the quote goes, but you know
9 what I'm talking about. You've read probably more than
10 I have. You and I have a duty because we've learned
11 how to get along with or without the support of those
12 who control everything, and we have a duty to create a
13 circumstance where our folk don't have to be fearful
14 and they can do what they believe in and not be fearful
15 that somebody is going to squeeze them, cut off their
16 check. You see, you may remember in the trial we had
17 most recently last year that there was testimony that
18 certain people made clear implications, including my
19 county judge, Judge Kenneth Hunter, that folks ought to
20 be off this welfare because they ain't doing right.
21 Now, if folks believe that Kenneth Hunter can get them
22 off of welfare, you're telling me they're going to be
23 very active in jumping up to vote for James Banks in a
24 race against Kenneth Hunter when James Banks ain't in
25 control of nothing because they know he ain't, he's

1 black, he ain't got nothing? And Kenneth Hunter has a
2 relationship with Danny Felton. That's who he told me,
3 he wondered what Danny thought about it. Little Danny
4 owns 15,000 acres.

5 So, it is a big problem. You and I have a
6 big duty here. We have a big duty and that duty goes
7 beyond just doing what is in our interest. It may be
8 all right to do that because I look at some of my
9 friends who make plenty of money and I need some of it,
10 but we have a duty beyond that, it seems to me, and
11 that duty means that we must stand up and be extremely
12 firm and take on these -- be on the cutting edge all
13 the time. And when things get better, we may not have
14 all the resources in the world, but we ought to be able
15 to look back and say, "Well, I have impacted somehow on
16 my community and my son or daughter will not have to
17 take the same kind of stand that I had to take because
18 I made some things turn a little bit."

19 MR. PATTESON: I'd like to reserve the final
20 question to myself. Are there any voting machines in
21 the Delta?

22 MR. NEAL: In Lee County we use a little
23 punch card thing that's counted by a machine. That is,
24 at the elections we go into our polling places and
25 there's a little thing you mark in a little slot with a

1 pen that's specifically designed to be counted by the
2 machine, and it's counted by machine. But, where the
3 checking up on you comes, Alan, is not when you -- when
4 they count it, but at the polling place where a person
5 is watching and they get ~~good enough where they know,~~
6 remember everybody that votes -- see, the same folk
7 work the polls all the time and one of the things --
8 the reason why -- one of the primary reasons why I
9 became an official Republican is because we control the
10 Republican Party in Lee County. That is, the African
11 Americans do. And at every polling place, if I don't
12 like the way somebody is working, I put somebody on
13 there that's bad enough to quiet them down. I have
14 actually put folk in the polling place just because
15 they acted mean to quiet down somebody that's playing
16 games with our voters.

17 MR. PATTESON: But you don't have a machine
18 where you walk in and --

19 MR. NEAL: (Interposing) No --

20 MR. PATTESON: (Continuing) close the thing
21 and the curtain closes and you pull the knobs down
22 anywhere in the Delta?

23 MR. NEAL: I won't say anywhere. They may
24 have some in Mississippi County. Somebody in
25 Mississippi County told me they had machines. I'm not

1 sure about that, though. I can only talk about Lee
2 County and Linda would know Phillips, and I could
3 guesstimate about St. Francis, but I don't consider
4 myself a district-wide organizer.

5 ~~MR. POINDEXTER: Not in the deep Delta~~
6 anyway. That's us.

7 MR. NEAL: Deep Delta. Lee, Phillips, Monroe
8 and St. Francis.

9 MR. PATTESON: We're adjourned until 9:15 in
10 the morning.

11
12 (Whereupon, the proceedings were adjourned at
13 9:20 p.m.)
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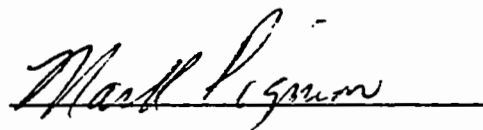
C E R T I F I C A T E

This is to certify that the proceedings
before the ARKANSAS ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO THE U.S.
~~COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS,~~

In the Matter of:
RACE RELATIONS IN THE
ARKANSAS DELTA

Phillips County Community College
Fine Arts Center
Campus Drive
Helena, Arkansas
Wednesday, March 21, 1990

were held as herein appears, and this is the official
transcrip for the files of the ARKANSAS ADVSIORY
COMMITTEE TO THE U. S. COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS.



Mark Pigmon

Official Reporter

ORIGINAL

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

UNITED STATES COMMISSION
ON CIVIL RIGHTS

In the Matter of:

RACE RELATIONS IN THE ARKANSAS)
DELTA)
)

Pages: 226 through 468

Place: Helena, Arkansas

Date: March 22, 1990

HERITAGE REPORTING CORPORATION

Official Reporters

1220 L Street, N.W., Suite 600

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BEFORE THE
ARKANSAS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
TO THE
U.S. COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS

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~~In the matter of:~~ _____ :

RACE RELATIONS IN THE ARKANSAS
DELTA _____ :

_____ :

Phillips County Community College
Fine Arts Center
Campus Drive
Helena, Arkansas
Thursday, March 22, 1990

The above matter came on for hearing pursuant
to
Notice, between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.

BEFORE: MR. ALAN PATTERSON, JR., Chair
Arkansas Advisory Committee

PANEL MEMBERS:
William Muldrow, Civil Rights Analyst, U.S.
Commission on Civil Rights
Elijah Coleman, Pine Bluff, Arkansas
Morton Gitelman, University of Arkansas
School of Law
Marie Bernard Miller
Dorothy K. Rappeport, Fort Smith, Arkansas
Dr. Beverly White, Marianna, Arkansas
Rabbi Eugene Levy, Little Rock, Arkansas
Linda Ann Poindexter, Little Rock, Arkansas

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P R O C E E D I N G S

1
2 MR. PATTERSON: Good morning. We're going to
3 reconvene at this particular point. We probably will
4 will juggle along our agenda, according to when some of
5 the presenters arrive.

6 I would like to review though not in complete
7 detail but mention a few of the ground rules that we
8 went over yesterday morning as we opened. This is a
9 public hearing. It is opened to the media and the
10 general public. We have a full schedule of people who
11 will be making presentations, and we have limited time
12 available.

13 The time allotted for each presentation we
14 hope will be strictly adhered to. This will include a
15 presentation by each participant followed by question
16 from committee members. To accommodate persons who have
17 not been invited but who do wish to make statements, we
18 have scheduled open periods on our agenda during the
19 afternoon session, beginning approximately at 4:50 p.m.

20 Anyone wishing to make a statement during that
21 period should contact a staff member for scheduling.
22 Written statements also may be submitted to committee
23 members or to the staff here today or by mail to the
24 U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, 911 Walnut, Room 3100,
25 Kansas City, Missouri, 64016.

1 The record of this meeting will close on April
2 6, 1990, that is any written statements must be -- must
3 arrive by April 6, 1990. Though some of the statements
4 made today may be controversial. We want to ensure that
5 ~~all invited guests do not defame or degrade any person~~
6 or organization.

7 Any person or any organization that feels
8 defamed or degraded by statements made in these
9 proceedings, should contact our staff during the meeting
10 so that we can provide a chance for public response.

11 Alternately, such persons or organizations can
12 file written statements for inclusion in the
13 proceedings. I urge all persons making presentations to
14 please be judicious in their statements.

15 At this time, for those of you who have an
16 agenda, we're going to again step out of sequence. We
17 are going to ask a member of our committee to step down
18 from this panel for the moment, in order to make a
19 presentation to the committee. Many of you know Dr.
20 Beverly Smith -- Beverly White. Excuse me, I know her
21 as Beverly Smith.

22 I had the opportunity really of hearing her
23 first make a presentation before this panel, oh, a
24 couple of years ago. And I was very pleased to hear
25 when she joined us. I was even more pleased when I

1 heard that she had been appointed Superintendent of
2 Schools in Marianna with the county.

3 I had the opportunity of hearing her speak
4 recently at Arkansas State University in Jonesboro. I
5 assure you, if she brings even a modicum of what she
6 presented to the students of Arkansas State to Lee
7 County, you are blessed, indeed. Dr. Smith -- Dr.
8 White. Excuse me.

9
10 DR. BEVERLY WHITE

11
12 DR. WHITE: I would like to say "Good Morning"
13 to my fellow panelists and to say "Thank you" for the
14 opportunity to move from my role as an advisory
15 committee member, and step into the role of
16 administrator, educator, teacher and parent, parent of
17 an Afro-American child.

18 I also want to commend you for taking on the
19 task of addressing an area that in many instances has
20 been pushed to the back of the burner at this particular
21 time in America.

22 First of all, I want to make some comments
23 generally about the plight of African-American children,
24 generally and more specifically in the Delta, and then
25 to move toward the plight of the children of the Delta

1 as it relates to their education.

2 As we look historically at what has happened
3 to children and to African-American families, the
4 children and the families have been able to overcome
5 ~~great odds to make the dream that each succeeding~~
6 generation will get a better education, work at a better
7 job and live in a better home come true for the children
8 of the families.

9 These personal success stories abound in the
10 lives of children who are healthy, who go to school and
11 do well, who get decent jobs and who live comfortably as
12 contributing citizens and adults.

13 However, according to the National Children's
14 Defense Fund, millions of African-American children do
15 not have this bright future. They do not have this
16 promise of success. African-American children are
17 falling behind at an alarming rate and the rates against
18 them and the odds against them are mounting.

19 They are more likely to be born into poverty.
20 They are more likely to lack pre-natal care. They are
21 more likely to have a single mother. They are more
22 likely to have unemployed parents. They are more likely
23 to be unemployed themselves as teenagers, and more
24 likely not to go to college after high school
25 graduation.

1 When we look at the general condition of
2 African-American children, and compound that in the
3 Delta with the two issues of race and class, we have
4 almost destroyed a generation of children. Black
5 ~~children are twice as likely to be born prematurely.~~
6 twice as likely to die during the first year of life.
7 twice as likely to suffer low birth weight; to have
8 mothers who received little or no pre-natal care; to be
9 born to a teenager or unmarried parent; to see a parent
10 die; to live in substandard housing; to be suspended
11 from school and suffer corporal punishment; to have
12 unemployed parents, or live in institutions.

13 African-American children are three times as
14 likely to be poor; to have their mothers die in
15 childbirth; to live with a parent who has separated from
16 the other parent; to live in a female-headed household;
17 to be placed in a class where educatably mentally
18 retarded students; to be murdered between the ages of 5
19 and 9; to be in foster care or to die of known child
20 abuse.

21 African-American youth are more than four
22 times as likely to live with neither parent and be
23 supervised by the child welfare agencies; to be murdered
24 one year of age or as a teenager, or to be incarcerated
25 between 15 and 19 years of age.

1 African-American children are five times as
2 likely to be dependent on welfare, and they are eleven
3 times as likely to live with a parent who never
4 married. We have some very serious problems as relates
5 to the children, and I think the challenge of not only
6 African-American American, but the total America, is to
7 save our children.

8 When we look at what is happening to them in
9 education, 30 years after the Supreme Court declared
10 that the doctrine of separate but equal had no place in
11 the schools, racial discrimination remains a serious
12 barrier to quality education for African-American
13 children, with the problem becoming worse if the child
14 is poor or male, as in the Delta.

15 And unfortunately, the United States cannot
16 afford to leave under-developed the talents of millions
17 of children who happen to be born different by virtue of
18 race, language, sex or income status. Nor can the
19 United States under the pretense of educational
20 excellence allow the unfinished national task of
21 offering every child black, Hispanic, Native American,
22 Asian, and white, a fair chance to learn and become a
23 self-sufficient citizen to go unnoticed.

24 You see, the unique promise of this nation has
25 been its commitment to extend opportunity to all, not to

1 just some of its children. Let's look at what's
2 happening to children in the Delta. Children all over
3 America in fact, who happen to be African-American.

4 African-American children tend to drop below
5 ~~grade level expectations in elementary school, and fall~~
6 further behind as they get older. And about five years
7 ago there was a new word coined for this regression of
8 the students called the "fourth grade syndrome."

9 More recent research indicates that it is now
10 a second grade syndrome. These children are not born
11 inferior. They come to school just as excited and ready
12 for learning as other students. Their experiences in
13 education might be different but with a lot of support
14 from the educational system, they can catch up.

15 However, as we begin to notice what is
16 happening around the second grade now, the system begins
17 to negatively impact these students, so that we can
18 predict as educators in the second grade, those
19 students who by the ninth or tenth grade drop out,
20 physically or will have dropped out mentally.

21 At the high school level, African-American
22 students are suspended three times as often as their
23 white peers. Now, when we look at discipline policies
24 and procedures, it is not those very serious offenses
25 like drug abuse or fighting that really gets the

1 students into difficulty.

2 It is those day-to-day interactions in that
3 classroom where teachers do not know how to respond
4 appropriately to the children which gets them into the
5 ~~discipline system because they are sent out of the~~
6 classroom on a regular basis, to the point that the
7 administrators have to make some decisions about
8 removing them from the school.

9 The national drop-out rate for blacks in high
10 school is nearly twice that of whites, and as we begin
11 thinking about the twenty-first century just a few short
12 years from now, and recognize that in America and in
13 this global society of ours, that we are going to be
14 peopled by a society of brown and black folk. We cannot
15 afford to lose any children to dropping out of school.

16 African-American students are more than three
17 times as likely to be in a class with the educable
18 mentally retarded as white students, but only half as
19 likely to be in a class with the gifted and talented.
20 It has nothing to do with the genes, but it has to do
21 with the response patterns and the sorting patterns and
22 the labeling patterns that we in education perpetrate
23 upon the students.

24 These segregated schools are utilizing
25 tracking, ability grouping at the elementary level and

1 other types of labels or sorting so that our children
2 who happen to be African-American are not leaving high
3 school with a quality education. They are not even
4 leaving school with an education.

5 ~~When we look at course offerings and who is~~
6 enrolled in those courses, many times by the choices of
7 the counselors, we're finding that upper level courses
8 are almost all white and lower level courses are almost
9 all black. We have children who are labeled the "Red
10 Bird" in the second grade, and when they leave high
11 school, they are still the "Red Bird," the student who
12 has nothing.

13 Teachers often adjust educational goals and
14 expectations. They often teach different materials in
15 mete out rewards and punish behavior based on race as
16 well as class. And in the Delta, if you happen to be
17 poor, whether you are white or black, if you happen to
18 be African-American and don't be male, you are in
19 trouble.

20 Even in our vocational educational programs
21 African-American students are enrolled earlier and most
22 often they are enrolled more extensively in programs
23 training specifically for low status occupations than
24 are white students. Low status occupations that are
25 leading no where and typically, these assignments are

1 made by school personnel rather than by the election of
2 the students of their parents.

3 In the Delta, we have the establishment of a
4 dual school system, one private and one public. And
5 ~~this dual school system is having devastating effects on~~
6 public education because those who are in public private
7 schools do not want to vote the millage increase that
8 are necessary for having a viable public education
9 institution.

10 We see in an appalling way in 1990 districts
11 that have from 55 to 98 percent African-American
12 students are still resisting the one week or the one
13 month of teaching African-American history. And those
14 of you are very learned and you know that in order for a
15 person to have a self-concept that allows him to be goal
16 oriented, resilient, to be productive, one must
17 understand and appreciate his history and culture.

18 Not only is that important for the African-
19 American students, but it is also important that
20 Caucasian students understand and appreciate the
21 differences of the students around them. Because we do
22 work and live in a global society. And as I said
23 earlier, as we move into the twenty-first century, we're
24 talking about the dominant culture being that of black
25 and brown people in this world.

1 We also have a lack of attention to multi-
2 culture education so that all of our children learn how
3 to operate in a global society. Unfortunately, because
4 of the lack of support for public education, we also
5 have the lack of accessibility of students to technology
6 and in the case of the Delta where we have lots of money
7 coming in from federal programs, children often who do
8 have access to technology, are having access to
9 technology that tells them what to do, and in order to
10 be truly prepared, children must be able to tell the
11 technology what to do.

12 Children are not having access to foreign
13 languages and other challenging courses that are
14 necessary as we move into a technology age. We need to
15 recognize that many of us in education particularly
16 those of us who are Caucasian have not been trained to
17 respond appropriately to the learning styles and needs
18 of African-American children.

19 And many of us who have come through those
20 institutions who happen to be African-American have not
21 been prepared either. It is important that we begin to
22 do some retraining, if we're going to respond to the
23 needs of African-American children, and that becomes
24 especially critical as we talk about what's happening to
25 the black male.

1 We also see a critical problem with the demise
2 of teachers who happen to be African-Americans and
3 administrators. When we look around this state, we
4 wonder what happened to the African-American principals,
5 ~~the African-American superintendents,~~ and we have to
6 give attention to the fact that when you have districts
7 that are 98 percent, 85 percent, 75 percent African-
8 American, those children need role models from the
9 classroom upward.

10 There has to be some attention in higher
11 education to not only the recruitment but the retention
12 of African-American students. Too often it becomes a
13 revolving door, especially as relates to athletes. We
14 get them in the door, we use them up and we push them
15 back out. And there has to be some attention to the
16 hiring of minorities in high education.

17 We have some challenges and what we see in
18 education is that the talents of millions of children
19 are being left under or undeveloped, because they happen
20 to be born different because of race.

21 One historian has said it well. "Education is
22 the key." Carter G. Woodson said "If you control a
23 man's thinking, you do not have to worry about his
24 action. When you determine what a man shall think, you
25 do not have to concern yourself about what he will do.

1 if you make a man feel that he is inferior, you do not
2 have to compel him to accept an inferior status, for he
3 will seek it himself. If you make a man think that he
4 is justly an outcast, you do not have to order him to
5 the back door. He will go without being told and if
6 there is no back door, his very nature will demand one."

7 For too many children in the Delta who happen
8 to be poor and African-American we are creating the
9 back doors. It is not the children who fail school, but
10 it is the schools who fail the children. We have an
11 obligation to provide all the children, rich and poor,
12 black and white with a good education. And we cannot
13 afford to attempt to blame the failures on the
14 children's parents or the society's shortcomings, or on
15 insufficient resources.

16 Schools should take the responsibility for
17 giving all the children the best education by upgrading
18 the curriculum, by improving instruction, and by seeking
19 support from the wider community. We have a right and
20 the children who happen to be African-American have a
21 right to learn and to a bright future. We who are
22 leaders, we who are decision makers, we who are policy
23 makers have a responsibility to secure that learning
24 opportunity and to ensure the future of not only the
25 children, but of this nation. Thank you.

1 MS. RAPPEPROT: I would like to say, Dr.
2 White, before I ask the question, that I am sorry that I
3 will remember what you said, always with a breaking
4 heart.

5 ~~But I want to ask you has to do with the early~~
6 childhood intervention programs such as Headstart, such
7 as little xX programs available. I am convinced that the
8 solution to the problem must begin very early. What
9 does the Delta offer these children?

10 DR. WHITE: We have Headstart programs in the
11 Delta. They do not begin to impact the number of
12 children who are in our communities. We have a few
13 HIPPIY programs, that is a home based program. This
14 program does not begin to impact the needs of many of
15 the children of the Delta, and unfortunately, our state
16 legislators have not seen fit to demonstrate their
17 commitment to the children of Arkansas by voting in the
18 legislation proposed by our governor for early childhood
19 education.

20 You may recognize that all of the research
21 indicates that we must have the early intervention as
22 early as three years old if we are going to make a
23 difference in the lives of these children.

24 And yet year in and year out, decisions are
25 made that say "We are not ready for meeting the needs of

1 children throughout early childhood education.

2 MS. LINDA ANN POINDEXTER: Dr. White, you have
3 addressed every concern we talked about at the luncheon
4 table, and I certainly do appreciate that, very, very,
5 much, especially those concerning tracking and gifted
6 education and education of the educable mentally
7 retarded.

8 But I am very, very much concerned that young
9 people do not choose to go into education. And that is
10 black and white young people. It is becoming a dying
11 profession. What salary incentives have been voted in
12 here locally in the Delta region, which would attract
13 the brightest and the best to the educational system?

14 DR. WHITE: No salary incentives have been
15 voted in. As I indicated earlier, in September the
16 fight for an increased millage in Helena failed. This
17 has been a problem all over the Delta. Not only is that
18 an issue in terms of voting millages, there is perhaps a
19 negative perception of us as a profession, and folks
20 many times do not feel we deserve more money and we have
21 to do a lot -- a lot to do with that perception.

22 But in terms of recruiting the brightest, it
23 is not only a matter of money in the Delta, it is a
24 matter of the kind of support systems, or the kinds of
25 environments people would want to bring their family

1 to. Housing becomes a problem. Recreational and
2 cultural facilities -- I'm talking about the whole of
3 the Delta, not in just a couple of selected cities.

4 Just because we have problems in terms of
5 ~~where will people live if they come, where will the~~
6 recreate, what kind of cultural enrichment will they
7 receive, how much accessibility to the total community
8 will they have. A very serious issue.

9 We are confronted with that. In fact, I too
10 have the dilemma of walking for several weeks trying to
11 find a house when I relocated to this area.

12 MS. POINDEXTER: Thank you.

13 MR. ELIJAH COLELMAN: As a child that grew up
14 to be an adult in a segregated everything, with few
15 advantages, who was raised by a grandmother who taught
16 me almost daily, "There is no crime in being poor. But
17 it is a crime to stay that way." It is not a crime to
18 be without. Now, I didn't only hear that from my
19 grandmother, I heard it from my school principal. I
20 heard it from my school first, second and third on
21 through teachers.

22 And everybody had a concern of removing us
23 from where we were at the time, to where they wanted us
24 to be. There was some concept there. So we was taught
25 that in church. It appears to me that what has happened

1 to us with the advents of integration, is that we
2 assumed that the next generation was going to be all
3 white (inaudible) a white value.

4 So we quit teaching and what I heard now from
5 college professors and high school kids, is "We can't
6 talk to our kids anymore like we once did, because
7 somebody is going to get the concept you're talking
8 against whites and for black." If that is a fear, what
9 responsibility do we have.

10 And in Pine Bluff, I suppose we have five
11 million dollars worth of black churches, and none of
12 them are open until Sunday morning at 11:00. What
13 responsibility do we have, to say "Look, we know where
14 we are." The Asians are doing it quite well.

15 Those kids who have good -- I mean viable
16 I.Q.'s from math, science and all those things, if for
17 no other time, black history namely, we will use our
18 facilities which are always in our communities to say
19 "We shall do the teaching."

20 Are we the only group of people who leave it
21 to somebody else to move us to where we want to go?
22 Every time I hear somebody saying on television or the
23 Today Show or something, everybody is talking about the
24 plight of black people or somebody else. Asians, they
25 don't talk for Asians.

1 They don't talk for the Jewish community.
2 They talk for black folks. Are we really leaving it all
3 to them to do for us? How is it happening in the Delta?

4 DR. WHITE: There seems to be a rebirth of
5 ~~consciousness rising in the Delta. And I think there~~
6 are two issues we must recognize -- well, three. One,
7 while it is true that there has to be a recognition on
8 the part of African-Americans to do something for
9 themselves, what happens and what impacts African-
10 Americans, impacts all of us.

11 So first of all, my first point is that within
12 the educational systems, we have to establish those
13 support systems, and those mechanisms, those structures,
14 those response patterns that respond to the needs of the
15 children who happen to be there.

16 And all too often there are many of us who
17 still remember the way it used to be. And it ain't
18 going to be that way no more.

19 Secondly, we must also recognize that the
20 general society has a responsibility to all of the
21 children. So, Rotarians, Chamber of Commerce members,
22 fraternities, sororities and other groups in the
23 community must recognize that we must come together to
24 save all of the children.

25 Perhaps one of the unique experiences for me

1 in the Delta, has been to see the disenfranchisement of
2 children who happen to be white and poor. in many
3 instances it is no different from what has happened to
4 the African-American child, except for the skin color,
5 which is compounded in America.

6 But these children suffer tremendously, and
7 nobody seems to care about either one of these groups of
8 children. So, these groups that I have mentioned have
9 got to recognize that that support system must be
10 there.

11 And three, just as the Jewish community, just
12 as the Asian community and other communities recognize
13 the need to establish internal support systems, yes. Mr.
14 Coleman, we must recognize it in our churches and our
15 communities and in our homes and in these other
16 organizations that are traditionally a part of the
17 African-American community. There must be some
18 commitment to the children. There must be some
19 teaching. There must be some role models.

20 MK. PATERSON: Dr. White, would you briefly
21 assess the situation in Marianna now, as far as
22 percentage of African-American and white percentages in
23 the school, what is happening in the private academies
24 now, and then in that context you accredited last night,
25 we have almost single-handedly and after having been in

1 Marianna only two months, with meeting a successful
2 millage passage, would you give us a little insight into
3 how you were able to manage that?

4 DR. WHITE: In our school system, the
5 ~~population is approximately 84 to 85 percent African-~~
6 American. We have had an exodus from the public school
7 system over a number of years to private schools and to
8 be quite candid with you, we are not trying to win the
9 confidence of many of our white patrons who not only
10 want to exit the system, but want to respond to the
11 Freedom of Choice Act and exit the area, by going into
12 other public school systems through that choice act.

13 When I arrived in the city, I was told by not
14 only the African-American community, but also the power
15 brokers in the community that there was no need to even
16 think about a millage. Our finances were such that had
17 we not passed a millage, we would be closing our school
18 doors at this particular time.

19 As I listened and had conferences with
20 leaders, perceived leaders, actual leaders in the
21 community -- I spent my first two weeks just
22 listening. It was apparent to me that not only are we
23 divided by class in Marianna, but we are also divided by
24 race very heavily.

25 And I knew that if I am to operate

1 effectively, I could not operate in a vacuum and give
2 all my energies to one group of people, that I had a
3 responsibility for educating all of the children, and to
4 make an education viable to the total community.

~~5 I think I was successful because we were able~~
6 to pull together an integrated group and I very candidly
7 shared with them what our plight was, in terms of our
8 finances, what we had to do and everyone to a person
9 made a commitment that they were going to do it.

10 We worked seven days a week, we were out at
11 night until 12:00 and 1:00 in the morning. I went
12 places they told me they never thought I could go. I
13 went places I never thought I would go. But part of it
14 had to do with not waiting for the community to come to
15 me. I went to the community.

16 I went to the total community and I told them,
17 "We can't afford to lose Marianna, because we can't get
18 together to support public education." While there were
19 some changes in school board members that I feel was a
20 result of some of the feelings toward race and people,
21 attitudinal, we were able to pass that millage by a
22 landslide.

23 It was not just by a small margin. I have
24 seen some changes in the community toward public
25 education. The confidence seems to be growing. There

1 are those who are still very cautious and watching, and
2 I can understand that. But the support seems to be
3 evidenced in a wide variety of arenas.

4 For example, you heard our prosecuting
5 attorney from the area yesterday. They have pledged
6 their entire support and we work very closely as relates
7 to our children who are having difficulty through the
8 juvenile system.

9 The Rotary Club, for the first time in
10 history, has appointed a committee to support education,
11 and donated \$2200.00 to us this past Tuesday night for
12 computers in our high school. We had a Marianna
13 Razorback Day, where we recognized those students who
14 are symbolic at the University of Arkansas of the
15 hundreds of children who have been successful in
16 education.

17 These were African-American students. We were
18 fortunate enough to be featured in a documentary that is
19 now being distributed throughout the State of Arkansas
20 where we have said, despite the poverty, despite the
21 conditions in Lee County, we have been historically able
22 to send over 79 percent of our high school graduates on
23 to college.

24 At the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff
25 alone, we have over 100 students on that campus and many

1 others. at other institutions.

2 RABBI EUGENE LEVY: I would like to go back to
3 some of the things you said at the very beginning when
4 you were doing your percentages, three times likely,

5 ~~four times, five times. At the risk of really opening~~

6 up a can of worms, I see that the home is a major arena
7 for emphasis on education, resources at home,
8 encyclopedias, books, parents who are interested in
9 their children getting their homework done.

10 You know, not only "What did you do at school
11 today," but you know, "Can I help you." I know that
12 that has got to be a major problem in many of the
13 African-American homes, as it is in poor white homes.
14 Is there anything that you as superintendent will be
15 doing in terms of the home environment so that the
16 children will know that they have got support, that they
17 have got to do work, and so that they come to school
18 ready to try to learn?

19 DR. WHITE: Let me respond to that on two
20 levels. First of all, there is a theory known as the
21 "psychology of the oppressed." That theory indicates
22 that when a people have been oppressed, that they are
23 going to do one of two things: Fight or flight.

24 When we're talking about "fight," we're
25 talking about the fight toward others in the form

1 of crime, in the forms of other kind of inappropriate
2 behaviors, or to turn inward, towards drugs, alcoholism,
3 those kinds of behaviors.

4 Or, to even cop out mentally, and pretend that
5 the problem does not exist. So on that level in many
6 instances when a people over a period of time, for
7 whatever reason are feeling hopeless and helpless, they
8 become a part of that fight or flight syndrome.

9 This is the support that Mr. Coleman was
10 talking about that is needed, and that we are moving
11 toward in Lee County. We are now presently working with
12 the religious community and the community leadership in
13 training them, after having gone to them and saying "the
14 problem cannot be solved by the schools. We need your
15 support."

16 So, we are in a series of training sessions to
17 help the leadership to understand some of the problems
18 of alcohol and substance abuse. Because very early on
19 in my encounter, many of the children were having
20 difficulty, not because of their behaviors, but because
21 of the problems that they brought to school from the
22 home that had to do with these particular issues.

23 At the end of the session, the intent is that
24 we will come together and come up with a number of
25 strategies and activities to respond from a community

1 level to these needs. Inside the system, we have two
2 programs that are supported with grants.

3 We have for grades K thru 8 what is known as
4 the "Comer Model." This is a support system developed
5 by an African-American psychiatrist at Yale University
6 where we have some processes that we have established to
7 try to overcome the negative impacts of the family, by
8 supporting the children in the home.

9 The second program at the high school level is
10 that of Cities and Schools. That is state funded
11 program, again, doing the same thing. We also have as a
12 part of the requirement of the state and also as a part
13 of our commitment to the children, a parent component,
14 under Chapter 1 guidelines, but we have gone beyond
15 that, where we have periodic parent education programs
16 for children where we actually have computers and
17 computer programs that children are able to take home,
18 where we also have done something I think is very unique
19 in that in every school, we have hired at least one
20 person who is a member of the community.

21 They might not have a college degree in most
22 instances, this person does not. That person serves as
23 the link between the school and the home so when
24 children begin to have difficulties or even when we want
25 to share news or we want the parents to know what is

1 going on, we don't rely on the traditional mode of
2 sending home a memo. That person actually has the
3 responsibility of going into the home and talking with
4 the parents.

5 ~~We have seen some tremendous changes in~~
6 attitudes this year as a result of really expanding that
7 program. For example, this fall we had the largest
8 turnout for parent-teacher conferences in recent years
9 in Marianna.

10 MR. PATTERSON: Are there any more questions?

11 MR. MORTON GIELMAN: Let me ask one. Dr.
12 White accused me of being too silent here, but I want to
13 touch on one thing you may not be able to give me much
14 feedback on, but in past years as I have studied the
15 problems of federal programs that deal with education
16 for the handicapped funneled through the state as you
17 know, 92.142.

18 That I saw two things happening in the State
19 of Arkansas. One was that up in the northwest part of
20 the state where I am, great reluctance on local school
21 districts to actually provide education that was needed
22 for handicapped children, fought tooth-and-nail like
23 many school districts did, while I was hearing that
24 over in eastern Arkansas, since there were at that time
25 I think the state money was like \$300.00 per child,

1 that lots and lots of students were labeled "EMR" and
2 warehoused in a class just so the school district could
3 get the money, but not provide the services.

4 And I wonder if you can just relate something
5 about how you see that particular problem?

6 DR. WHITE: I sure would like to.

7 MR. GITELMAN: Thank you.

8 DR. WHITE: That I mentioned generally in my
9 comments. We do have the over representation of African-
10 American students in those classes, and it especially
11 becomes true for black males.

12 There are some new federal guidelines that say
13 that you must -- teachers must utilize some other kinds
14 of interventions before that referral process can
15 occur. And that there needs to be close scrutiny in
16 terms of who is represented in those classes.

17 The U.S. Office of Civil Rights, as well as
18 our new equity guidelines for the State of Arkansas
19 mandate that this must be monitored. However, there is
20 an issue here in the Delta, and it is one that I have to
21 tell you that is an issue in my school district.

22 Because we are 85 percent black, the
23 enrollment in special education can be 85 percent black,
24 and there not be "legally over representation." But you
25 also have to look at how many placements are occurring

1 and who is being placed and why. And that is a very
2 serious issue.

3 The other concern I have relates not only to
4 special education for which we get federal dollars, but
5 also Chapter I for which we get federal dollars, that
6 often we concentrate on remediation, remediation, which
7 ends up being -- keeping kids at the lower rung of the
8 thinking pattern, if I may use that term rather than
9 using "education needs."

10 So that, they are not challenged well, and
11 what we need to do and now federal guidelines for
12 Chapter I have changed, so that we can institute more
13 challenging programs that help kids not to just get some
14 remediation, but actually to catch up. That is a very
15 serious issue.

16 MR. PATTERSON: Doctor, thank you very much.
17 We appreciate your willingness to make a presentation
18 and play both roles today. Welcome back to the panel.

19 We have just received word that Dr. Jacqueline
20 McGray is here today. She is actually not scheduled to
21 speak until about an hour from now, and has graciously
22 agreed to make her presentation at this time.

23 Dr. McGray is the Deputy Dean at the
24 University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff. Welcome.

25 DR. MCGRAY: Good morning. I would like

1 apologize to the commission for my probable repetition.
2 I tried to get here a little early so that I could hear
3 some of the other presentations and avoid the repetition
4 that I might have included in my comment.

5 ~~And I did appreciate and agree with many of~~
6 the comments that Dr. White made. So, I am going to be
7 modifying my comments a little bit and try not to be too
8 repetitious. I may make comments and I think many of
9 the examples and strategies that she is employing in the
10 Marianna School District will help provide impetus for
11 some of the comments that I am going to make.

12 But I really am sorry that I didn't get to
13 hear other presentations so that I could try to do the
14 same thing for that. I was asked to talk about race
15 relations in the Mississippi Delta from the perspective
16 of higher education.

17 I believe that any perspective on race
18 relations and its influence on higher education in the
19 region, must be viewed from a historical perspective,
20 and that is from its relationship to the south as a
21 whole.

22 According to a noted historian of the south,
23 this region is best characterized as a state of mind.
24 He suggests that its boundaries are as much cultural as
25 they are climatic and as much political as geographic.

1 In general, the outlook in educational traditions of the
2 Delta grew out of the broadest social, economic and
3 political systems of the region.

4 Well before the Civil War, the south made its
5 choice against the democratic public education of the
6 north and determined that education should be selective,
7 private and concerned with the training of leaders.
8 Public education was viewed as a Yankee attack upon the
9 southern way of life.

10 Post Civil War education fashioned from this
11 mind set, faced extreme resistance because the
12 educational needs of the freed slaves became an issue to
13 be considered. The poverty of the post war south made
14 taxation oppressive, and consequently education was
15 viewed as a luxury rather than a necessity.

16 In essence, the south never developed a
17 democratic philosophy of education, and did not feel its
18 need. Nonetheless, northern teachers came to the south
19 following the war to teach freed slaves and poor white
20 people to read and write. By 1886, more 150 thousand
21 freed slaves were enrolled in school.

22 During this time, the American Missionary
23 Association maintained eight colleges, twelve normal
24 high schools, and 25 common schools. Southern whites
25 were hostile to this northern invasion, and ostracized

1 and terrorized teachers and vandalized and burned
2 schools.

3 Coincident with the drive to educate the black
4 population arose the question, "What type of education
5 does the freed slaves need." Upon accepting vocational
6 educational as suitable for the subservient role of
7 blacks in society, all southern states gradually moved
8 to provide some type of separate public education for
9 black and white students.

10 During the early decades of the twentieth
11 century, public education in the south was stymied by
12 poor economic conditions, a sparse and isolated
13 population, and bi-racial system that perpetuated white
14 dominance.

15 Southern school terms average less than a
16 hundred days a year, while the national average was
17 145. Only one southern pupil in ten who enrolled
18 reached the fifth grade, and only one in seven completed
19 the eighth grade.

20 Many of these practices can be traced to the
21 influence of a cotton dominated economy and its labor
22 intents of harvesting requirements. The split term
23 school system was developed to accommodate production
24 and harvesting requirements of the cotton industry.

25 Such school terms remained well into the 1950s

1 and were especially prevalent in segregated black
2 schools. Local support for black schools throughout the
3 region was minimal, because black citizens lacked the
4 opportunity or the desire to make their needs known and
5 felt via the ballot.

6 Again, Ezell reports that in the 1930s, for
7 every \$7.00 that was spent on education for white
8 students, only about two was spent on education for
9 blacks. School property was markedly inferior and
10 teacher's salary were often lower by as much as 50
11 percent.

12 The basic philosophy was that Negroes should
13 be given only what he paid for, and since he usually had
14 a large family and few resources, that meant very
15 little. The current system of higher education
16 developed in this environment, that was hostile to any
17 notion other than white supremacy, that was lacking in
18 physical resources and devoid of basic appreciation for
19 the value of an educated population.

20 This general lack of appreciate for education
21 has negative consequences on all racial groups. But
22 when this, coupled with a basic disrespect for the
23 intellectual power of black people and a general
24 disregard for the political rights of blacks, race
25 relations add another dimension to educational problems

1 in the region.

2 Both public and private black colleges were
3 created in this same environment. But at the time of
4 their establishment, black institutions were held in
5 high esteem by the black population, and they were
6 tolerated by the white population, because of their
7 usefulness in maintaining the bi-racial society.

8 However, given the events of recent decades,
9 the perceived importance of black colleges and
10 universities is declining. So in reference to the topic
11 of discussion for today, race relations in the Delta and
12 its influence upon higher education, I believe that
13 three issues are relevant for consideration.

14 First is the impact of the southern mentality
15 on student behavior and performance. The second is the
16 role of institutions of higher education in responding
17 to social, political and economic concerns of society,
18 and third, the relevance of black colleges and
19 universities.

20 In terms of the southern mentality and student
21 performance, the southern mind set is alive and well,
22 and it is so much a part of the mentality of both blacks
23 and whites, that it is not often recognized for what it
24 is, and what it does is often not acknowledged.

25 High rates of adult illiteracy, school drop-

1 outs and an under skilled work force all reflect years
2 of under funded public education, a general disregard
3 of the population for its own educational needs, but it
4 also reflects an educational environment unresponsive to
5 ~~cultural differences in the student population.~~

6 Although funding for public education and
7 recognition of its value are important, it is the
8 educational environment that I want to talk about.
9 Despite federal injunctions and the elimination of bi-
10 racial school systems, the mind set of white supremacy
11 and its influence on education still exists.

12 It is not surprising that fewer than one-third
13 of Arkansas' black high school seniors even take the
14 ACT. Or that while 20 percent of the state's high
15 school graduates are black, total undergraduate
16 enrollment in public higher education was 12 percent in
17 the fall of 1988.

18 Or that only ten percent of the bachelor's
19 degrees awarded to the state go to black graduates.
20 This is a significant decline in just the last decade.
21 These statistics from the Arkansas Department of Higher
22 Education signal a decline in educational aspirations of
23 black students. But they do not address the increasing
24 problems related to the amalgamation of black students
25 into the educational environment.

1 To say the least, education has not served
2 black Americans well, primarily because the system fails
3 to recognize the debilitating effects of racism and the
4 effects of this on the perceptions that black students
5 have about being black and the cultural traditions
6 associated with their blackness.

7 And I might want to just stop here and say
8 that I think this is a real important part of the
9 question that the gentleman asked Dr. White about what
10 is the influence of the home, and why is it that black
11 parents are not any more involved.

12 I want to quote Lamar Miller who is a noted
13 black child psychologist. He says "It is strange and
14 yet simplistic that it has taken so long to understand
15 the importance of an awareness of black cultural. One
16 explanation is that the experts overlook the cultural
17 strengths and resources of black people because they are
18 unaware that they exist or because they feel they are
19 without value."

20 The system has always responded to the needs
21 of black students in a deficit oriented mode. Programs
22 for the culturally disadvantaged rather than programs
23 designed to address positive attributes of the African-
24 American experience, send negative images of self to the
25 black student.

1 Contemporary research highlights the center
2 significance of the individual's concept of himself and
3 also notes that one's self-image is not internal. It is
4 learned. The individual contrives a picture of who he
5 is from countless messages from his external
6 environment.

7 It is in this vein that race relations within
8 the educational system have created profound negative
9 consequences. In terms of the role of high education in
10 responding to society concerns, certainly all of us
11 present recognize the important role of higher education
12 in developing citizens with the intellectual and moral
13 capacity to transmit knowledge and cultural values, and
14 in creating an educated citizenry capable of responding
15 to economic and service needs of our communities and the
16 nation.

17 A small part of that very large responsibility
18 is a preparation of teachers and administrators that
19 shape the educational environment at the elementary and
20 secondary levels. Institutions of higher education
21 transmit knowledge not only through its curricula, but
22 also its patterns of practice.

23 I am going to speak quite a bit about patterns
24 of practice, because I think they are so important. And
25 just to define what I am referring to with this

1 terminology, a pattern of practice is something that is
2 done. It's a (inaudible) or a folkway. It is not a
3 policy. But it is something that is done so often that
4 it is an accepted mode of behavior. So I want to keep
5 us in term of what this pattern of practice is.

6 These are obvious reasons that race relations
7 ought to be important to institutions of higher
8 education and that's going back to their role in the
9 preparation of teachers and the personnel for the
10 elementary and secondary schools.

11 However, it is difficult to conceive that
12 future teachers and administrators are receiving the
13 type of culturally sensitive educational curricula
14 needed to reverse the negative impact of the southern
15 mentality.

16 I say this with a great deal of certainty,
17 since institutions of higher education have been equal
18 contributors to the southern mind set. For clarity, we
19 need only observe the distribution of black students
20 enrolling in and graduating from historically black
21 versus historically white institutions.

22 Such statistics as well as general problems of
23 black students in historically white institutions reveal
24 similar racial and cultural bias. Sensitive issues are
25 always difficult to discuss, and I know of no other

1 issue as sensitive as race relations.

2 However, recognition of the problem, open and
3 honest discussions and a firm commitment to its
4 resolution have been traditional strategies for
5 ~~responding to difficult issues.~~ W. E. B. DuBois was
6 black Massachusetts-born scholar who studied at Fisk,
7 Harvard and the University of Berlin, and who became the
8 guiding spirit behind the establishment of the NAACP
9 stated that "the most difficult stage in the struggle
10 for racial justice in America will be reached when it is
11 clear that fundamental inequities exist in spite of
12 litigation, legislation and direct confrontation."

13 Now, he initially published those words in
14 1908, and at that time, he was pondering the future, and
15 I would like to suggest, ladies and gentlemen, that
16 future is the present. We have gone through the court
17 battles. We have gone through the street fights and now
18 is the difficult time when we have to deal with what is -
19 - what patterns of practice still permeate the
20 educational environment that make it difficult for all
21 students to receive the quality education that we're
22 talking about.

23 I want to look a little bit now at the
24 relevance of historically black institutions. For
25 almost a century, historically black educational

1 institutions represented the hope of the future, a way
2 out of poverty and a source of inspiration for the black
3 population.

4 However, public school integration in
5 elementary and secondary schools, ~~as well as recent~~
6 increases in black enrollment in historically white
7 colleges and universities, have diminished the perceived
8 relevance of the historically black college.

9 The academic preparation of students enrolled
10 in these institutions and the quality of faculty and
11 programs are frequently challenged. Yet the vast
12 majority of black college graduates of noted black
13 scientists and professionals, are graduates of these
14 institutions.

15 Such statistics indicate the one important
16 aspect of the historically black institution is the
17 positive environment that it provides for creating self-
18 esteem in black students.

19 Components of this environment include
20 positive role models, awareness of and appreciate of
21 African-American culture, and a recognition of the
22 social climate from which its students come. The
23 strengths of black colleges and universities are
24 frequently ignored or perceived to be of little value.

25 In essence, the potential of historically

1 black institutions is also threatened by the southern
2 mind set. Black teachers are disappearing, having gone
3 from 282 education graduates in the State of Arkansas
4 ten years ago, to only 79 just last year, only 6 percent
5 of the total education graduates in the state.

6 Throughout the south the black teacher has become an
7 endangered species to the detriment of both black and
8 white students.

9 The black teacher is a visible positive image
10 for creating cultural awareness and understanding with
11 white colleagues, students and parents. But equally as
12 important, black teachers represent a vision of what can
13 be and a source of inspiration for black students and
14 parents.

15 In summary, the problem of race relations in
16 the Mississippi Delta is a critical challenge to
17 increased effectiveness of educational institutions in
18 the region. Many of the human capital resource problems
19 so frequently discussed appear to be related to patterns
20 of practice in the educational environment.

21 According to Columbia professor Herbert Gans,
22 there are psychological educational and cultural
23 problems associated with bringing people into society
24 who have been told that they are no good. Although
25 racism is much more covert now than in the past, the

1 psychological consequences are just as severe, and have
2 been most devastating to black males who have to balance
3 mixed signals regarding their intrinsic worth.

4 On the one hand there is the male ego that is
5 ~~so highly counted in our society.~~ But on the other
6 hand, there is the largest society that devalues his
7 blackness, and treats him than less than a man.

8 Retreat from the largest society is a frequent
9 response. How can institutions of higher education
10 respond? The most needed response is to recognize the
11 problem and to acknowledge its existence, to the extent
12 that visible and positive strategies for overcoming the
13 debilitating effects of racism are developed and
14 implemented.

15 Educational environments must be altered to
16 reflect a system of values and behavioral patterns
17 consistent with the ideology of racial equality, and
18 with the objective of equal educational opportunities.

19 I will stop and this point and just reflect on
20 something that I was reading a couple of weeks ago. I
21 really have been concerned about the history of the
22 Delta region for several reasons of late. And one
23 writing that I read, indicated that just after the
24 Emancipation -- well, prior to the Emancipation
25 Proclamation, black people cried for freedom.

1 And that was granted with the Emancipation
2 Proclamation, but with that freedom came lynching and
3 all other kinds of violent attacks upon them. And so
4 then the cry turned to justice and there were many --
5 ~~there was much literature written on the struggle for~~
6 justice for black people.

7 But now the cry has turned to equality, and
8 our progress -- we are moving, but we cannot forget the
9 roots, we cannot forget why this system was established
10 and we must understand all of the things that have
11 happened that -- all the things that actually bring us
12 to where we are.

13 So for the institutions of higher education, I
14 think an initial step might be an examination of
15 existing patterns of practice and university policy from
16 a more enlightened perspective. I think before we even
17 begin to talk about programs, curricular, whatever, that
18 we need to understand where we are and what it is that
19 we do, and of course this enlightened perspective
20 relates to this history that I talked about.

21 Invited lecturers during Black History Month,
22 though they are useful, do not erase years of social,
23 economic and political isolation and in most instances,
24 it is only the black people that go. And I believe that
25 black people as well as white people need educating.

1 I believe that racism exists not only in the
2 minds of white people, but it exists in the minds of
3 black people. And that we must attempt to overcome
4 these years of history. Creating positive change in the
5 educational environment of the region is a mammoth
6 challenge. But it is a challenge that all institutions
7 of higher education need to address in practice, policy
8 and programs.

9 MR. WILLIAM MULDRON: Dr. McGray, I have a
10 question for you, but first, would you take just a
11 moment to brief us on your own professional and
12 education background?

13 DR. MCGRAY: I am Deputy Dean in the School of
14 Agriculture at UAPB. Prior to that time, well, even
15 now, I am actively involved in research and Rural
16 Sociology, primarily with an emphasis in housing and
17 family and community relationships.

18 I am a graduate of UAPB. I did a Master's at
19 Michigan State University, and Ph.D. at Florida State.
20 I have been employed at the university for several years
21 in various capacities. Prior to my most recent
22 appointment, I was Assistant Administrator for Home
23 Economics for the Research and Extension Programs.

24 MR. MULDRON: Thank you. Just to follow up on
25 my question, I have been tremendously impressed with

1 what you have had to say and also Dr. White. It seems
2 to me that we're getting at here a problem so basic, to
3 what attempts are being made in the area of development
4 in the Delta area, as well of course, as on a larger
5 scale.

6 I am surprised, or maybe I am not aware of
7 more focus on this issue at higher levels. Is anything
8 being done at the state level to deal and to rectify the
9 kinds of problems which you and Dr. White have raised
10 here? Unless these problems are dealt with, it is hard
11 for me to see how any other programs can really be
12 successful in the other areas?

13 DR. MCGRAY: I agree with you wholeheartedly,
14 and perhaps Dr. White is aware of some efforts. I am
15 not.

16 DR. WHITE: I would like to respond, although
17 I have some colleagues who just came in from the
18 Department of Education, at both the higher education
19 levels and the State Department of Education, there have
20 been some half-hearted efforts to address these issues,
21 because our institutions are politically oriented and
22 politically motivated.

23 I will say this quite candidly, there was an
24 attempt last year to develop some equity guidelines that
25 were go guide the state in terms of decisions as relates

1 to minority students, that would look at structures,
2 programs, practices and the final report was not
3 accepted.

4 We do have now equity guidelines, but it is a
5 ~~water-down~~ version of what was originally proposed.

6 Dr. McGray correct me if I am wrong, the higher
7 education levels, there are requirements through INCAI
8 and other accrediting institutions that talk about
9 inclusion, and responses to the needs of minority
10 students.

11 And I am told that higher education
12 institutions have found very slow ways of circumventing
13 in a very substantive way the response to these issues.

14 DR. MCGRAY: Let me clarify something. When I
15 said I wasn't aware, I am aware of the kinds of things
16 that you mentioned, but when I say I am not aware of
17 anything -- any kinds of programs that get to the core,
18 that tell you to look at yourselves and to evaluate
19 yourselves and see how your actions impact white --
20 black and white students.

21 And I hate to make personal -- give personal
22 examples, but I would like to give two personal examples
23 of what happened to my son who is a graduating senior at
24 Florida A and M University this year.

25 He graduated from Pine Bluff High School, was

1 a National Merit Finalist, and was an -- I would think --
2 - listen to me being a mother, was an outstanding
3 student as well as an outstanding athlete. At the end
4 of his junior year when he went in to talk to his
5 counselor, to ask his counselor about getting an
6 application for governor's school in the spring of his
7 junior year, she told him that she didn't think he
8 qualified, because you have to be in the top ten percent
9 of your class.

10 And he said "Well, I think I am." She says
11 "Well, I'll check." He went back and she says "Well, I
12 checked and you're not," but he was, and I really think
13 that she had not checked. I think she had made the
14 assumption that he was not eligible, and did not bother
15 to check.

16 That kind of thing happens over and over
17 again. Another thing about black culture also when my
18 son was in high school, he was taking a course in
19 creative writing. One of the assignments was to do a
20 monologue on an outstanding person, or a famous person.

21 And the students had to read about the person,
22 they had to essentially develop that person's thoughts,
23 and to present this monologue. He was very excited
24 about the project. He wanted to do Malcolm X. And I
25 took him to the Salvation Army and we bought old

1 clothes, and glasses, and he looked the part and he was
2 really proud of his presentation.

3 When he finished, the lady -- his teacher
4 informed him that he had done a good job, but that he
5 ~~did not follow the instructions because they were told~~
6 to select a famous person, and Malcolm X was not a
7 famous person.

8 There are many -- I mean, if you talk to any
9 parent at any school the thing of it is, that there are
10 some students who have parents who can help them
11 overcome those things, and there are other students who
12 have parents who can't. And I think that is a big
13 difference.

14 MS. LINDA ANN POINDEXER: I am very much
15 concerned about student testing. I think that we do a
16 dis-service in this state when we emphasize so much and
17 yet we have no truth in testing law. How can we
18 guarantee that the test scores that they tell us our
19 students make, are really the test scores that they
20 get? How can we go about making sure that the test
21 makers know these answers themselves, because we have
22 seen numerous examples of them having questions with no
23 correct answers at all to the problem, and when race is
24 one of those questions which is asked, how can we be
25 sure that our kids are going to be given a fair shake if

1 they identify themselves?

2 DR. MCGRAY: That is an excellent question and
3 I do not have the answer. I am going to be just frank
4 with you. My background is not in higher education or
5 ~~educational administration. It is rural sociology.~~ And
6 I really -- obviously that is a very important question
7 but I really don't have an answer there. Maybe others
8 can. I don't know.

9 MS. POINDEXTER: Maybe I should have asked
10 representative Cunningham.

11 MS. DOROTHY K. RAPPEPURI: My question was
12 also going to be on testing, but testing in high
13 education, the pre-assessment program that is coming
14 forward and the developmental courses that are being
15 offered. Will this facilitate the African-Americans --
16 will it help him, or will it simply further damage his
17 ego?

18 DR. MCGRAY: I believe that, depending upon
19 the environment in which the test is administered and
20 the kinds of programs that come forth. I can speak at
21 UAPB. right now the young man who graduated at the top
22 of UMS class of 1989 was a UAPB graduate who came from a
23 small school, Roswenwall Tucker in Jefferson County, and
24 he did not -- he failed the admissions requirements to
25 enter UAPB.

1 His ACT scores were so that he had to go
2 through the complete development curricula. He went
3 through that curriculum, he graduated in four years, and
4 made all A's. If we say to students that because your
5 ~~test scores are such, "This is not a reflection of your~~
6 innate intelligence, it is a reflection of the
7 environment in which you come, it is a reflection of
8 what you have been exposed to."

9 And that "We can help you overcome those
10 deficiencies, we will get you on a par with other
11 students and you can move forward from there." In that
12 sense, we have many outstanding success examples from
13 our institution where that has been the case.

14 On the other hand, if students are told
15 "You're going to go into this course because you didn't
16 make the required score on this, and you have got to
17 take this before you can come out," and if they are
18 placed there with the attitude that "You are here
19 because you don't have the intellectual abilities, and
20 we're going to put you in here and if you don't make it,
21 you're going to have to go home." It all depends on how
22 the programs are approached.

23 RABBI EUGENE LEVY: I am concerned a little
24 bit about athletics, and I wanted to -- since your son
25 was both an academician and an athlete, I wanted to ask

1 you, you know, the perception in Arkansas is, we have
2 some wonderful athletic programs, football, basketball,
3 track, baseball, and yet the education in those same
4 institutions is considered among the lowest in the
5 nation.

6 And I am concerned specifically because in
7 Little Rock, at UARK I was told by a controller, that
8 within the last three years, only one senior on the
9 basketball team actually graduated from UARK. Only one,
10 out of three years.

11 What is being done, as a sociologist, maybe,
12 and since so many of the students come from rural areas,
13 what is being done to emphasize education at least on a
14 par with athletics? Not everybody who gets to these
15 schools are going to get scholarships and go on to
16 become million dollar pros, but it is important to get
17 an education as well. What's being done to motivate
18 them in terms of education as well as athletics?

19 UK: MCGRAY: I don't know. My son was
20 motivated from home. He had athletic scholarships and
21 we said that you play in high school and when you go to
22 college, you study. And he went on an academic
23 scholarship.

24 I don't know what is being led to other
25 students. I suspect however, that many people because

1 of the discouragement that has -- that they have
2 experienced from the educational system, many parents
3 may push their students --

4 MR. LEVY: (interposing) That's the only way
5 to get --

6 DR. MCGRAY: (interposing) That's right,
7 because that's the way you can go. I was very
8 disheartened to hear the mother of the quarter back for
9 West Virginia during the -- at the end of the football
10 season encouraging her son who was a good student and
11 has a possibility of graduating on time, encouraging her
12 son to leave because she didn't like the way he was
13 being treated by the coach and some other people.

14 I think we have got a lot of cultural things
15 and we have got a lot of things related back to the
16 family that families need education and -- but we have
17 to say to people that education is a way out. But they
18 have to see a visible evidence that education can be
19 important.

20 MR. PATERSON: In an interest of staying on
21 time, Mr. Coleman had asked to speak so I am going to
22 take one more question and after that from Dr. White.
23 And we'll take a ten minute break.

24 MR. ELIJAH COLEMAN: The last two examples
25 that you enumerated there, I am familiar with, your son

1 whose father has a background in mathematics, was a Ph.D
2 and his mother graduated cum Laude from UAPB, he had to
3 make it.

4 In the other case, we look at the young man
5 that you mentioned in medicine, he was discouraged in so
6 many instances I know, because I was superintendent of
7 the little school where he graduated. Now, the
8 counselor told him -- we just recognized him by his
9 papers and all of these kinds of things, grades that he
10 made in high school. We didn't give tests necessarily,
11 with no funds to buy tests.

12 Now, the counselor caught him and said "Well,
13 you don't need to do your senior year. Why don't you
14 just send him on down here to UAPB." He performed well,
15 and somebody said "Well, he must have been liked. He
16 went to the medical school and made all A's in medical
17 school."

18 Now, we can duplicate that a number of times.
19 In your instance and this instance it was because there
20 was an interest. In so many of our students now are
21 running up against counselors who graduated from the
22 University of Arkansas, first year, born middle class
23 white woman, trying to guide some kids that she's never
24 seen before.

25 But superintendents don't seem to pay that any

1 attention at all in hiring of personnel. Where did she
2 come from? This kid has been taught at the University
3 of Arkansas and never seen a black teacher. You know,
4 they don't have any professors at the University of
5 Arkansas.

6 She graduated -- how can we expect them to
7 guide and how many of us -- how many organizations are
8 kind of looking at these points from a human relations
9 standpoint and saying that these are very simple kinds
10 of problems that can be cured just by having some
11 interest and doing some studying? Are there any
12 organizations who are caring for these kinds of -- I
13 know it is the State Department, but they are too busy
14 and too underpaid to even fool with it.

15 DR. MCGRAY: Was that a question, or, that was
16 a statement.

17 MR. LEVY: Are there organizations, other than
18 just private citizens:

19 DR. WHITE: I really don't have a question. I
20 wanted to respond to something that was said earlier and
21 to Mr. Coleman. Yes, there has been a response to the
22 issue of what's happening to counselors.

23 The college board has recognized that for poor
24 and minority students, there has not been proper
25 response on the part of counselors. So there is a new

1 program called "Keeping the Options Open," where summer
2 programs are available to actually train secondary
3 counselors how to more appropriately respond and counsel
4 kids at the secondary level.

5 ~~Going back to talking about something that~~
6 Rabbi Levy asked, in terms of what happens to athletes.
7 That's a very critical issue. At this particular time
8 in the Delta because at the state level there is a push --
9 -- there is some resistance to setting a grade point
10 average requirement for athletic participation.

11 And I think I am in the extreme minority when
12 I say I have no problems with that, in fact I would like
13 to see it raised, because we are fooling ourselves when
14 we say that we believe that all of the children can
15 learn, and then we turn around and make excuses for
16 athletes not being academic students, and when we do not
17 set the expectation that every child will be taking
18 courses. Too often we have children who go to college
19 and do -- have to be put in those developmental
20 classes, not because of anything again, wrong with the
21 genes, but because of the way we have mis-educated them.

22 We are putting children in business math,
23 vocational math and general math, and we know in order
24 to make that cut score, on the ACT or the SAT, they
25 have to have taken Algebra I and preferably Algebra II.

1 Geometry, trigonometry, those higher level courses.

2 We know if children have not had physics and
3 chemistry and other higher level science courses, they
4 are not going to do well on those tests. So, we have a
5 ~~responsibility even in course like English, when we do~~
6 that tracking that Mrs. Poindexter was talking about,
7 those children leave those basic level courses not with
8 the kind of preparation for writing and thinking and
9 analyzing in English that they need in order to do well
10 on those tests.

11 So, we have to do something different in terms
12 of how we respond to the needs of the kids in school, so
13 they can achieve the kind of skills that they need in
14 order to be competitive, and I think we are doing
15 something wrong at the higher education level.

16 All too often when the children do go into
17 higher education, I think they are prostituted. They
18 are used up. And when they are used up and do not make
19 the cut in terms of passing the courses, they are being
20 kicked out.

21 And I can see many instances of students who
22 were the super heroes in junior high school, the super
23 heroes in high school for a couple of years or three
24 were super heroes in college, and when they find out
25 they're going no where, doing nothing, they become the

1 drug addicts, they become the deviant behaviors on the
2 street.

3 And we have some responsibilities for that.

4 MR. PATTERSON: I need to call time now. Our
5 ~~next presenter, Mr. Henry Richman is here. With his~~
6 indulgence, we would like to take a ten minute break,
7 and then I would ask that we move on very lightly
8 because we have two presenters and we must break exactly
9 at 12:00. Thank you, very much.

10 (recess)

11
12 MR. PATTERSON: We are five minutes later, but
13 we will come to order. I apologize for being later than
14 my own schedule.

15 At this time, I would like to call on Mr.
16 Henry Richman who is I understand, the President of
17 the Helena-West Helena School Board and a banker by
18 profession. We are very pleased to have you, and I
19 appreciate your indulgence and stayed through our 15
20 minute recess.

21
22 ---

23
24 MR. HENRY RICHMAN

25

1 I have a few prepared remarks that I would
2 like to cover. Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen of
3 the Arkansas Advisory Committee to the United States
4 Commission on Civil Rights. I am Henry Richman,
5 ~~President of the Board of Education of the Helena-West~~
6 Helena School District.

7 I am a graduate of the local Central High
8 School and the School of Banking of the South at the
9 Louisiana State University and the American Bankers
10 National Graduate Trust School at Northwestern
11 University.

12 I have been a banker for nearly thirty-four
13 years. From a bookkeeper to Senior Vice-President,
14 Cashier and Trust Officer. I was elected to the Board
15 of Education in 1973, and have been re-elected for five,
16 three-year terms.

17 I have served as the President of the Board of
18 Education since 1977. That's been 13 years. During
19 these years, the district has experienced a decrease in
20 the number of students and a racial black-white ratio of
21 55-40 white -- 45, to a current ratio of approximately
22 75-25.

23 The Board is aware of race relations and is
24 diligent in its effort to provide a quality education
25 for all students. The district has followed a non-

1 discriminatory hiring policy for all personnel, that's
2 administrators, teachers and other staff.

3 We have capable black and white administrators
4 and the work well together. Most of our schools have
5 ~~parent-teacher associations, PTA's but they are much~~
6 more active in the elementary schools. They have helped
7 improve race relations through such things as Dad's
8 Pancake Supper, involving all races working together for
9 the children and their schools.

10 Other activities have been science fairs,
11 where teachers, students and parents, black and white,
12 work together for recognition and reward in the
13 projects. Where the Board responds more to racial
14 perception, the PTAs focus on organized projects at the
15 grass roots level, and have experienced very positive
16 relationships.

17 In addition, teacher appreciate days are
18 sponsored and carnivals with activities in the five cent
19 and ten cent range, that allow all children to
20 participate.

21 Discipline is a problem for this district as
22 well as others in this country. The district has an
23 alternative school for students, grades 7 thru 12 as an
24 option for suspension from school. It requires a parent
25 teacher or administrative conference in order -- with

1 the parent's approval for the child to be entered into
2 this school.

3 It is not a school for punishment, but one for
4 students with behavioral problems, where they can be
5 counseled and taught on an individual basis to prepare

6 them for the regular classroom settings. This district
7 has a parent teacher conference period scheduled at the
8 end of each grading period, where the parents come to
9 pick up the report cards and to talk with the teachers.

10 These conferences help, but are not not enough
11 alone to create the kind of teacher-parent relationship
12 that is needed to have better discipline and thereby a
13 better quality education. I feel like it takes a
14 partnership of the parents and teachers in order to
15 maintain a quality education.

16 Our district is encouraging leadership
17 development of the administrative staff in school based
18 management, through a program of organizational health
19 and effectiveness for each school in our system. There
20 is a committee selected by the teachers who works with
21 the principal to significantly impact the internal
22 affairs of that school.

23 These committees provide the opportunities for
24 the total faculty in translating problems and concerns
25 into potential solutions. Our teachers attend workshops

1 on local, state and national levels. A number of staff
2 development sessions are geared toward improved inter-
3 personal relations.

4 Some of our teachers were scheduled to attend
5 ~~the "Minority-Non-Minority" Conference in Little Rock on~~
6 March 17th. I haven't heard the results of that yet,
7 but they were they.

8 MS. POINDEXTER: They were there.

9 MR. RICHMAN: Thank you. Several of our high
10 school teachers traveled to California to visit Mr.
11 Escalanti's area, and to hear his techniques in dealing
12 with students at his school for which he has received
13 national recognition. This has had an impact on our
14 Math Department at Central High School.

15 And then on the elementary level, teachers
16 have been and continue to be in the process of
17 developing multi-cultural classroom teaching units,
18 through various grants including those aimed toward the
19 "at risk" child, we are able to provide enrichment
20 opportunities for all children in our school system.

21 Improved self-esteem and acceptance of who one
22 is, and what one can be is stressed. Secondary students
23 are offered in black history and ethnic literature. And
24 through the student assistant program, the staff has a
25 vehicle for reporting potential problems developing.

1 indicating changes in behavior. And counseling is then
2 made available.

3 Through the peer tutoring group program.
4 Heartbeat, students at each grade level in the secondary
5 system, have the opportunity to work with each other in
6 resolving difficulties. The members of the Board of
7 Education have pledged to begin a process of renewal of
8 the Helena-West Helena School system.

9 It is our goal to improve our educational
10 services and to rebuild the high level of community
11 confidence and support that is essential to the
12 successful growth and operation of any public
13 institution. This process will begin with the
14 establishment of a detailed evaluation of our current
15 strengths and weaknesses.

16 Essential to this process will be the full
17 participation and contribution of the community and all
18 levels of our staff. We are in the process of
19 developing an admission statement to arrive at a set of
20 goals and objectives in order to measure the progress of
21 our system.

22 The population of the Helena-West Helena area
23 is made up of many ethnic groups and races, black,
24 white, Indian, Oriental, Jewish, Italian, Mexican,
25 Americans. I think this population mix has led to a

1 better understanding of race relations as a community in
2 the way that they support our Phillips County Community
3 College.

4 Our school district works closely and in
5 cooperation with the college in many ways. The college
6 offers higher education and vocational technical
7 training to many local students that would not otherwise
8 have the opportunity to attend another college.

9 One of the outstanding programs of the college
10 is the nursing school which provides training where at
11 the local hospital, students of all races work side-by-
12 side in delivering health services to the people of this
13 area.

14 Finally, the district is about to begin a self-
15 study through the state ethnic commission in Little
16 Rock. This is to start shortly after I return from
17 spring break. Dr. Arthur Carthage, our Deputy
18 Superintendent and our local coordinator makes regular
19 reports to this committee.

20 The self-study will be the culmination of
21 these reports on the progress we are making in the area
22 of race relations. Thank you. Do you have questions?

23 MR. PATTERSON: Yes, I am sure there will be.
24 Would anyone like to lead forward? I will ask then, one
25 question. I understand -- didn't Helena just fail a

1 millage increase?

2 MR. RICHMAN: That is correct. We have tried
3 several times for our building program that is intended,
4 in my estimation, to upgrade all the schools in our
5 district to give them much better setting for classroom
6 learning and also, to relieve, I think, which is -- so
7 that the child that -- any child in the district, if
8 they are in the 1st grade, attends the same school.

9 They have sort of a uniform type of
10 instruction that comes to them through the principal,
11 and you know, supervision, and it also, to me you don't
12 have a student saying or a parent saying, well you only
13 go here because you live in this area, and you only go
14 here because you live in this area. Anywhere you live
15 in the district, you would attend that same school.

16 So, it is sort of a unification to me in the
17 total school district.

18 MR. PALLERSON: Someone had made that remark
19 last night. That has to be a depressing experience for
20 somebody that is president of the school board. How
21 long has it been since a successful millage has passed
22 in Helena?

23 MR. RICHMAN: I believe it was 1977 that we
24 passed a millage that -- and before we could -- we had
25 intended in that, I think like on the 4 to 3 vote of the

1 school board, to build a K-1-2 complex or something of
2 that nature, and to allow as a unification at that time,
3 but then the millage -- well, then our gym burned and
4 that was a much greater need.

5 ~~At the time, we needed to replace that PE~~
6 facilities.

7 MR. PATTERSON: Let me ask one other question
8 and then I'll move on to someone else. Is there a --
9 are there private academies in Helena also?

10 MR. RICHMAN: Yes sir, there is the Desoto
11 School, and several churches have private schools, yes
12 sir.

13 MR. MULDROW: Mr. Richman, how many members
14 are on the school board and what is the racial make-up
15 of the board in your district?

16 MR. RICHMAN: Well, when I first got on the
17 board, there was six white and one black. Then a few
18 years later, there was five white, two black and this
19 last year there is now six white, one black.

20 MS. POLINDEXER: Along that same line, first
21 of all, let me congratulate you on having some very
22 excellent teachers in the Helena-West Helena area. And
23 also for having an excellent beginning teacher's
24 luncheon. Because I think many time the way teacher's
25 are welcome into your district, determines whether or

1 not they stay there for a while.

2 But I would like to ask you, what is the
3 racial make-up of the administration, how many -- do we
4 have a black superintendent in this predominately black
5 school district? How many head coaches or if you have
6 any head coaches and that sort of thing? Coming from a
7 district which is under a desegregation order because it
8 failed to be sensitive in many instances, I am wondering
9 what is your racial makeup at the administrative level,
10 and in the schools themselves as far as the
11 administration is concerned?

12 MR. RICHMAN: Okay. I don't recall right
13 offhand, but I can go down -- the Superintendent is
14 white. The Deputy Superintendent is black. The
15 Assistant Superintendent for elementary is black. We
16 have I know two black -- there is a black principal at
17 Jefferson.

18 There is a black principal at Westside. At
19 Central there is a white principal. At Miller there is
20 a white principal, and then at Helena Crossing there is
21 a lady that I think probably is of a Spanish-American
22 type, I would think. At J.F. Wall, there is a white
23 principal.

24 MS. POINDEXTER: What do you consider the
25 greatest obstacle to blacks being elected to the school

1 board in this area, and will reapportionment or this
2 reapportionment suit which is very much in focus in the
3 Delta, will that have an effect on the ability of blacks
4 to run and win positions on the school board.

5 MR. RICHMAN: I don't know how to answer
6 that. I mean I don't select people on the board, you
7 know, and its the people that do, and it is, I think, a
8 matter of the public perception you know, as to the type
9 candidate they are and -- because I felt like, you
10 know, we have blacks elected to the board and they have
11 been quality people.

12 So, you know, I just don't know how to answer
13 that.

14 MS. POINDEXTER: Thank you.

15 MS. WHITE: I would like to ask, since you as
16 board president and your board secretary had to sign off
17 on the equity guidelines compliance for the state, what
18 kind of directives have you ordered the administration
19 and staff of the Helena School District, in terms of the
20 areas that you view as policy-makers that they must
21 address in order to be more equitable in their
22 structure, their practices, their organization?

23 MR. RICHMAN: Well, Dr. Arthur Carthage is in
24 charge of that, and he is making presentations to the
25 board and is involved in that. That's part of the

1 attachment that I have, is the scope and purpose of this
2 study, I think, the self-evaluation.

3 And I feel like that he would know that we
4 would expect him to, you know, conform to the content of
5 that program.

6 MS. WHITE: A two-part question. I understand
7 that our State Department of Education is looking
8 seriously about the positive as well as the negative
9 impacts of alternative schools, on children as it
10 relates to race. What has been the impact of your
11 alternative schools here Helena-West Helena?

12 MR. RICHMAN: Well, it is my understanding
13 that because of the population it is predominately
14 black, you know, as to referrals to that school. But I
15 have visited and there are whites there, and -- but it
16 is something the board does not control. It is
17 determined by the parents themselves. They have the
18 alternative for either suspension or attendance at the
19 alternative school.

20 MR. COLEMAN: IN many of the areas,
21 especially involving this millage quest, the same people
22 who vote against the millage are the people who normally
23 ought to be concerned. They seem to have kind of a
24 strange relationship. In this instance, I am talking
25 about the NAACP and the landowners in your school

1 district. They vote the same way about millage. How
2 come? Strange bedfellows? Someone brought that to my
3 attention who is a local citizen?

4 MR. RICHMAN: Well, you know, I don't know the
5 racial breakdown of the vote, but -- ~~or who voted which~~
6 way, but I know -- I was greatly disappointed in the
7 vote and we have strived to reach, you know, different
8 areas of the community.

9 I just know we are not doing something right
10 and that's one of the reasons we are embarking on this
11 program to find out what our strengths and weaknesses
12 are, and then what we can do to involve the people in
13 the community more and to have pride and support for our
14 public schools. We are well aware that we need a
15 millage increase and that -- we are trying to do what
16 we can to change that concept.

17 MR. PATTERSON: I think you need to visit with
18 our panelist here from Marianna. She has been
19 successful at it in Marianna.

20 MS. POINDEXTER: You mentioned that the
21 alternative school is made up predominately of black
22 children. Conversely we hear about your odyssey of the
23 mind team which traveled to Little Rock. I did not get
24 to see the young people. What is the make up of your
25 talented and gifted program and has there been a move to

1 use multiple criteria rather than relying simply on test
2 scores to determine who is gifted and who is not, or who
3 exhibits gifted behaviors and who does not?

4 MR. RICHMAN: There have been -- I don't
5 know the details of that. I just know that students of
6 all races are involved in that, and more than just
7 exceptionally talented students are involved in it.
8 Because each trip that comes before the school board, I
9 mean, each trip has to come before the school board to
10 be approved, and they have you know, many good projects
11 that they are taking all the children to, regardless of
12 the race, creed or color.

13 MS. POINDEXTER: Thank you.

14 MR. PATTERSON: Mr. Richman, thank you very
15 much. I was asked a few minutes ago during the break by
16 a reporter what solutions might come from some of these
17 events, and I said we are still on the area of gathering
18 information. There are a lot of situations that have
19 been raised.

20 I don't know, but we have heard -- until I re-
21 read some of the testimony that we have heard, offers of
22 solutions or concrete approaches that need to be made.
23 I'll be interested to read the testimony -- I mean the
24 presentations, not testimony.

25 I emphasize again, we are not in any sense a

1 judicial body. We are simply gathering information. Do
2 you have any concrete solutions? I'll let that be our
3 last question and then we will move on, other than
4 money?

5 MR. RICHMAN: I wish I did. It's I think a
6 problem I think the solution is to address the problem
7 that we have, and to get more and more people involved
8 in it, particularly parents, teachers and the students
9 themselves, and you know, what the best avenue for that
10 is, I don't know. I am hoping that you all will find
11 some answers to that and let us know. Thank you.

12 MR. PATTERSON: Thank you. Is Dr. Burton
13 Elliott here?

14 DR. ELLIOTT: Yes.

15 MR. PATTERSON: Are you prepared, Dr.
16 Elliott: Dr. Elliott is our next presenter. He is I
17 understand the Director of the State Department of
18 Education. Is that correct?

19 DR. BURTON ELLIOTT: Yes sir.

20 MR. PATTERSON: Welcome.

21 MR. ELLIOTT: I am the Director of the State
22 Department of General Education. We have a Vocational
23 Educational Division, also, and so I am the Director of
24 General Education Department.

25 Mr. Chairman and members of the commission, it

1 is a privilege for me to be here this morning. I would
2 like to discuss very briefly some of the things that we
3 consider to be very important issues, civil rights
4 issues, equity issues that we deal with on practically a
5 daily basis at the State Department of Education.

6 We do have an affirmative action plan that we
7 follow very closely in the State Department of
8 Education. According to the 1980 federal census, I
9 believe the minority population in Arkansas was 17.3
10 percent.

11 Our work force in the General Education
12 Department, we have 333 employees. Of that number, 30
13 percent of them are minorities, 66.4 percent are female,
14 and of course the 33.6 are male. I think you can see,
15 we have paid attention to the affirmative action plan,
16 and have tried to abide not only with the letter of our
17 plan that is adopted by the State Board of Education,
18 but also with the spirit of it.

19 We firmly support equal employment
20 opportunities for all applicants that apply to us. We
21 have incorporated the policies and procedures to ensure
22 that we do have non-discriminatory actions within our
23 department. We have an attorney on our staff that is
24 very much aware and concerned with equity issues and we
25 often seek advice from her.

1 One of the big issues that issues that is
2 coming down the line, not just in Arkansas, but all over
3 the nation, and that is our inability to hire minority
4 teachers. As all of us realize, kids need role models.

5 ~~We need role models from all races, all religions, all~~
6 segments of our society.

7 Right now we have more minority kids going to
8 college and graduating from school than we have ever had
9 and yet we have fewer people who are going into
10 education, who are going to be teachers. And the
11 problem with this and I don't blame the youngsters, is
12 that they are getting better offers.

13 It is more -- it is financially more
14 rewarding for them to go into business, to the other
15 professions than it is for teaching. And so, there is a
16 greater demand for black college graduates in fields
17 other than teaching.

18 And I know before you asked if we have a
19 solution. Let me tell you what we are trying to do.
20 Ron McDavis, Dean Ron McDavis -- I'm sorry, it is Rod
21 McDavis at the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville.
22 Dean McDavis is a black person. He was hired from the
23 University of Florida. He has been on the job about six
24 months. He has been working with the affirmative action
25 programs and minority recruiting for a number of years.

1 He has written a lot of articles. He has
2 spoken all over the United States, and I consider him to
3 be an expert. We have worked up a partnership between
4 Dean McDavis and the State Department of Education,
5 trying to devise ways to recruit minorities in
6 teaching.

7 We have a bias. We are worried about minority
8 teachers. We want a larger percentage of minorities
9 going to college but we would like for more of them to
10 go into teaching. This coming November, we have set up
11 a two-day conference in Little Rock. This will be a
12 first and it is still kind of in the preliminary stages.

13 We are going to actively recruit minority
14 youngsters who are juniors and seniors in high school to
15 come to this conference. At this conference, we are
16 going to have outstanding minority leaders in the State
17 of Arkansas to speak to these youngsters to promote them
18 going to college.

19 We will have the financial aid people at this
20 meeting to explain all of the sources of financial aids
21 and grants that we can get for young people, especially
22 minorities going on to college.

23 We plan to have all the colleges and
24 universities represented at this meeting, and we're not
25 going to just send out a notice to Helena High School,

1 and say "Okay, this is a meeting and we would like for
2 some of your people to come."

3 We are going to promote their counselor, their
4 teachers and their principals to actively recruit those
5 youngsters, those minority youngsters who are potential
6 college students and try to entice them to come.

7 In other words, we're going to try to recruit
8 them. We not just going to send an invitation. This
9 program we feel like is going to cost \$40,000.00.
10 Incidentally, if you've got any money, I am in the
11 process of trying to raise \$40,000.00 for this
12 conference. So, if you know of any money, I would be
13 happy to talk with you.

14 We feel like there is -- like the kids are
15 there, that we need to actively recruit them and try to
16 get them into teaching, but if they don't want to go
17 into teaching, that's fine. We still want them to come
18 to this convention, and if they want to be an engineer,
19 a doctor, a lawyer or whatever, we still want to promote
20 them going on to college.

21 One of the things that Dean McDavis both agree
22 on that, when the kids enter college as freshmen,
23 especially minority kids, there needs to be a support
24 mechanism for those youngsters. Too many times most of
25 you who went to college -- my kids went to college not

1 too many years ago, in a big school you become a number
2 and a name and you enroll and that's the last time you
3 talk to anyone except your professors, and sometimes
4 there may be 150 kids or people in the class.

5 We feel like that there should be a person who
6 is an advocate for ten or twelve or fifteen freshmen
7 students, especially minority students that they can go
8 and talk to, that they can go and say "Look, I am
9 discouraged. I bombed out on a test. I am out of
10 money," or whatever. And be able to go and talk to
11 someone at that college to get advice, to be a
12 substitute mother or father, if you please.

13 And this is another thing that we are going to
14 be working on at this meeting in November. We have
15 other things that are in the plans, but this is
16 basically the overall picture of what we're trying to
17 do.

18 We have -- in the last session of the
19 legislature, we got a bill passed that would give --
20 set up a grant program for minority students to go to
21 college. It passed, no problem whatsoever. I believe
22 David Matthews handled it in the House. The only
23 problem is, it wasn't funded. We don't have any money,
24 and this is going to be a -- McDavis and I, it's a high
25 priority issue for us in the '91 session of the

1 legislature, that we're going to try to get this act
2 funded.

3 And I know you all are looking for help. We
4 are looking for help. We need some help on getting
5 things such as this funded, so that youngsters can go to
6 school and there is some financial help other than just
7 the routine grants that are made for college students.

8 We have a choice plan that some of you may
9 have heard, a new state law that permits students to go
10 to school in places other than their resident school
11 district. There is an assurance, there is a protection
12 that this will not promote segregated schools again.

13 There is a protection in there that you cannot
14 transfer from a school that has more of your race in it,
15 and it will upset the balance if you -- let's say it
16 was a 50-50 school, and you are transferring to one that
17 has 10 percent minority and 90 percent white, you cannot
18 transfer under those conditions.

19 If you were -- well, there is a protection in
20 the law and I didn't bring a copy with me, but we would
21 be happy to try to answer any questions on that.

22 MR. PATTERSON: Would you allow a question at
23 that point?

24 MR. ELLIOTT: Yes sir.

25 MR. PATTERSON: All schools don't have to

1 participate in that transfer --

2 MR. ELLIOTT: That is correct. The law says
3 unless you pass a resolution that you do not
4 participate, that you will participate. It is a kind of
5 ~~permissive -- no, it is required unless you opt out of~~
6 it. We had 120 school districts out of 329 have chosen
7 to participate in the Choice plan. And we are very
8 optimistic that it is going to spread and we're going to
9 spread and we're going to get more and more people
10 participating in Choice.

11 And we think this is a good idea. We feel
12 like that there are -- this is for the benefit of the
13 student as well as giving parents some options. It is
14 very popular with everybody except the educational folk,
15 to be honest with you.

16 DR. WHITE: Dr. Elliott, do you see any
17 potential negative impacts of the Choice Plan, even
18 though there are supposed to be the safeguards of the
19 law, on schools in the Delta particularly those
20 districts that have disproportionately high percentages
21 of minority students?

22 DR. ELLIOTT: My response to that, and again,
23 Dr. White, I don't think it would be detrimental, if we
24 permitted a school to re-segregate.

25 DR. WHITE: I guess my guess then, maybe

1 stated another way is, what kind of monitoring will be
2 going on from the State Department of Education, to
3 ensure that maybe inadvertently superintendents allow
4 white students to exit or enter their districts from
5 ~~minority black --~~

6 DR. ELLIOTT: I can assure you that we will be
7 monitoring it very closely. If you will remember, and I
8 know we send you a lot of mail, within the last month,
9 we have sent you a list of every school in the State of
10 Arkansas, the percentage of black, white and we look at
11 each individual case, and say "Yes, you can transfer.
12 No, you can't."

13 As you know, there is another law that says if
14 a superintendent knowingly permits a student to transfer
15 illegally, they can fine the school district \$750.00 and
16 take your state aid, or something of this sort.

17 So, there are some legal ramifications if you
18 do this intentionally. Every now and then, everyone
19 makes a mistake. As Beverly can you, if you have a road
20 going down between two school districts, and you're not
21 exactly sure whether the road makes a bend -- you know,
22 if you live on this side of the road is it my school
23 district, and on the other side is it someone else's.

24 Occasionally people make mistakes such as
25 that. We have no intentions of letting this happen, and

1 I can assure you that if it does happen, it will be a
2 very, very isolated case because we are going to monitor
3 it very closely.

4 I have with me today, and it just so happened
5 that Horace Smith, who works for our Equity Assistance
6 Center, was in Helena, he is in town, and he knows much
7 more about some of the programs in multi-cultural
8 education that we're working on and some thing such as
9 this, and I would like to let Horace take five minutes
10 or so and talk to you just a few minutes if you would,
11 and then both of us will answer questions, if you like.

12 We also have John Hatcher who is our Deputy
13 Director --

14 MS. POINDEXTER: May I ask one before Dr.
15 Elliott goes?

16 DR. WHITE: I would, too.

17 DR. ELLIOTT: I thought you might want to let
18 Horace make a little presentation and then I would be
19 available --

20 MR. PATTERSON: I did mean -- I started
21 this. I didn't mean to start the questioning really, in
22 the middle of your presentation.

23 DR. ELLIOTT: I don't mind answering
24 questions.

25 MS. POINDEXTER: There are Future Teachers of

1 America groups in the high schools, that have survived
2 in spite of a lot of obstacles. One of them I know is
3 in Marvel, Arkansas if I am not mistaken. Do you plan
4 on working with Future Teachers of America in helping
5 to establish this program that you're referring to?

6 DR. ELLIOTT: I'll be honest with you. We have
7 not even thought of that, but that is certainly a good
8 vehicle to use. I know -- I worked in a public school
9 for 34 years, so -- and I have been the sponsor of
10 future teacher groups, and all these things.

11 Anything that we can do, any vehicle that we
12 can use to get the youngsters to recruit them to go to
13 college, and specifically to get them to go into
14 teaching. That's what we're going to be doing. FIA is
15 a good vehicle to use.

16 MS. POINDEXTER: Well, they have a summer
17 conference. What I am saying to you is, you said you
18 needed money. Is there the possibility of you two
19 getting together, you, Don Murphy getting together and
20 perhaps pooling that conference so that it would be
21 meaningful for both and then getting the money:

22 DR. ELLIOTT: It might be, but I'll be very
23 honest with you, Rod McDavis -- we do not want to do
24 anything that is going to hinder or interrupt his plan,
25 because I feel like he is the most knowledgeable person

1 in the state to do this recruiting. I honestly do,
2 because he has worked at this down in Gainesville,
3 Florida for a number of years before he came up here,
4 and I don't want to inhibit our plans or the plans that
5 he has right at the present time.

6 Now, we would love to work with the FIA. No
7 problem at all. But I think that we need --

8 MS. POINDEXER: I am talking about expanding,
9 but that would be a base of beginning. That was my
10 concern.

11 DR. ELLIOTT: But it is obvious what we have
12 been doing in the past has not worked very well. We
13 need to take a new, fresh approach, and if we can
14 involve other people, that would be great.

15 DR. WHITE: My question is really germane
16 prior to Mr. Smith's coming before Dr. Elliott. In the
17 educational circles that I am a part of, there seems to
18 be the perception that with the perceived political
19 pressures and changes in administration, that there
20 might be a relaxing of the state standards as well as
21 the equity guidelines, as it relates to responding to
22 the needs of poor students, period, and African-American
23 students particularly and I would like for you to
24 respond to that in terms of the commitment from the top,
25 for making a difference for poor and African-American

1 children in this state.

2 DR. ELLIOTT: Okay. I was asked by Governor
3 Clinton and also the State Department of Education --
4 the first question I was asked before I was hired for
5 this job. "Are you willing to rigorously enforce the
6 standards," and my response to them was "Absolutely,"
7 because I had supported the standards since '83, and
8 worked with the development of them and with
9 implementation of the local school system.

10 I see absolutely no threat whatsoever of the
11 standards being relaxed. Under the present situation --
12 but see, the state board is a continuing body.
13 Governors change, representatives change, senators
14 change.

15 I do not think that the people of Arkansas
16 would tolerate us weakening the standards. I know those
17 of us in education, I don't feel would. Most of the
18 leadership that I know about in education.

19 MR. PATTERSON: We have a break coming in ten
20 minutes, so if we are going to hear Mr. Smith --

21 MR. ELLIOTT: All right. Thank you.

22 -----

23
24
25 MR. HORACE SMITH

1
2 MR. SMITH: I can be very short. My name is
3 Horace Smith. I am a Program Advisor at the State
4 Department of Education, specifically in the Equity
5 Assistance Center.

6 And just two areas that I would like to cover -
7 - well, three areas. One, what the equity assistance
8 center is and what it does. Secondly, the equity
9 guidelines that you have heard mentioned and then
10 thirdly, some of the other programs that the Equity
11 Assistance Center and the Department of Education are
12 carrying in right now in the area of multi-cultural
13 education and equity.

14 The Equity Assistance Center was established
15 in 1985 by an act, Act 231 of the state legislature, and
16 it was specifically given the responsibility of
17 providing technical assistance to districts all of the
18 state in response to their responsibilities or
19 obligations under the civil rights laws, primarily three
20 of those laws, title VI being Race, Desegregation and
21 Protection of Rights under Race and National Origin,
22 title IX, Sex, and Section 504, Handicapped.

23 And so, those are the three primary areas
24 where we provide technical assistance for districts.
25 The center provides services in several ways. One is to

1 provide information to districts as to what their
2 obligations are under the federal civil rights laws, and
3 any other state acts which would apply under those laws,
4 too.

5 ~~The second part of that is to actually provide~~
6 technical assistance in meeting those obligations. Some
7 of the ways in which we do that would be direct work
8 shops which we carry on throughout the year for both
9 administrators as well as teachers, building level as
10 well as district-wide basis, as well as the boards of
11 education.

12 And second part of that would be provision of
13 resources which would assist in that procedure, too.
14 The educational equity guidelines that you heard
15 mentioned several times, came about as a result of
16 trying to meet this idea of technical assistance for the
17 districts. There is one of the standards, standard 15
18 which assures equal educational opportunity on the basis
19 of race, sex, national origin and handicap.

20 As a result in trying to measure what that
21 meant, there was a large gap, and so as a result, there
22 was a task force established to look into that and to
23 establish some guidelines.

24 As Dr. White mentioned earlier, those
25 guidelines went through several forms before a final

1 form came out, which in that form -- and Dr. Elliott
2 brought several copies, and the bright yellow copy of
3 the Education Equity Guidelines that you see before
4 you.

5 ~~And what you will notice, is those guidelines~~
6 take the form of goals for districts in several
7 different areas. They took a broad look at what an
8 equitable school should look like in all areas, and I
9 think there tend to be sixteen different areas that we
10 look at in the school, and there are goals established.

11 That narrows it down a little bit but then the
12 Equity Assistance Center has the responsibility and we
13 are doing that in a series of workshops, the next series
14 which will be held in late April around the state, six
15 workshops, to help equity coordinators, and each
16 district as required by law to have an equity
17 coordinator, to define what this actually means.

18 There are several key questions which are
19 asked and we have produced a check list for equity in
20 each one of those areas, and we have taken those goals
21 and based on the feedback we have received from
22 districts as well as looking at just that area, what are
23 some of the key questions we can think of that would
24 narrow down the parameters.

25 If I were to use an example, discipline,

1 suspension and expulsion, and this is one that is very
2 key in regards to racial issues. What are some of the
3 questions that a District Equity Committee in each
4 district is in the process of organizing an equity
5 ~~committee to take a look at those areas, what can we do~~
6 in our self-study? What are the questions that we ask
7 regarding race, sex, national origin, handicap, as well
8 as, when we're encouraging district even though they are
9 not a legally protected group, the disadvantaged,
10 economically disadvantaged student.

11 And what we are finding is, that even though
12 you may find that there is a disproportion and that
13 there is a common characteristic, and that being
14 disadvantage, those kinds of areas can be compounded
15 once you add race and sex in on it.

16 And I speak particularly in the area of
17 discipline, the black male. So it might be a
18 disadvantaged student that may be disciplined more
19 heavily, but the fact remains, that if you add race and
20 sex into it, it only compounds the issue.

21 So, we are encouraging districts to take a
22 very close look at those areas, and that this study be a
23 data-driven study. And that it be longitudinal in
24 nature so that they can come out with some results, but
25 not leaving it only that we have identified a problem.

1 But in the process of their planning, their six year
2 plan as well as the annual school improvement plans,
3 that they incorporate certain strategies to alleviate
4 those situations.

5 ~~When the instructional supervisors take a look~~
6 at or monitor the standards, this will be part of the
7 criteria that they use for judging whether districts
8 have met Standard 15. And so it gives some more
9 definition to what was originally a vague statement.
10 And so the guidelines have served that purpose.

11 The second aspect of it being the multi-
12 cultural education, another term that has been mentioned
13 through the Equity Assistance Center and the department
14 as a whole, we are encouraging school districts to take
15 a look at curriculum as well as approach, and that it be
16 multi-cultural in nature.

17 And so rather than seeing only multi-cultural
18 education as being content-driven, we are also asking
19 teachers and districts to take a look at multi-cultural
20 education as being the way we approach education and
21 what we believe about education.

22 The whole issue of expectations in the
23 classroom, diverse strategies being used in the
24 classroom to meet the needs of various cultures rather
25 than simply one in the classroom, as well as pluralistic

1 content, and so we are taking a very wholistic look at
2 the school.

3 One of the ways that we have said --
4 explained equity to school is, that if we took race,
5 ~~sex, handicap, disadvantage~~ out of the whole equity of
6 equity, we would just be talking about an effective
7 school for children, period. And so that's one of the
8 ways that we are using to define what we mean by
9 "equity" is looking at it this way.

10 As far as what the department is involved in,
11 the Equity Assistance Center is providing workshops in
12 Human Relation skills, as well as an overview of multi-
13 cultural curriculum and approach in the classroom
14 throughout the state.

15 In the instructional section as the cycle
16 comes around for the revision of instructional guides,
17 particularly history this past year, one thing that will
18 be noted is that there has been the inclusion of more
19 multi-cultural information in the history guides.

20 In the language arts area, there have been
21 workshops that deal with methodology which is more
22 culturally sensitive in teaching of language arts.
23 Strategy such as student team learning, and also
24 workshops such as TESA, which is Teacher Expectation
25 Student Achievement, deals with some of the significant

1 areas that we find that there are weaknesses in the
2 classroom in a nutshell.

3 MR. GITELMAN: I have a question before you
4 leave, Mr. Smith. As I recall, it was also in 1985 that

5 ~~for the first time the Arkansas Legislature passed a~~
6 statute requiring Arkansas School Districts to report to
7 the Department of Education about dropouts and
8 discipline, suspensions, expulsions, and with reasons
9 stated.

10 In other words, that was the first time we had
11 statistics available in this state to see which school
12 districts were pushing out students and what the rate of
13 drop out was. I was wondering whether your office or
14 someone like you is not just collecting those
15 statistics, but looking at the equity problem by
16 identifying school districts that seem to have a higher
17 rate of drop outs than could be expected, and taking
18 some initiative, maybe not enforcement initiative, but
19 some initiative to single out those school districts for
20 your special attention?

21 MR. SMITH: I don't know about the term
22 "singling out," but I know that any time that there has
23 been identification of a problem, one of the areas -- I
24 think we have done an extensive amount of traveling this
25 year for example, in trying to make actual first-hand

1 contact with school districts and pointing out that in
2 the course of their self-study, if they run across areas
3 of this type and these problems exist, that we are
4 presenting ourselves not as an enforcement arm or a
5 ~~regulatory arm, but to say that we have the resources at~~
6 our disposal within our office or the department as a
7 whole, to alleviate some of these situations for you.

8 So I think that in answer to your question, we
9 are serving the purpose of technical assistance and I
10 think that we are being asserted in that effort.

11 MR. LEVY: A little different angle, and I
12 don't know if you're the right one to ask or Dr. Elliott
13 or really anybody who has spoken this morning with
14 regard to the whole concept of education. These
15 programs, these equity programs, all of these things
16 sound so fantastic. What can we do, what can you do,
17 what can we do to try to put over to our state
18 legislators that education in this state is important?

19 There seems to be a terrible bias made by
20 because many of the legislators themselves are not
21 educated, and I know I have read facts about the
22 education level of our legislators. But if we don't get
23 the legislature behind us in all of this, most of the
24 funding of this is going to be for naught.

25 What are some of the solutions between now and

1 the time the legislature reconvenes I guess, which will
2 be next January, to do -- to promote what we're doing
3 and tell them it is important for our state?

4 MR. SMITH: I have one short answer for that.
5 I think ~~there is some pragmatic things that we can do.~~
6 We try from two angles. One is that we talk about the
7 fact that we should be interested in equity for all
8 children in Arkansas, simply because it is right.

9 If the moral aspect of it doesn't work, then
10 we talk about some of the pragmatic aspects of it. We
11 cannot afford for any children to fail in the system any
12 more. It might not be to your immediate advantage as
13 you see it right now, for all children whether they be
14 minority or majority to achieve, but the fact of the
15 matter is, that your economic welfare, your social
16 welfare is going to be greatly dependent on it.

17 If they are talking about any issues such as
18 prison, then can't talk about prison without talking
19 about education. Which is more cost-effective, to
20 educate someone or to build more prisons. And so we
21 take it from both a moral issue as well as, in some
22 cases, people will believe it as a pragmatic.

23 And so in that sense, I think that even if
24 people have an antipathy toward certain groups, whether
25 they be poor or minority in the state, I think they have

1 to see it as being a very practical thing for them to do
2 to invest in education.

3 MR. PATTERSON: Dr. Elliott, do you have a
4 closing comment?

5 ~~DR. ELLIOTT: I would like to just respond~~
6 just very briefly to that. I think that is a very, very
7 true problem. I was in a meeting not only at the state
8 level but also at the national level. I was in a
9 meeting at the U.S. Department of Education Monday, and
10 we mentioned money and they said "Well, you know,
11 everybody wants more money."

12 I was in a meeting last night, Maylan Martin.
13 Many of you know Maylan. He is one of the -- I think
14 the real pragmatic people in this state, as far as I am
15 concerned. He is head of the Rockefeller Foundation
16 right now, and a person in the audience said that he was
17 saying "We've got to have more money in Arkansas in
18 order to improve education."

19 And this person said "Well, that's all we
20 hear. You want us to through more money at it and we
21 raised teacher's salaries, that's not going to help
22 education in Arkansas." Said "We're just pouring good
23 money after bad," and Maylan's response was that "Look,
24 we have never even tried to put an adequate amount, a
25 very minimal amount in Arkansas to run a first-class

1 operation as far as education is concerned."

2 We're not talking about an excessive amount of
3 money in education in Arkansas. We're talking about a
4 very minimal adequate amount to improve and do some
5 ~~programs like we're talking about.~~

6 I think we have made tremendous gains in the
7 last five or six years. I have been involved in
8 lobbying for more money for education the last five
9 years. I am talking about eyeball-to-eyeball, working
10 in the legislative session and we have this misnomer
11 that you know, \$18,000.00 is enough money to pay a
12 teacher.

13 Right now, we are spending \$14.92 per child
14 per day to operate schools in Arkansas. I defy any of
15 you to hire a babysitter for \$14.92 per day. We are
16 providing a good instruction program. We are providing
17 facilities. We are providing transportation and often
18 times we are providing a meal for this.

19 And to me, I can't argue with someone that
20 says "We don't need more money than this." I appreciate
21 your letting us be with you.

22 MR. MULDROW: I want to ask the same question
23 I asked of a previous speaker. Problems of education
24 seem so basic, I mean, their solutions seem so basic to
25 dealing with problems of economic and other kinds of

1 development in the Delta region that we are specifically
2 concerned with.

3 I am hoping, are you aware of how the lower
4 Mississippi Delta commission is approaching this

5 ~~problem? Are they placing that kind of importance on~~

6 it? Are there going to be some recommendations coming
7 out of that that will undergird some of the efforts that
8 you are making to deal with that problem?

9 MR. ELLIOLF: I sincerely hope that they do,
10 because I can't -- I couldn't improve upon what Horace
11 said a while ago. Forget about it if you're not
12 interested in an individual youngster. If you don't have
13 any -- forget about that. It is a societal problem and
14 looking at it from strictly an economic standpoint, we
15 absolutely cannot afford not to educate our populous.
16 We cannot afford to do it.

17 And we are going to have to get some early
18 childhood education programs going. People tell us they
19 have done research on this, that society will get six
20 dollars back for every dollar you spend on early
21 childhood education, because you can alleviate some drop
22 outs. You can alleviate many of the social problems
23 that people have.

24 MR. MULDRON: Have you been approached by that
25 lower Mississippi Delta Commission to --

1 MR. ELLIOTT: I have read about them in the
2 paper. I was scheduled to speak over here or attend the
3 meeting four or five months ago and something happened
4 and I didn't get -- I am not familiar with it, except
5 that I know the things I have read in the paper about
6 it. I think they are doing good work from what I
7 hear. It is -- they are concerned about the poor and
8 the improvement of just living conditions for everybody,
9 which includes education and job opportunities and other
10 things. I may be wrong, but that's my impression.

11 MR. MULDRUP: The fact that they have not
12 approached you -- you have not had the opportunity to
13 share with them some of these underlying benefits that
14 come from the improvement of the educational system
15 makes me a little concerned.

16 MR. ELLIOTT: Well now, they have invited me
17 to a meeting. I know that. And the one meeting that I
18 was going to attend, it was at my own -- I think the
19 governor set up an other meeting and I happen to work
20 for the governor, and when he says we have a meeting
21 here, that's the one I go to.

22 But I certainly would be glad to share
23 anything that I have that would help the Delta region.

24 MR. PATTERSON: I think we should probably
25 entertain one more question if there is one? If not.

1 then Dr. Elliott, Mr. Smith, thank you very much for
2 your time and your preparation.

3 We will adjourn until 1:30.
4

5 (R E C E S S)

6
7 -----
8
9 (time noted-1:30 p.m.)
10

11 MR. PATTERSON: Although our entire group is
12 not back, I think in the interest of meeting our time
13 schedules, we ought to go on and reconvene. At this
14 time, I would like to invite a fellow Jonesborian, Dr.
15 Robert Hoskins, to make his presentation. Dr. Hoskins
16 is Vice-President for Academic Affairs at Arkansas State
17 University in Jonesboro, which is a member of East
18 Arkansas Higher Education Economic Development
19 Consortium, is that correct?

20 DR. ROBERT HOSKINS: Yes sir.

21 MR. PATTERSON: Welcome.

22 DR. HOSKINS:
23

24 DR. ROBERT HOSKINS
25

1 It is a privilege and a pleasure to
2 participate in this community forum, as Vice-President
3 for Academic Affairs at Arkansas State University, my
4 remarks will relate especially to race relations in
5 higher education.

6 But having served ASU for fewer than five
7 months as vice-president, my statement will draw on my
8 16 years of experience as Dean of the College of
9 Communications at Arkansas State University.

10 While Dean of Communications, I watched a few
11 hundred young journalists and broadcasters and printers
12 graduate from ASU. Generally, the white students who
13 wanted a job in the media, those who were honor
14 graduates as well as those who just scraped by with a C
15 average, usually found employment.

16 Normally, they didn't begin in Memphis or
17 Little Rock or St. Louis or Dallas, although some did.
18 More likely, they began in Irumann or West Helena or
19 Salem or Stuttgart. But they found jobs in the field
20 for which they had prepared.

21 Also, black students who were exceptional and
22 we have had several over the years found jobs in the
23 media. They went to the Associated Press, or USA Today
24 or major market television stations, but also to Pine
25 Bluff and Jonesboro and Little Rock. But over the

1 years. I have seen too many average black graduates,
2 and after all by definition, most of us are average.
3 fail in their efforts to find that beginning job in the
4 media.

5 ~~Too often I have seen them end up clerking in~~
6 Wal-Mart, serving as a secretary in an insurance office,
7 dishing up the french fries at the local fast food.
8 Now, let me quickly note that clerking in Wal-Mart or
9 serving as a secretary in an insurance agency or even
10 working at a fast food, are all honorable jobs, but
11 those are not the jobs for which these young men and
12 women prepared, and they are not by and large the jobs
13 that their white classmates secured.

14 My observations relate to mass media jobs, but
15 I suspect the experience of young black graduates from
16 other programs would be very similar. Too many
17 university educated black men and women, find that a
18 bachelor's degree does not necessarily open the doors of
19 employment opportunity.

20 I believe this problem has two parts, at least
21 two parts. The first part I think is racial. In the
22 Arkansas Delta, throughout the south and in the great
23 cities of the north and in the small communities of the
24 mid-west, racism is still a dark stain across our land.

25 I would agree that conditions have improved

1 for many blacks. Yes, more and more black university
2 graduates do secure good jobs. But far too many do not
3 because of the lingering racist attitudes of our
4 society.

5 ~~The second part is economic. Where in the~~
6 Delta of Arkansas can university educated blacks or
7 whites, for that matter, find the good jobs on which to
8 build productive careers? Too often, only those
9 graduates in mass communications or business or science
10 who would leave Arkansas, can find the good jobs in the
11 fields for which they have prepared.

12 That's a human tragedy and it is a tragedy for
13 our state. At least one of the answers, one of the best
14 answers in fact to that tragedy, even when we recognize
15 that a college degree will not automatically open the
16 doors of opportunity, must continue to be higher
17 education.

18 In the fall of 1989, 926 black students were
19 enrolled at ASU. That was 10.1 percent of the
20 university's total enrollment. The 42 Arkansas counties
21 in the lower Mississippi Delta accounted for 73.4
22 percent of the black students at ASU. We don't keep
23 statistics by counties for states other than Arkansas,
24 but considering the number of students we have for
25 Mississippi and Missouri and Tennessee, I would estimate

1 that about 85 percent of all black students at ASU are
2 from the lower Mississippi Delta.

3 In the five year period from 1984 to 1989,
4 black enrollment at Arkansas State University increased
5 by 6.6 percent. That was not quite as impressive as the
6 university's over all growth, which was about 8.5
7 percent, but it was much better than national figures,
8 which I believe show an overall decrease in black
9 enrollment in higher education for that period.

10 In that five year period, enrollment of first
11 time entering black freshmen, increased at an average
12 rate of 6.3 percent per year. In that same period,
13 while overall graduate student enrollment at ASU slipped
14 by 5.3 percent, black enrollment in our graduate school
15 held steady.

16 And I might add that that positive situation
17 in the graduate school did not just happen. Very
18 special efforts were made to bring blacks into the
19 graduate classroom and I would be glad to speak to that
20 later if you like.

21 All in all, we believe we have done a
22 relatively good job at Arkansas State, given the
23 financial resources with which we have to work, in
24 attracting black students. Last year our admissions
25 counselor spoke to over 400 minority students in

1 Arkansas, Missouri, Tennessee and Mississippi schools.
2 Additionally, they had contact with numerous others
3 through about 80 college night events on various school
4 campuses. We also have been relatively successful in
5 ~~retaining black students, through our program of~~
6 academic skills and services. We call it the "Pass
7 Program."

8 We provide several developmental courses along
9 with tutoring and counseling services for all students
10 who need help and encouragement to adjust to the
11 academic and social demands of the university.

12 Additionally, we offer a special mentoring
13 program for new black freshmen. The result is, that
14 black students are graduating from ASU in about the same
15 ratio as white students. I don't have figures on this
16 for the university.

17 When I was Dean of Communications, we did
18 develop figures on it, and they were very, very simple.
19 So I can offer data to underscore the generally
20 successful job we believe we are doing at ASU in
21 recruiting, retaining and graduating black students.
22 But I would not suggest that we're going as good as we
23 should do.

24 There always is room for improvement. One
25 problem that we have not solved is that of recruiting

1 black faculty. We have ten black faculty members, and
2 five black administrators at Arkansas State. That is
3 not satisfactory. We desperately need leader diversity
4 in our classroom.

5 ~~To meet this need, we have attempted to~~
6 attract and help develop our own Delta people. Let me
7 underscore that effort with a few names. Dr. Mossey
8 Richmond, Vice-President of Student Affairs from Wynne.
9 Dr. Calvin Smith, Assistant Dean of the College of Arts
10 and Sciences, from Marianna.

11 Dr. Georgia Hale, Assistant Professor of
12 Administrative Services, from Irumann. Dr. Wilbert
13 Gaines, Assistant Professor of Health and Physical
14 Education from West Helena. Dr. J.W. Mason, Assistant
15 Vice-President for Administration from Osceola.

16 Dr. Herman Strickland, Director of Student
17 Teaching from Blytheville. Dr. Jane Gates, Assistant
18 Professor of Political Science from Jonesboro. These
19 and other black faculty at ASU have worked very hard to
20 succeed in their chosen fields. They would have made it
21 with or without ASU, but notice the common thread.

22 All are from Delta counties. While they would
23 have made it without ASU, ASU will not make it in terms
24 of fulfilling its commitment to diversity in the
25 classroom and its offices, without them. Without the

1 human resources of this rich Delta.

2 I might note here that one strategy of
3 development of our human resources is the dependent upon
4 the state's commitment to provide the people of this
5 region with access to programs of higher education. How
6 many more black professors and administrators would be
7 available to Arkansas if they had to go no further than
8 ASU for their Doctorate in Education, or in Biology or
9 in Music.

10 We acknowledge that we must do more to
11 respond to this and other problems, but generally we
12 think the statistics show we are making some progress.
13 ASU and other institutions of higher education, also are
14 dealing with the economic side of the problem, through
15 its involvement in the lower Mississippi Delta
16 Development Commission.

17 In the east Arkansas Higher Education
18 Development Consortium. In its high value support
19 projects -- products project in agribusiness, in its
20 center for economic development and in its consistent
21 efforts to promote the growth and development of
22 Arkansas, ASU is working to create new job opportunities
23 for black and white alike.

24 We would ask that all levels of government,
25 local, state and national join us in support of those

1 efforts. I would be happy to address any questions you
2 have.

3 MS. POINDEXTER: Dr. Hoskins, my name is Linda
4 Poindexter. How are you? In our studies of higher
5 education as it impacts on minority involvement in the
6 professorial range, we have found that many minorities
7 come in with the same amount of experience and
8 education, and yet are assigned to assistant
9 professorships, as opposed to professorships.

10 And that the road to attaining the
11 professorship is very, very hard and very, very long.
12 Have you found that to be true at ASU, what can we do to
13 make sure that that is not true at ASU. I notice that
14 you did have diversity there, but that a lot of
15 individuals were assistant professors.

16 Do you see that as a problem, and if so, what
17 is ASU doing to address that perceived disparity?

18 DR. ROBERTI HOSKINS: Well, you are correct
19 both black and white alike at Arkansas State normally
20 come in as Assistant Professors.

21 MS. POINDEXTER: Well, they say women and
22 minorities stay there longer. I am just wondering if
23 that is the case?

24 DR. HOSKINS: I don't think we do that
25 necessarily by choice. I was Dean for sixteen years,

1 and I never hired a professor. I didn't do that because
2 I had anything against professors. I never had the
3 resources that were required to employ somebody at that
4 high level of rank.

5 ~~Even when some Deans have resources to do~~
6 that, they are so strapped that usually they look at
7 that and say rather than spend \$54,000.00 on one person,
8 I can take that and I can probably hire two people at a
9 lower rank or one and a half or something like that.

10 It is very difficult, and it is set up to be
11 difficult for people to progress through the ranks to
12 the top rank. Of the people I just read off, one of
13 those people have just been promoted to associate. She
14 doesn't even know it yet. She has applied for it and
15 the process has worked its way up, and the board will
16 announce it to her later.

17 Two of those other people applied for
18 promotion and were turned down for promotion. They were
19 looked at in the same way as everyone else. They know
20 what is needed to be done. At least one of those I
21 think in a year or two will probably do it.

22 There were probably six or seven people turned
23 down for promotion this time at Arkansas State at
24 various levels, and about two of those were black. I
25 think -- I think one of the problems is that when you

1 have so few black faculty members, they miss the
2 mentoring advantages that their white colleagues have.

3 They don't have models that they can turn to
4 and say "What should I do to move on up the ladder."

5 ~~"What kinds of things should I be doing." At least it~~

6 is not as easy for them to identify mentors that will
7 help them and will sort of take them under their wing
8 and help them move along. And I think that presents an
9 area of solution when you recognize that.

10 You say if they don't have that, you know, are
11 there strategies that you could develop to help them
12 develop that in some way.

13 MS. POINDEXTER: Are those strategies being
14 worked on at ASU?

15 DR. HUSKINS: Frankly, probably more for women
16 than for minorities at this point. And some of the
17 minorities are women, and they are in that group. I
18 have not been in this job long but it does appear to me
19 that the women, black or white, seem to be more
20 aggressive in trying to develop these strategies than
21 the men.

22 Now, that may be a premature observation, but
23 the women -- two of the first people I had in my office
24 back in November when I took this job, one white woman
25 and one black woman, talking to me very earnestly about

1 what I was going to do for women on that campus, and how
2 I was going to make sure that they were given a fair
3 shake in promotion and particularly in salary increases
4 and so forth.

5 ~~I haven't had any black men in the office.~~

6 So, I think white or black, I think right now, women are
7 sort of stepping out and saying "If you're not going to
8 take care of us, we're going to take care of ourselves"
9 and maybe that's what it takes sometimes.

10 MR. PATTERSON: Dr. Hoskins, you made a very
11 telling point when you mentioned the number of graduates
12 that you might have in education if you were able to
13 offer a graduate program in education at ASU. How
14 feasible is that in the future, and what are the
15 obstacles that are preventing that happening now?

16 DR. HUSKINS: At Arkansas State, we are
17 basically committed to developing doctoral programs. It
18 is going to be difficult. It is going to be a long
19 road. We are not going to do it overnight. We are not
20 going to do it tomorrow.

21 We are conducting studies in two or three
22 areas right now that we think we may have a possibility
23 of offering doctorates in. We're going to find out that
24 we are at this level, and that to offer doctorates, you
25 have to be at this level.

1 And then we are going to have to program our
2 resources over the course of five or six or eight or ten
3 years, to move to that level where we need to do it.
4 Educationally, we're going to get there. Politically in
5 ~~the State of Arkansas, that's another question.~~

6 The State of Arkansas is basically committed
7 to the idea that there should be only one doctoral
8 granting institution in this state. More and more, I am
9 seeing that that philosophy, aside from Arkansas State,
10 and any special considerations or special interests we
11 have, I am seeing places where that philosophy is
12 hurting the state.

13 I think we'll get that door opened one of
14 these days, and we're going to have to be very judicious
15 about it. The State of Arkansas can't afford a lot of
16 very expensive upper level programs, particularly
17 programs that duplicate what are not only offered within
18 our state, but just across the river or just down the
19 road.

20 But it does seem to make an awful lot of sense
21 to me that when you provide access, when you put a
22 program -- we are right here in the living proof of it
23 with this community college. The people of Helena put
24 a community into this community, the number of students
25 that could go to college in this community increased

1 dramatically.

2 And we might have said before "Why put it
3 here. You can come to Arkansas State. It's only two
4 hours away." But when they put it here, it increased
5 dramatically. When you offer a doctoral program at
6 Arkansas State, you'll open up access to the people of
7 this Delta region for advanced education.

8 MR. PATTERSON: One follow up question. Is
9 that attitude peculiar to Arkansas or is that true in
10 most other states also where you have got more than one
11 significant university:

12 DR. HOSKINS: I know of no other state that
13 has that policy but that doesn't mean it doesn't exist.
14 I just can't think of any other state that has only one
15 doctoral granting institution in the state. What we are
16 short-changing ourselves on, aside from access, you look
17 at National Science Foundation funds and where they are
18 going. They are not going to Arkansas.

19 You look at National Institute of Health funds
20 and where they are going. They are not going to
21 Arkansas. You look at what the National Center for
22 Toxicology Research in Jefferson County is trying to do
23 with our state university in Arkansas, and how they are
24 trying to cooperate and the trouble they are having.
25 because basically we have only one small group of

1 research oriented scientists in the State of Arkansas.

2 And -- well, two small groups I guess, but -- at the
3 Med Center and then at Fayetteville.

4 there are having terrible time making that
5 program work. That's a world class institution that
6 most of us in Arkansas don't even know about, and we
7 can't take advantage of it because we don't have the
8 personnel at that level.

9 DR. WHITE: You mentioned the need for
10 students as well as professors to be nurtured and
11 mentored. Have you developed any unique kinds of
12 programs to do that nurturing and getting the role
13 models on campus for students through other kinds of
14 methods, other than people who are ranked as full
15 professors or professor status, regardless of what the
16 rank is?

17 I know that some of universities around the
18 country are beginning to use people in the field who may
19 not be employed by the university as adjunct professors,
20 teach some of the classes so that students do have that
21 experience with minority role models.

22 DR. HUSKINS: Most of the mentoring that we're
23 doing for students, and particularly for freshmen
24 students involve their student peers. When we bring
25 black freshmen on to campus, we try to pair them with
another black student who is already on campus, and that

1 first freshman year can be sort of a traumatic period
2 for a kid coming from a high school, particularly a
3 rural high school on to a campus.

4 So, we are trying to bring him together with
5 someone who can sort of show them the ropes and make
6 them feel at home and make them understand that any
7 problems that they are having, everybody else is having,
8 and that it is all not strange and new.

9 Our black faculty are tremendously overused I
10 think as role models or mentors or whatever you want to
11 call it, because more often than not, the black students
12 turn to them. Whatever their official capacity is, they
13 turn to them for counseling, for advice and most people
14 on the campus don't recognize that.

15 That's not recognized in the promotion
16 application. There is no place on there to show that
17 this person is up to 12:00 midnight over at his home
18 with three or four students counseling them, twice or
19 three times a week or something.

20 So, that is sort of a deficiency in the system
21 that some of us are beginning to recognize.

22 MR. WHITE: I want to comment about that, or
23 ask about that, because friends who are at the
24 university levels, particularly majority white
25 institutions have indicated that much of the time that

1 their colleagues spend with research and projects is not
2 available to them, because they are placed on
3 committees, because they are so few in numbers they need
4 that representation in everything, and they are there
5 and they do get into the advisement, and many times even
6 in compensation on jobs, that have to do with support
7 for students and I am wondering if your institution in
8 beginning to look at that, will begin to look at how
9 that might be factored in as a way of helping people
10 improve their status?

11 DR. HUSKINS: We have recognized that
12 problem. We haven't done a whole lot about it. We have
13 made a few small steps. For example, we are trying to
14 cut the number of committees that any one individual can
15 serve on, because you are exactly right. We have so few
16 black faculty members, we want minority representation
17 on all the main committees at least, so you reach out
18 over and over and over, you use this same person. It is
19 a problem for those people.

20 DR. WHITE: Throughout the State of Arkansas,
21 there has been an emphasis on improvement of
22 instruction, instructional methodology, et cetera, at
23 the secondary and elementary levels. What is happening
24 in higher education to improve the delivery of
25 instruction, regardless of the college?

1 DR. HOSKINS: I can only speak for Arkansas
2 State. First of all, we still give basic attention to
3 teaching. We are not a research institution. I don't
4 think we'll ever be a real research institution. We
5 don't put graduate assistants in classrooms by and
6 large.

7 We try to hire people who are teachers who are
8 interested in teaching. And we try to reward good
9 teaching. I don't think there are any particular unique
10 things that we are doing at this point as far as
11 teaching is concerned. I think if we could just get the
12 old traditional things working like we would like them,
13 we would be somewhat satisfied at this point.

14 MR. PATTERSON: Dr. Hoskins, thank you very
15 much. I hate to cut off questioning, but we're having
16 to keep a fairly tight schedule. I understand that
17 State Senator Paul Benham is here. We would call on you
18 at this time. Would you tell us, Senator, as you open
19 your comments, would you delineate District 30 for us,
20 please?

21
22 -----

23
24
25 SENATOR PAUL BENHAM

1
2 SENATOR BENHAM: District 30 is mighty hard to
3 delineate now days. I have tried my best to find out
4 exactly where it is. I found out the other day, I
5 thought I had all of Helena and all of West Helena, and
6 come to find out, I have all of the black, predominately
7 black wards in Helena and West Helena, and none of the
8 whites.

9 My district, District 30 that I had was
10 removed from me and given to Senator Clarence Bell, who
11 now represents the people all the way from Earle, all
12 the way down to Snow Lake, and all of Monroe County. My
13 district as designed by the Federal Court is northern
14 and eastern Phillips County, eastern Lee County, the
15 east part of St. Francis County, and a few few townships
16 in Crittenden County.

17 My previous district consisted of Lee County,
18 Phillips County and Monroe County, and was a
19 predominately black constituency. So, that is the best
20 I can describe my -- but I really can't figure it all
21 out right now.

22 I have my prepared remarks for you people, for
23 whatever they are worth. No one denies that in the
24 past, the rights of the black minority were ignored and
25 denied. And no one deplores this situation any more

1 than I.

2 I am happy and proud of the progress Arkansas
3 has made in the field of civil rights in the past ten to
4 twenty years. I followed my father before me in farming
5 and when we began to mechanize the operation, there was
6 no need for as much manual labor as we had used prior to
7 1950.

8 I had at the time, seven black tenant farmers
9 who resided on my land, and who are entitled to draw
10 social security. They were un-educated and kept
11 absolutely no records of any financial dealings they
12 might have had in the past year.

13 A black woman accountant offered to prepare
14 applications for social security benefits for them, and
15 the fee to be paid was the entire first check that they
16 drew. One of the tenants was well into his seventies,
17 and his first check would amount to \$2800.00.

18 Fortunately for my tenants, I had kept a
19 record for the past 30 years of every bale of cotton
20 they had raised and sold, as well as their checks for
21 the cotton season. I made these records available to my
22 accountant and he prepared the application for all of
23 these tenants at a cost of \$10.00 each, and each one
24 began to draw checks, varying from \$300.00 to \$475.00
25 per month, under the social security program.

1 I also left the houses in which they lived
2 intact, had them wired for electricity and told my
3 tenants they were free to live there, with one acre of
4 land for a garden spot at no cost to them for as long as
5 they desired.

6 The last one of them passed away two years
7 ago. We had worked together for many years and we had
8 prospered from our efforts. I felt duty-bound to
9 provide them with a home in their old age, and did so.

10 I do not however, believe that we can
11 legislate an improvement in race relations. We must
12 have legislation on the books that protects the rights
13 of both majorities and minorities. In the Delta, the
14 majority is the white race and the minority is the black
15 race. During the 1960's the civil rights laws that were
16 passed, certainly served a purpose toward this end, but
17 in my opinion they were not entirely fair to both
18 sides.

19 The laws forced the commingling of the races
20 many times when neither race was in favor of the
21 legislation. Perhaps the federal mandate for school
22 desegregation will eventually work itself out, and I
23 certainly hope to the best advantage of our nation.

24 I also sincerely hope that both races will
25 accept the federal mandates and continue to receive the

1 education in an atmosphere that is conducive to gaining
2 knowledge rather than creating a feeling of animosity
3 toward the other race.

4 In the recent state we have in the state in
5 regard to re-districting of eastern Arkansas, is a case
6 in point. U.S. District Judge G. Thomas Easley, said
7 "In my view, that many voting rights cases such as this
8 one, are changing the political landscape of American in
9 fundamental ways without legislative mandate, and
10 without the benefit of scholarly, legally and political
11 discourse, I believe to be unconstitutional."

12 Quoting Judge Easley further he says, and I
13 quote: "Apparently there is no one willing to say 'no,'
14 'stop' or at least 'think' before you proceed down this
15 path." He states further, that "This being the case,
16 we are heading toward political structure that can only
17 be described as separate but equal."

18 And our experience in other areas, tells us
19 how long we can expect separate to remain equal. Judge
20 Easley is of the opinion that the court is misconstruing
21 the meaning of the law in an effort to correct all
22 perceived wrongs against black people.

23 The result he said, is that the courts are
24 stumbling toward proportional representation, which he
25 says is unconstitutional. It is inconceivable to me

1 that Mr. P. S. Hollingsworth, Attorney for the
2 plaintiff, has publicly gloated "Whites have no rights
3 in this case."

4 For two decades blacks have not had equal
5 rights. But they have enjoyed special rights.

6 Webster's dictionary describes gerrymander as "1) to
7 divide a voting area in such a way as to give unfair
8 advantage to one political party, and 2) to manipulate
9 unfairly and to falsify to gain advantage."

10 This apparently is what the federal court has
11 done in spite of the fact that the United States Supreme
12 Court held in the 1960's that gerrymandering was
13 unconstitutional. I agree with the United States
14 Supreme Court that gerrymandering is unconstitutional,
15 but today we see the federal district court defying the
16 decision of the United States Supreme Court and saying
17 that gerrymandering is constitutional in the State of
18 Arkansas.

19 In my estimation, the case in question now
20 before the Federal Court of Arkansas in regard to
21 political boundaries is serving to polarized the races.
22 One does not discuss the main issues in an election.
23 The question seems to be, is the candidate white or
24 black. No consideration is given to who is the most
25 experienced and best qualified to represent the

1 district.

2 It is my considered opinion that until the day
3 comes that the white race and the black race can sit
4 down together and in legal, scholarly, popular and
5 political debate, keeping in mind that we are dealing
6 with the heart and soul of our democratic government, we
7 will continue to have trouble.

8 In my opinion, lack of education on the part
9 of both races is one of the prime culprits in the
10 matter. In my home county, 51 percent of the people are
11 functionally illiterate. And this is a situation that
12 must be eradicated. A good education provided both
13 black and white students is absolute necessity if we are
14 to survive as a nation.

15 We cannot deny the fact that we have various
16 and sundry ethnic groups in this nation, and that each
17 and every one is an American and is entitled to equal
18 protection under the law. We must however, remember the
19 fact that we have three branches of government, the
20 legislative branch, the executive branch and the
21 judicial branch.

22 When the judicial branch starts making the
23 laws and usurping the power of the legislative branch,
24 then we are in trouble. I believe I am correct quoting
25 Lenin, in a statement he made back in 1920 when he said

1 that if he could control the courts in any democratic
2 nation, he could take that country without firing a
3 shot.

4 I do not doubt this statement is correct. And
5 I applaud the efforts of the Commission on Civil Rights
6 in the efforts to bring about harmony and understanding
7 among the races of our nation.

8 We must not violate the mandate of the United
9 States Supreme Court and the one man-one vote rule. I
10 am afraid that we are on the brink of ignoring this
11 mandate, and should this occur, we would be forced back
12 in the same situation that existed in the 1940's and the
13 1950's.

14 Now, the letter that I received, an invitation
15 down here, I was to address political matters, not
16 educational matters. I addressed the education matters
17 in the legislature. And I am convinced that the real
18 problem that we have in the State of Arkansas is
19 education.

20 It has been said that a human mind is a
21 terrible thing to waste. And we must have equal
22 opportunity to -- for educational advantages, for
23 blacks, whites and every other ethnic group in this
24 state. Yes ma'am?

25 MS. POINDEXTER: Yes. Senator, do you

1 represent Lee and Phillips County?

2 SENATOR BENHAM: I represent the eastern part
3 of Lee, and about five townships in Phillips County.
4 That is, under the new --

5 MS. POINDEXTER: ~~Previously, did you represent~~
6 Lee and Phillips County?

7 SENATOR BENHAM: All of Lee, all of Phillips
8 and all of Monroe.

9 MS. POINDEXTER: All of Monroe. And I am
10 looking at the figures which I received which indicates
11 that Lee County has 55.9 percent of its population being
12 black, Phillips County 54.1 percent of its population
13 being black.

14 SENATOR BENHAM: That's right.

15 MS. POINDEXTER: And Monroe County 43 percent:

16 SENATOR BENHAM: The figures I got said 48
17 percent.

18 MS. POINDEXTER: 48? Well, I'll go with
19 yours. Which brings to mind your statement that the
20 majority of the people in the Delta are white. The
21 majority of the people which you represent are not
22 white.

23 SENATOR BENHAM: Yeah, but I am not the entire
24 Delta. I did, I had the only -- with the exception of
25 Senator Jewell in Little Rock, I had the only

1 predominately black senatorial district in the State of
2 Arkansas.

3 MS. POINDEXTER: Well, could you tell me, sir,
4 in looking at the court case -- are you a part of the
5 group which is appealing that decision?

6 SENATOR BENHAM: No, the decision is being
7 appealed by the Reapportionment Board. That's the
8 governor, the --

9 MS. POINDEXTER: Are you in support of that
10 then?

11 SENATOR BENHAM: Yes, I am in support of it.

12 MS. POINDEXTER: Could you please tell me how
13 polarization will increase since there has not been non-
14 polarization in this area since I've been coming here
15 for the last ten years? How is that going to increase
16 the polarization of the area?

17 SENATOR BENHAM: Well, the only way I can say
18 is, that the things I have heard since this action of
19 the Federal Court is, who is black, who is white. Not
20 who can do the job, who has the experience. So, I
21 conclude by that.

22 MS. POINDEXTER: Well, we know the experience
23 is not going to stand on the side of the blacks, because
24 you only have one black senator, and that Senator Jewell.

25 SENATOR BENHAM: Senator Jewell, and a very

1 line senator. too. I might add.

2 MS. POUNDXTER: And we know then that the
3 experience is never going to be equal to yours, since
4 you have been there for some time. All things are not
5 equal, as you and I both know. How then do you propose
6 that we bring about inclusion of blacks in the political
7 process other than through reapportionment taking place,
8 and if you can give me some innovative methods that may
9 have come to your mind to end the polarization which has
10 been in existence here forever?

11 SENATOR BENHAM: I think the best approach to
12 it, and of course, I am not an attorney, would be more
13 of a 50-50 ratio. If we could get that. Now, the only
14 place you're going to get that is going to be in the
15 Delta, because in the northern part of the state,
16 northwestern part, the western part, southwestern part
17 of the state, there are not too many members of the
18 black race. It is mostly in eastern Arkansas.

19 I think if we could reapportion this thing and
20 make it 50 percent white, 50 percent black. I think
21 nothing in the world be fairer than that.

22 MS. POUNDXTER: One more question and I'll be
23 through. One of the things that was alarming to me was
24 the fact that people are still using basically a paper
25 and pencil ballot, which does allow for those who are

1 patrolling the ballot place in many instances to
2 memorize, many people feel, what their vote is.

3 Since you are one of the more influential
4 individuals in the senate at this time, could you tell
5 me what influence you are using to make sure that there
6 are voting machines in this area and not some place
7 where people have to travel a 1000 miles in order to
8 vote?

9 SENATOR BENHAM: We only had that come before
10 the senate one time in the form of a bill. And I voted
11 for mechanical voting machines, and the question came
12 back, "Okay, who is going to pay for them, the state?
13 The county can't afford to pay for them."

14 Well, the state certainly can't afford to pay
15 for them, either. However, I do favor mechanical voting
16 machines or any other method for instance in Lee County,
17 we don't have voting machines per se. But the votes
18 are cast and then they are counted electronically.

19 So, that gives some form of protection for the
20 right of privacy in the ballot box.

21 MS. POUNDXIER: Well, being a part of a union
22 which uses the method that you speak of with the little
23 thing and then you go to the machine, there is still the
24 opportunity for people to walk by, see how you're voting
25 rather than your closing a curtain and you have that

1 privacy, and you have the right, if you would like to
2 carry somebody in there to help you vote.

3 In order to promote equity in the voting area
4 and to diminish the fear that many people have,

5 ~~sometimes the state has got to put up money that it~~

6 doesn't necessarily want to put up. We manage to find
7 money for most other things that we want. What would be
8 your push in this legislative session to guarantee that
9 people in the Delta feel comfortable walking into a
10 voting area that they feel is secure, and that
11 repercussions will not be taken against them because of
12 their political point of view?

13 SENATOR BENHAM: I think the answer to that is
14 that if the counties or cities cannot afford electronic
15 voting machines, that it should be limited on who can go
16 into that voting booth behind that curtain. I think it
17 should be limited to a man and wife, or mother and
18 daughter, if the person who is voting is illiterate.

19 If they are not present, then it should not be
20 beyond the -- I believe they call them the "sheriff,"
21 at each polling place. If they want somebody to go in
22 there and people tell them who they want to vote for,
23 and they point those out, and let them put their mark on
24 there.

25 MS. POINDEXTER: Do you think they can trust

1 them?

2 SENATOR BENHAM: I can't say. I think that
3 most of the people I know of, try to be very
4 discriminating in who they choose completely and totally
5 honest people. However, you cannot dismiss the fact
6 that you might get somebody that would try to influence
7 somebody.

8 MS. POINDEXTER: Let's begin at this end, if
9 you will, all the way down, and let's ask each member if
10 they have a question. We will try to confine ourselves
11 to one question in the interest of time, please.

12 DR. WHITE: Senator Benham, during the
13 consortium that was held early this fall, here in this
14 building on race relations in the Delta, yesterday's
15 testimony and last night's testimony and again this
16 morning, we heard over and over again that part of the
17 barrier to economic development in the Delta, has to do
18 with the continuing plantation mind set on both the part
19 of blacks and whites in the Delta.

20 As one of our congress leaders, what would you
21 offer as suggestions for eradicating this plantation
22 mentality between the races?

23 SENATOR BENHAM: Well, I am not aware of the
24 plantation mentality. It is -- my office is open every
25 day in the week, to all of my constituents, if they are

1 black, if they are white, if they are Chinese or what.
2 if they come to me for help, they get help.

3 I am completely color blind as far as that is
4 concerned. Now what I can do to eliminate that feeling
5 that someone might have, I don't know. I wish that I
6 could answer the question. I wish you could answer the
7 question. If you could give me a suggestion, I would
8 certainly like to follow up on it and do what I could
9 about it, if it is a good suggestion.

10 Because it is a bad situation and one that
11 should be completely and totally eradicated and
12 completely and totally ignored. Because as I said
13 before, we are all Americans and we all have our rights
14 and our rights must be protected.

15 MR. LEVY: Senator, I appreciate what you said
16 at the very beginning of your talk about education
17 being, you know, one of the major factors and probably
18 the common denominator for all the problems.

19 I mentioned to a couple of other people who
20 have spoken to us, the legislature seems to -- in
21 Arkansas seems to be very anti-education, or at least
22 that is the perception that we get when there are
23 various tax measures and views toward consolidation of
24 districts and so forth.

25 What can you do in the next session of the

1 legislature in the Senate, to promote education, the
2 need for education and the need for the state to support
3 education in Arkansas.

4 SENATOR BENHAM: I guess the best thing I
5 could do is what I have done in the past, is to continue
6 to vote for education. I was maligned by the Arkansas
7 Education Association for supporting teacher testing.
8 But I have voted for every tax increase that has come
9 along for education during my tenure in the Senate.

10 And I also voted for the increase in the
11 multiplier for the retirement for our teachers. Because
12 our problem is, if everybody says -- well, I'll give
13 you an example. I had a man walk up to me in the Senate
14 and says "Aren't you a Senator?" I said "Yes." He said
15 "Well, you promised us four thousand dollars and you
16 didn't give it to us."

17 I said "I didn't promise you four thousand.
18 Your governor promised four thousand dollars." But here
19 is the pity of that whole thing. If you any teacher
20 that you have teaching today, if you pay them \$20,000
21 more than they are receiving today, they are not going
22 to be one bit better a teacher than what they are now.

23 They have got to be good teachers and they
24 have got to be dedicated or they wouldn't be working for
25

1 what they are getting. But if we can provide money to
2 increase the salary of those in the teaching profession,
3 you'll feel the effects of that eight or ten years down
4 the road. Because the young people, the bright minds
5 that are going into school now, will see that as a
6 lucrative, profitable profession in which to enter, and
7 they will prepare themselves to become teachers.

8 And that's where that would pay off. And we
9 have got to start somewhere. And I dare say if we pay
10 the teachers any more now, it wouldn't make any better
11 teachers, but it would compensate them for some of the
12 short years when they drew short salaries.

13 MR. PATTERSON: We have time for one more
14 question. If not, then thank you very much, Senator.
15 We appreciate your time and preparation.

16 SENATOR BENHAM: My pleasure. I want to
17 congratulate you people on a very fine job you seem to
18 be doing.

19 MR. PATTERSON: I understand that we have in
20 the audience now the Mayor of Marianna, Mayor Martin
21 Chaffin? Mayor Chaffin has been the Mayor of Marianna
22 for seven years, is that correct?

23 MAYOR CHAFFIN: Yes sir, that is correct.

24 MR. PATTERSON: Welcome.

25 MAYOR CHAFFIN: Thank you.

MAYOR MARTIN CHAFFIN

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6 MAYOR CHAFFIN: Thank you, ladies and gentlemen.
7 I am not real sure about my invitation. Mr. Muldrow
8 called me and asked me if I would appear, and I told him
9 I would be happy to if he could tell me a little bit
10 more about it.

11 I think I am a lot like you folks. I am looking
12 to see what I can get for my community out of this
13 hearing, also. He said that the remarks would be taken
14 and would be published. I am not sure what you folks
15 will be able to help us. I will give you a little bit.

16 I am a very informal person and I will give you a
17 little bit of background on myself, a little on the
18 city, which I am proud of, and a little bit of a
19 direction that I think that we're going, and will ask
20 for some assistance from you folks in helping us get
21 there.

22 My background. I was raised out from Marianna on a
23 farm in Lee County. Went to school, graduated from
24 public schools in Marianna, got my education teaching
25

1 degree, taught for a short time and went to work with
2 Sears.

3 I would have loved to have come back to my home
4 town and worked, but there weren't any jobs there.

5 ~~That's much the case the have along the lines. So, I'll~~
6 get back to this a little bit more as I need.

7 But because there were no jobs, I ended up leaving
8 the area. I was in -- with Sears. I was in district
9 management and store management, did labor relations for
10 the thirteen southern states and then was regional
11 Personnel Director for the southeast, and my last
12 assignment was in Chicago in field operations for
13 distribution centers.

14 I took an early retirement from Sears, came back
15 to Marianna. I like the area. I think we have an awful
16 lot to offer here in east Arkansas, and I may always get
17 accused of being a little naive about some things, but
18 anyway, I am very positive in feeling this way.

19 I came back, opened a couple of stores, after
20 about three years I was asked to run for mayor against
21 an incumbent and I did run. I was asked by both a white
22 group and a black group to run. I had never run for any
23 political office, didn't really know anything about it,
24 didn't even know how to file.

25 So anyway, to make a long story short, I did run.

1 The only promise that I made was to a black group. At
2 that time, we had at large voting in the city of
3 Marianna. And I told them I would petition the court
4 for ward voting. And that was the only request which I
5 ~~felt was a very good one, from all that I understood~~

6 about it.

7 I had never really -- I am afraid this is one of
8 the problems that we have. Not a lot of people get
9 involved, and not a lot of people know all the basics of
10 what it takes to get an education and to go into
11 politics. They just don't get involved with it. They
12 are not that aware of it.

13 But anyway, I did. I petition the court. I was
14 elected in November of 1982, and right after my election
15 I petitioned the court. We did go into ward voting for
16 the next election which would be two years off. I went
17 into office in January 1983.

18 In the ward voting, we ended up with at that time,
19 we had six wards. We petitioned for eight wards. We
20 had six whites when I went into office. At the next
21 election, we had two blacks and six whites, and in 1988
22 we went to five aldermen, white aldermen, three black
23 aldermen.

24 In 1989 we have our current makeup of four black
25 aldermen and four white aldermen. Our school board

1 there has been from three white -- I'm sorry, five
2 black and three -- I'm sorry, five white and three
3 black, to six black and two white in the periods that I
4 have been there, and we are currently four and four at
5 the present time.

6 And I am not aware of any serious problems in
7 anyone that wants to vote. We campaign very diligently
8 and very openly, and I have seen the results go both
9 directions, and I don't know what it will be this fall.
10 It could be either way.

11 But the key thing that I wanted to speak to you
12 about, because I think that we have recognized one of
13 our problems. I hope that we have done something about
14 it, in being able to have our elections, being able to
15 have the people represented, the citizenry.

16 But our key problem in our area is jobs and
17 education. And I really don't know what you as a panel
18 can do to help in this area. One of your panel members
19 is our superintendent of schools, and certainly has done
20 a commendable job since she has been in that area, and I
21 don't pretend to know the answers on education.

22 I know that we have a need there. I have worked
23 very hard with the literacy program and with the GED
24 programs, to try to improve it, but I have worked
25 extremely hard in trying to bring industry into the

1 area, because I don't think there is anything more
2 disheartening than to go to school, get an education,
3 and not be able to find a job.

4 Or to go into a special education program, get
5 ~~trained for some job or a voch tech school where you're~~
6 going with a grant of some type and come out expecting --
7 you're on a real high because you've graduated, and you
8 come out and you can't find a job.

9 So, we have been very fortunate. I understand Mr.
10 Humphrey is still here in the group, and we work very
11 hard with AIDC and Mr. Humphrey has assisted us on three
12 of the plants we have located in Marianna in the last
13 two years.

14 Prior to that time, I don't think we had had a
15 plant in 25 years. We had a couple of plants there,
16 they were older plants and these are not large ones, but
17 they are going to grow. And we just have a hard sell in
18 order to get out. But nobody has helped us with these
19 applications. Nobody has helped us find these folks.
20 We have had to get out and get them on our own.

21 I'll accept any of your neighbors that are going
22 to expand. We will certainly give them an awfully good
23 shot in Marianna, Arkansas. And that's basically what --
24 a little history of Marianna and of me and I'll be
25 happy to try to answer any questions that you have.

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MR. PATTERSON: What is the population of Marianna now?

MAYOR CHAFFIN: Sixty-two twenty.

MR. PATTERSON: Do you know approximately how many industrial jobs there are?

MAYOR CHAFFIN: There are approximately 600.

MR. PATTERSON: Any questions?

MS. POINDEXTER: I just want to congratulate you on the passage of the millage which has been elusive in most counties in the state. And to ask you if Marianna has worked with Mr. Bennett from the Shore Bank of Chicago in his efforts to provide economic inventiveness, if you will, in this area?

MAYOR CHAFFIN: I am very familiar it and with the bank actually in Chicago, and when they came down. My understanding was, they were going to locate in the Delta where a need was. I tried to get them interested in two different banks in this area. I think they talked to one here in Helena.

We had one which later sold in Marianna, which I thought would be an idea set up for them. They located in Arkadelphia, and the time that I tried to get them to want to get that far away from their base, at that time.

MS. POINDEXTER: Well, there is a liaison that we met who was in this area for the purpose of working with

1 development, and I am wondering if you have had contact
2 with Mr. Bennett or someone from his area?

3 MAYOR CHAFFIN: No, I have not. I have attempted
4 to do that. One of their real pluses is a hands-on.
5 ~~When they make a loan, they get in and work with the~~
6 person that -- they more or less make them successful,
7 which is certainly what we need, and I would love to be
8 able to do this. We have tried to make contact with
9 them.

10 Also, with the Llana Corporation, which is Alice
11 Walton out of Fayetteville. We have tried to work with
12 both of those. Their success has been with Mr. Humphrey
13 and AIDC.

14 MS. POINDEXTER: Thank you.

15 DR. WHITE: Mayor, good afternoon.

16 MAYOR CHAFFIN: Good afternoon.

17 DR. WHITE: I would like to ask you the same
18 question that I asked Senator Benham. Again, we had a
19 conference here this fall, sponsored by higher education
20 and the focus again at that conference was, on racism in
21 the Delta.

22 Yesterday, last night and this morning, again we
23 had testimony saying that there is a plantation
24 mentality on the part of both blacks and whites, that
25 continues to divide races in the Delta and it also

1 serves as a barrier to economic development. What would
2 be your comment as it relates to that mentality and what
3 would you offer as suggestions for how we can begin to
4 bridge the gap?

5 ~~MAYOR CHAFFIN: Well, I would first of all say I~~
6 really would challenge the comment. I would like to
7 have some evidence or proof or someone to give examples
8 of it. I can only go for what I have experienced.

9 I know that in the jobs that we bring into
10 Marianna, we work giving 51 percent low to moderate
11 income. That certainly is -- when you reach and get
12 those, the majority of those are going to be black.

13 Looking at our hiring policies in the city of
14 Marianna, we are half -- or over half of the jobs are
15 filled by black. I am just not aware of this, and that
16 has not ever been anything that I have run into in
17 recruiting and going out and talking to industries, and
18 I work principally with border lying industries, like
19 Memphis and places like this.

20 And I am not aware -- it makes real good
21 conversation, but I am not aware of the specifics. I
22 would be happy to address individual specifics if you
23 can narrow them down for me. I'll be happy to try.

24 DR. WHITE: Being new to the area, I don't know
25 the specifics. The people who have historically been a

1 part of the community were the people who made the
2 comment. But it was indicated in the task force, I know
3 from this area, the Governors Rural Development
4 Committee also made the same recommendation, that there
5 ~~is a need for some kind of dialogue, some kind of~~
6 strategies to be affected, to bridge the communication
7 gap between the races.

8 And I know I am aware of that report because many
9 of the people with whom I interact in Marianna are on
10 that committee, and that continues to be something that
11 they, in every meeting I have been in that has to do
12 with the development of the Delta continue to say is an
13 issue.

14 In fact, when we had our hearings two weeks ago on
15 health issue with the Kizer Foundation, that same issue
16 was broached there.

17 MAYOR CHAFFIN: Most of the time, and I can almost
18 take the comments from the individuals and discuss with
19 them, but most of the time when this comes up, I believe
20 -- that's a generality. I shouldn't get into this
21 part. I am thinking of one of the conferences where I
22 was.

23 The people that brought it were really not that
24 involved in all facets of the community. The last one I
25 think was more in the health area. But you know, I

1 really don't have an answer for you. I am just not that
2 aware of it, because maybe I just don't want to admit it
3 is there, but we have such a thing as a coffee for --
4 at the Chamber of Commerce that we initiated, and we had
5 ~~it for many months and the whole purpose of this, was to~~
6 bring in the blacks and the whites and there was
7 absolutely nothing on program.

8 There was nothing discussed. We had coffee and
9 donuts or we had something there, somebody sponsored it
10 each month, and it was strictly to communicate and get
11 together. And we - it went for I guess 15 or 18
12 months, and then because of the attendance -- we got
13 into the summer months and because of attendance, it
14 wasn't started back up.

15 But I am receptive to anything. I just don't know
16 what the answer is.

17 MR. LEVY: As a member of the clergy, I am
18 interested in knowing if there are any dialogue groups
19 within the city of Marianna between white and black
20 ministers over what they might see as some of the
21 barriers or problems between them, and if not, maybe
22 that would be a positive program coming from the Mayor's
23 Office to encourage that?

24 MAYOR CHAFFIN: About two years ago, I got a group
25 of black and white ministers together in my conference

1 room. We had coffee and donuts and it was the first, as
2 I know, the first time I have known of the two
3 ministerial alliances getting together. It was not all
4 of them, but it was the ones that had accepted.

5 ~~And I offered the conference room and to meet with~~
6 them for a couple of times, and then actually challenged
7 them to go out on their own. To the best of my
8 knowledge, that group is still meeting, and they --
9 unfortunately they probably -- we probably have three
10 ministerial groups now.

11 the black, the white and the bi-racial. But the --
12 and there are some that belong to this that go to both
13 of them, you know, go either way. But we had them at
14 the -- at the conference room. That I thought was
15 going to work, and I still -- I have every faith that
16 it is going to, because this group is -- does more
17 community wide than the others do.

18 MS. POINDEXTER: Just one question, Mr. Mayor.
19 You alluded to the fact that there are approximately 600
20 industrial jobs here?

21 MAYOR CHAFFIN: Yes ma'am, something like that.

22 MS. POINDEXTER: Approximately how many blacks are
23 in management positions in those jobs? You say about 51
24 percent of the individuals who make them up are
25 minorities. How many are in high management, middle

1 management as well as --

2 MAYOR CHAFFIN: I'm sorry. I don't know. In the
3 51 percent -- was on the last three industries that we
4 put in. We put them in with the guidelines that they
5 ~~would be --~~ that 51 percent would be low to moderate
6 income for them to qualify for the loans we were able to
7 get too them.

8 The other two main industries that have been there
9 for a long period of time, are not under any particular
10 stipulation of that type. This was one that we were
11 able to work out. In order to get them the loan, they
12 had to go 51 percent on the new hires.

13 I plan for that to be the same thing on these new
14 ones coming in.

15 MS. POUNDKIER: Well, I guess that is part of the
16 concern for plantation mentality. People who work, who
17 is telling people what to do when they work. Are blacks
18 just being the ones told, or are they in a position to
19 tell someone else what to do. And that's why I am
20 wondering, with the 51 percent, I really admire that you
21 have that kind of goal, but I am wondering in those
22 decision making jobs, how many of them are set aside as
23 well?

24 MAYOR CHAFFIN: I really can't answer that one for
25 you. I don't know.

1 MS. POINDEXTER: Thank you.

2 MR. PATTERSON: I would like to go back just a
3 minute to the presentation made by Mr. Bennett of the
4 Shore Bank yesterday. As I recall Dr. White asked Mr.
5 Bennett the question, whether he would entertain the
6 idea some day of coming into the Delta specifically.

7 He explained his Arkadelphia operation. He
8 reflected for a moment and then looked at her and said
9 "Yes." So, it -- is that correct? That's the way I
10 remember it?

11 DR. WHITE: Yes, and we had further conversation.
12 Too.

13 MR. PATTERSON: Yes, so you might discuss that and
14 pursue it.

15 MAYOR CHAFFIN: That would be great, because I was
16 very disappointed when they ended up going into
17 Arkadelphia. You know, I was - they have a lot to
18 offer there. We have to sell hard.

19 MR. PATTERSON: I mean the impression that I got
20 was that as they got their feet on the ground and they
21 were successful with their model, that they looked
22 forward to moving specifically into the Delta area.

23 MR. MULDRUP: Okay. Just to kind of follow up on
24 what your prime concern is, that's for jobs, economic
25 development, which would have all kinds of spin-off

1 benefits, and your city and your district. What do you
2 see is needed to bring that about? I mean, we have
3 heard all kinds of four lane highways, and better
4 education, more political participation, all of these
5 things would of course contribute. What do you see as
6 needed in order to do that?

7 MAYOR CHAFFIN: All of those are great, and all of
8 those are tools. That's -- the harbor here in Helena is
9 a tool, you know, the harbor coming in. If this comes
10 in and we end up with a large industrial part there, we
11 could be bedroom community and have spin-off
12 industries.

13 We are 60 miles from an international airport at
14 Memphis. And four lane, 17 miles up the road.
15 Hopefully have a four lane through Marianna. These are
16 all tools that we can use, but they are no better than
17 our usage of them is going to be.

18 I think our prime benefit that we can offer to any
19 employer that comes in is our people. Their willingness
20 to work, and I go to the last plant that came in. They
21 employed 23 when they came in. 22 of those are still on
22 their payroll. One left in January to go back to
23 college. He went to Philader Smith, I believe, in
24 Little Rock on a scholarship.

25 But I think that our people are ready to work and

1 willing to work, and I think that's our greatest asset.
2 I guess mine is my ability to sell this. I am - we are
3 trying constantly.

4 MR. PATTERSON: Mayor Chaffin, we appreciate very
5 ~~much your time and your effort in coming here. At~~
6 this time, we would like to call on Mayor Rosalie Gould
7 from McGehee, Arkansas. Welcome.

8
9 ---

10
11 MAYOR ROSALIE GOULD

12
13 MAYOR GOULD: Thank you. I appreciate it. And
14 ma'am, we do have voting machine in McGehee. They cost
15 us a lot of money but we bought them because we think
16 they are necessary.

17 MS. POINDEXTER: Thank you.

18 MAYOR CHAFFIN: They were financed by the city
19 voters.

20 MAYOR GOULD: City and County, yes sir. They sure
21 were. First, I want to thank you for allowing me to
22 participate in this forum. I know that my
23 representative was supposed to be here, but she couldn't
24 make it, so I appreciate your letting me speak for her.

25 Everyone, of course, has his own ideas about what

1 civil rights establishes. As with all rights and
2 privileges, some of us abuse that system in our zeal to
3 fulfill our responsibilities to everyone.

4 Others of us will complain that someone else's
5 ~~civil rights are being violated without first finding~~
6 out all the facts, and let me tell you, ladies and
7 gentlemen, in my area, this is the biggest problem
8 between the races. Someone says "The Mayor did this,
9 and now it is because I am black or because I am white,
10 the Mayor did this."

11 And my opinion or my stand is, come in and talk to
12 the Mayor. Let the Mayor tell you, let the horse's
13 mouth tell you. Don't let somebody else. If we could
14 make everyone understand, when you've got a problem,
15 don't go to your neighbor and say "Well, I think the
16 mayor did this and this is the reason he or she did
17 it."

18 One thing about the town where I live in, it is a
19 very small town. First let me back up and tell you
20 where I live. Most of you probably do not know it. I
21 live in southeast Arkansas, in DeShay County, in the
22 city or town of McGehee. We are about 60 miles south of
23 Pine Bluff, and you were talking about the roads.

24 We are not on a four lane highway. In fact, we
25 have often accused the State of Arkansas of saying that

1 "Arkansas ends at Pine Bluff, from Pine Bluff to El
2 Dorado. "You see nothing on television. When you look
3 at the map of Arkansas, you see nothing below Pine Bluff
4 or Eldorado. Well, we live in the area where there is
5 ~~nothing.~~

6 But to get back to the issues of civil rights.
7 Black and white is not the only issue. Being female, I
8 do know. There is discrimination of white against
9 white, black against black, men against women, parents
10 against children, religion against the state, young
11 against the aged, and employer against employee.

12 The city of McGehee has not had an active count in
13 20 years. The 1980 count was stopped by the former
14 Mayor because the story is that he became angry. I
15 don't what it is. He has never discussed it with us,
16 but we are still going under the 1970 census.

17 We have probably lost money. We have lost
18 representation. All we can do is say "We think we have
19 this." As you're coming into McGehee, coming in from
20 one area, you find a sign that says one population. You
21 come in from another entrance, and you find another
22 population. So, you just take what you want to.

23 In 1980, McGehee was said -- I don't know where
24 they came up with this figure, because this figure is
25 not on either one of the signs, a population of 5800

1 persons, with a 33.5 percent minority, with 30.7 percent
2 under the age of 18, 54.1 percent of 18 to 65 population
3 and 15.2 percent over age 65.

4 The median age was 30. I still don't know in 1980
5 ~~where they got these figures.~~ Of the 2,073 households
6 in in 1980, there was 2.69 persons in each. The 1986
7 figures for DeShay County, reported 19,760 persons with
8 11,579 of these white, and 8,933 minority with a total
9 of 56.4 percent white, and 43.6 minority.

10 The median income in the 1986 figures, which still
11 left McGehee, so we still don't know what these are, was
12 \$10,167.00 per household or \$12,708.00 per family. The
13 total personal income was \$156,602.00 with a per capita
14 income of \$740.00. The percentage completing four
15 years of high school was 49.6 percent.

16 This figure is high. This figure is not correct.
17 I have called everywhere, trying to find out what that
18 figure was. Our latest figures for four years of high
19 school in DeShay County or the area around DeShay
20 County, I am sure is around 28 or 29 percent. Yes, that
21 is correct.

22 The percentage of completing four years of college
23 was 7.9 percent. The median value of housing in 1980
24 was \$27,700.00 and the median contract rent was \$69.00.
25 I know that most of the testimony today is on the issue

1 of minorities. I'll briefly address this, but I also
2 want to bring you a little bit about being female in the
3 land of politics and in the land of farming, as I have
4 been in both of these.

5 In January, 17 plaintiffs filed suit to force
6 reapportionment of districts in southeast and east
7 Arkansas to create super black districts. I can only
8 speak on effect of this plan on Deshay County, where I
9 live.

10 Our present representative who I am representing
11 today, she truly represented all in her district, is
12 being moved out of Deshay County into a north district
13 of. I think it is east -- well, I have it here and I
14 will give it to you and I am sure you know it. too.

15 That's takes Dumas and Mitchellville out of Deshay
16 County and puts them in this new district. McGehee, my
17 town of 5800 people. is literally being split in two.
18 We originally had three wards. For this we will only
19 have two wards. They have split it in half, the north
20 half going into a sitting representative in Star city.

21 Now, the area of Star City is hilly, has none of
22 the problems that the McGehee or Deshay area has, but we
23 are still being put into that district. The south half
24 of the McGehee area is being put into Chicot County
25 district which is represented by a man from Chicot

1 County.

2 DeShay County which is one of the 11 course
3 counties in Arkansas, we were in the Governor's Rural
4 Economic Program. will be split in three parts, with
5 three different representatives. 19,000 people will be
6 split in three parts with three different
7 representatives.

8 This takes away the continuity of any of our
9 economic growth projects that we have, because we will
10 have to go to three representatives to try to get
11 something done. This tearing up of an area that has
12 many problems, cannot but create more problems.

13 Most of the residents of DeShay County -- now.
14 These remarks were made at the Lower Mississippi Delta
15 Commission task force that was held in Dumas a couple of
16 months ago, and they agreed, even the plaintiffs agreed
17 that most of the residents of DeShay County will admit
18 that the color of a persons's skin does not elect him or
19 keep him from being elected.

20 In my town of McGehee, we have six aldermen. We
21 do vote by wards. We have been voting by wards now for
22 many years. We have only one black on the city
23 council. Three of our four quorum court members, DeShay
24 County forum court members from McGehee, are black. We
25 have one white and three blacks on that forum court.

1 It is admitted that DeShay County is as supportive
2 of black candidates as they are of white candidates.
3 But we are being penalized just the same for our voting
4 record. I am now in a predominately white district.
5 The center of DeShay County, they took Dumas and
6 Mitchellville to move to the north to make a
7 predominately white district, and took the south half of
8 McGehee to put in Chicot County to make a predominately
9 black district.

10 So, that leaves the middle half of DeShay County,
11 which is predominately white. The problem in our area,
12 and this is our biggest problem, is that we have not had
13 minority candidates who would run. We have many, many
14 qualified, but they are just not -- we have not figured
15 out why they are not running.

16 But what a lot of people don't understand is, just
17 because a person, be he black or white, runs, does not
18 mean that he is qualified for that position. I of
19 course, do know discrimination first hand quite a few
20 ways.

21 When I was about two years old, we moved to
22 Liller, which is a little town just north of McGehee.
23 My parents came over from Italy, could not speak English
24 and of course, when we moved to Liller, it was a
25 community, my family of full-blooded Italian Catholics.

1 So, I remember going to school and of course,
2 everybody making fun the Italians Catholics that had
3 moved to town, and I remember my father saying "Do not
4 ask for breaks. Don't ask them to give you any breaks,
5 just work harder and show them that you are as good as
6 they are, or better than they are." And I have never
7 forgotten my father's advice on that.

8 So, I ran for the office of Mayor well, eight
9 years ago, in 1982. My father was in the nursing home
10 and I went over and spoke to him. I said "Daddy, they
11 are wanting me to run for Mayor of McGehee. What do you
12 think?" He said "Well, Sis, do they have a bookkeeper?"

13 And I said "Yes, daddy, they do." We had a City
14 Clerk. "Well, why don't you go for it," because he
15 knows that I am no good at keeping books, but he figured
16 that if I had somebody to keep the books of the city, I
17 could probably handle the others.

18 So, I did run and I ran for the office of the
19 Mayor of McGehee. There had never been a female Mayor.
20 In fact, I had been on the city council for two terms.
21 They have two year terms, until the Mayor, the former
22 Mayor and I had a argument after one of our City Council
23 meetings.

24 He was of the opinion that the City Council
25 meeting did what the Mayor said. They had no vote in

1 the matter, and that they do he tells them, he tells
2 them how to vote. Well, I did not agree with him, so we
3 had an argument and I quit.

4 And then I ran the next term. He did not run
5 again. ~~There were three men who ran against me. We~~
6 were all friends. We campaigned together. This was one
7 campaign that never once was a derogatory thing said
8 about anybody else.

9 The men never once said that I was a female and I
10 didn't have sense enough to run the city of McGehee, and
11 never did I say because I was female, I was more
12 sensitive and caring and I could do a better job. The
13 only issue in this, was the plans for our city.

14 After I was elected, both men and women, black and
15 white gave me the opportunity to fulfill my duties. If
16 I had not fulfilled those duties, it would have been my
17 fault, not because I was white, not because I was a
18 woman. Just because I was not qualified to be that
19 person.

20 When my husband died 25 years ago, he left me with
21 three little children and a huge farm with a huge debt.
22 I took over the farm. That was back in 1965 when women
23 did not farm. The men farmers did not hold it against
24 me that I was a woman. In fact, they treated me like
25 the good ole' boys. I rode around in the pick up truck.

1 There was only one difference. I didn't drink
2 beer and I had no gun rack, and I didn't wear a cap.
3 But they did. We rode over all the farms together and
4 did discuss it. The banks didn't care that I was
5 ~~female. They made me repay the loans just like they did~~
6 the men.

7 Now, I did run into difficulties with some of the
8 farm workers at first on the farm, on my farm. They
9 really didn't think I could cut the mustard, and
10 frankly, I didn't think I could either, because this was
11 something that I knew absolutely nothing about. Well, I
12 didn't know anything about the office of Mayor, either.

13 But I remember one time I had told my manager that
14 I wanted to plant a field of sunflowers to try
15 experimenting. And so I noticed he looked kind of funny
16 and we went ahead and experimented with it and did a
17 pretty good job. But after we harvested the sunflowers,
18 he came in and he said "Rosalie, I am not going to plant
19 another field of sunflowers. Every time I go in the
20 coffee shop, they say 'Uh-huh, your boss lady is making
21 you plant flowers, isn't she.'"

22 So it is just one of those things, that after they
23 found out that I could prove myself, of course they went
24 ahead and accepted me and did listen to me. But now
25 they gave me no breaks. I had to strictly prove

1 myself.

2 Of course, I am sure they laughed about my
3 mistakes behind my back, but that was strictly their
4 right. I am not trying to say that DeShay County of

5 ~~McGehee is a perfect county or perfect city, but~~

6 whenever a problem arises in McGehee, the office is
7 always open.

8 And when a black representation comes in for a
9 discussion they have never accused me of having the --
10 the problem existed because I was a white and didn't
11 care about the problems of the blacks. And the -- I am
12 sure of course a few blacks did. Don't misunderstand
13 misunderstand me. I am not universally loved. Don't
14 take that by any chance.

15 But the majority of the civic minded blacks knew
16 that all they had to do was come in and we would discuss
17 it. And they knew that if we could not do anything
18 about the problem, that we would tell them, and then of
19 course, if they didn't like it, they would certainly let
20 me know in no uncertain terms.

21 And never have the white people come in to
22 complain and accuse me of discriminating against them
23 for the black support. I am sure a few of the whites
24 did rumor that, but they were ignored, so we don't worry
25 about that.

1 We are actively supporting a black Chancery
2 Judge. He is very, very well-qualified and we are
3 actively supporting him. A popular well-qualified black
4 is contemplating running for a position now held by a
5 ~~white incumbent senator. If he decides to run, he'll~~
6 have all of our support because we know the type of
7 person he is, and it has nothing to do with his skin
8 being black. It is because we know that he is strictly
9 qualified.

10 That is why we have elections, so all the people
11 have a chance to say who they want to govern and also
12 have the opportunity to vote out anyone who does not do
13 what they think he should do.

14 You know, it is very strange, we are working
15 closely with Cleveland, Mississippi, Boliver County,
16 Mississippi, trying to get a bridge built across the
17 river and Mississippi, the men do not allow the women to
18 get actively involved in projects.

19 Now, the black males have all the opportunities
20 in the world, but they don't allow the women, but yet
21 they work beautifully there with three of us in DeShay
22 County who are pushing the bridge in DeShay County and
23 we work beautifully with the men. But they don't allow
24 their ladies to get involved.

25 The white people are often blamed for not aiding

1 the blacks in problems. But is not always the case.
2 take the November 18, 1989 news article which stated
3 that a history professor at UAPB said black aldermen
4 should work for the blacks who elected them and not for
5 the city voters as a whole.

6 He told the black aldermen that they should work
7 for the rest of the city, only as, and I quote "Time and
8 love permit. Your allegiance basically should be with
9 the people who put you there. That's the way it is," he
10 is quoting as saying.

11 "You have to say that if you don't, you're
12 betraying the people." I am sure he didn't really mean
13 exactly what most people read into that quote. And
14 that's exactly what I mean by not looking at everything
15 from a black and white issue when someone says something
16 because as I personally know, sometimes I am talking and
17 I say something that really doesn't come out the way I
18 mean it. and then when you look at it in quotes, you'll
19 say "You know, that isn't what I meant at all."

20 Fortunately, nothing was made of this article, and
21 I am very proud of both races for not trying to blow
22 this up into something that will cause more disharmony.
23 The greatest single step a local government can take to
24 improve minority representation in government management
25 is to encourage employees and candidates to pursue

1 professional advancement through college classes, in-
2 house training, internship programs and so forth.

3 The single greatest step a perspective minority
4 candidate can take, and this also applies to all
5 candidates; is to continue his professional education
6 with or without the help of the citizens.

7 In an era of increasing demand and decreasing
8 resources, local governments cannot afford to elect
9 anyone but the most competent person available. We must
10 demand that our young people study harder, study and
11 visit local and state government, examine all sides of
12 problems, solutions and reasons why certain decisions
13 were made without the blinded vision of black-white
14 division.

15 Black and white young people must be ready to put
16 aside race, and older persons must look at their
17 neighbors and see fellow residents, and not racial
18 issues.

19 Ordinances must be passed for the good of the city
20 and not for the good of one race over another. If we
21 are to move forward, it is now the time to begin. The
22 beginning leads to an end. That is our goal. It is the
23 same world that awaits us. How we meet that world, is
24 up to each and every one of us.

25 The familiar darkness, the lack of faith in our

1 goodness and small strength of purpose is often
2 overshadowed by our greed. Now, is the time for unity.
3 That unity is our task. We must put aside intatuation
4 with one's opinion, lack of tolerance, narrowness of
5 mind which will not allow us to truly look our deeds
6 and utterances.

7 We need the foresight and wisdom to not cause more
8 division among our people. We need leaders who are
9 clear sighted and courageous so the feel a
10 responsibility for the cares and concerns of all in the
11 future. Grant those in authority the conviction that
12 unity does not mean conformity. But rather reconciled
13 diversity for all.

14 Only with this foresight can racial harmony be
15 achieved. Thank you. Do you have any questions?

16 MS. POINDEXTER: I am just real interested to know
17 whose legislative district was torn up, the individual?

18 MAYOR GOULD: I have got them all here.

19 MS. POINDEXTER: You mentioned a female. Who in
20 particular is that?

21 MAYOR GOULD: Charlotte Chexnayder. Charlotte
22 Chexnayder is in our district. She was moved with --
23 the two towns in north DeShay County into the -- I
24 think the eastern Jefferson or eastern Lincoln County.

25 MS. POINDEXTER: How much did the voting booths

1 cost you to get, do you remember?

2 MAYOR GOULD: I don't remember. That's been
3 about, oh, gosh, I guess about 12 years ago.'

4 MS. POINDEXTER: So, if McGehee, a town of
5 ~~approximately how many?~~

6 MAYOR GOULD: Well, which entrance --

7 MS. POINDEXTER: I see both signs, so I am still
8 confused?

9 MAYOR GOULD: 5800. Around 5800.

10 MS. POINDEXTER: How many voting booths do you
11 have?

12 MAYOR GOULD: We have three wards, so we have
13 six.

14 MS. POINDEXTER: And they are in the wards
15 themselves so the individuals do not have to go --

16 MAYOR GOULD: Yes ma'am. Ward 1 votes in one
17 place. Ward 2 booths are put in Ward 2, and Ward 3
18 booths are put in Ward 3, yes ma'am.

19 MR. PATTERSON: I have reason to have great
20 respect and be very grateful to the town of McGehee.
21 One of the most superlative young men I have ever met
22 whose name is Samuel Angus McGehee, has been away four
23 generations, my grandson. Would you like to see the
24 pictures? That's true.

25 MR. MULBROW: Isn't there any way you can petition

1 for an exception in the case of your community in the
2 case of your redistricting?

3 MAYOR GOULD: We tried that and were told that
4 under no circumstances was there going to be a change.

5 ~~By the way, I understand today that the Supreme Court~~

6 Judge said that the Supreme Court was hearing this
7 redistricting plan tomorrow. I don't know what will
8 come of it.

9 It is too late because -- see, one of the big
10 things, just like McGehee, we have three wards and two
11 precincts in each ward. It was all lined out and you
12 knew what ward you were in. Now, they have take McGehee
13 -- we will only have two wards. This and this goes to
14 the north, and this goes to the south. (indicating
15 document)

16 Now, we don't know where anybody is voting. We
17 don't know when we will find out where people are going
18 to have to go and vote. We don't know where we are
19 going to have to put the voting machines. We don't know
20 how we're going to count the people. We don't know
21 anything. That's one of our big problems, because we
22 desperately need all of our citizens voting.

23 MR. PATTERSON: I think if there are no more
24 questions, we'll take at least a 15 minute break and our
25 next presenter is not here. We are very grateful to

1 you, Mayor Gould.

2 MAYOR GOULD: Would you like for me to leave this?

3 MR. PATTERSON: Yes, anything -- leave that with
4 us.

5
6 (R E C E S S)

7
8 MR. PATTERSON: May we please re-assemble. I
9 think we were all in need of that break. I hope we
10 didn't make it too long. We would like to open this
11 health services session by calling on Mr. Jerry
12 Campbell, who is the CEO of Helena Regional Medical
13 Center. Mr. Campbell, we are very informal. If you
14 could make your presentation from right up here?

15 MR. CAMPBELL: Okay. Can I sit down?

16 MR. PATTERSON: Well, those microphones only feed
17 the recorder. They don't feed the --

18 MR. CAMPBELL: All right.

19 MR. PATTERSON: Welcome. We are very pleased to
20 have you.

21
22
23 ---
24
25 MR. JERRY CAMPBELL

1
2
3 MR. CAMPBELL: Thank you. I would say that for
4 the last two days we have been hearing about needs, some
5 ~~of them are desperate needs.~~ These needs are going to
6 take some desperate efforts. I am going to leave my
7 speech alone, because I don't want to take any time from
8 Dr. Elders, and just tell you that it is important that
9 we remember in meetings like this, that words aren't
10 enough.

11 That this commission, I believe, has been charged
12 originally and is reminded from time-to-time, that we
13 need to challenge ourselves to look at patterns and how
14 patterns and the laws might be implemented in a way that
15 would be unfair.

16 You have my testimony and my data in the blue
17 binders. I would suggest that there are some patterns
18 that all of us ought to be aware of today and ongoing.
19 Number one is the Arkansas is a league leader on taxes
20 of poverty level income.

21 That Arkansas is a league follower in Medicaid
22 funding, even though Medicaid funding is a three for one
23 match, we fail to bring in as many federal dollars as we
24 could, which is an indictment for a state as poor as
25 ours.

1 Arkansas is a league leader in a number of elderly
2 per capita, second only to Florida. I tell the story
3 that the difference between the elderly in Florida and
4 the elderly in Arkansas is that the elderly in Florida
5 ~~have money.~~

6 But even with the second highest rate of people
7 over 65 per capita in the population, Arkansas has the
8 fewest hospital beds per capita, and even with that, we
9 have the fewest dollars spent per hospital bed. We are
10 very low on expenditures.

11 I think it is important that we have commissions
12 like this. And I report to the commission in some
13 detail in the blue binder that there are legal
14 developments in health care delivery that constitute
15 discrimination or at least a lasting denial of health
16 care to the poor.

17 To the elderly and to the other disenfranchised in
18 the Delta area. Today I want to apprise this committee
19 of the commission that there are state and federal
20 policies with respect to health care delivery that have
21 the effect of taking away equal access of health care to
22 the poor, the elderly and the otherwise disenfranchised
23 in the Delta area.

24 Inadequate funding of the education system
25 reducing our earning power and reducing our access to

1 sources of needed talent. Secondly, inordinately high
2 rate of Medicaid denial regardless of whether the
3 applicant qualifies or not.

4 Inordinately high rate of Medicaid payment denials
5 ~~to health care providers the first time they are~~
6 submitted, possibly because of the way we pay people who
7 receive the applications. Serious under-funding of the
8 seven basic federally mandated Medicaid services, thus
9 keeping federal money out of Arkansas and harming health
10 care providers with below cost reimbursement.

11 Fifth, differential Medicare rates that reward
12 wealthier hospitals and nudge rural hospitals to
13 closure. I would encourage you to read the rest of the
14 speech in the blue book but these are my recommendations
15 in the interest of time.

16 The pink arm flush funds and the S and L bailout
17 should not have a higher priority than our educational
18 system or our health care delivery for the elderly and
19 the poor. Funding and reimbursement rates should be
20 standardized across the board, not lower in poorer
21 communities.

22 Anything less in education and health care
23 delivery will maintain a cycle of poverty. Anything
24 less is discriminatory.

25 Number two, we need to build on our strengths.

1 Bring urgent educational programs home to the poor who
2 are trying to break the poverty cycle. We need EMT's
3 and paramedics. We need lab techs, x-ray techs, nurses
4 and doctors.

5 ~~A lot of our people cannot afford to go to Little~~
6 Rock and Memphis for education. Those that can afford
7 to go, do not come back. Existing hospitals and
8 colleges are a valuable resource in bring this training
9 home where it is needed.

10 Third. Medicare reforms from the federal
11 government are dangerously slow. We hear people
12 suddenly speaking the same language, but a lot of the
13 rural hospitals and hospitals that serve the poor,
14 especially in the Delta will close between now and the
15 three years it takes for Congress to enact the reforms
16 they are talking about today.

17 Most hurt will be the elderly who were promised
18 complete medical care for the aged, 26 years ago. Dr.
19 Elders, you have heard me tell that story. I won't
20 repeat it today.

21 Fourth. The deductibles and co-payments for people
22 over 65 are way too high. I don't know what it is like
23 in your checkbook, but in my checkbook, \$562.00 is a lot
24 of money, and now it is happening more and more. And
25 that wasn't what the promise was 26 years ago when these

1 people spend more money fixing up their farms and
2 sending their kids to school because they knew they
3 didn't have to worry about this when they retired. A
4 government's unkept promise.

5 ~~Medicaid applications and payments are being~~
6 denied too often even though the applicant is qualified,
7 and we need reform on these two processes. And fifth,
8 Arkansas budget members should be given priority -- be
9 giving priority to those matching fund programs that
10 have the effect of bringing big federal dollars to the
11 poor in the state of Arkansas.

12 In the blue book, you'll find a little bit longer
13 version of the same speech and recommendations, and you
14 will find what we call the "Frost Report" on the impact
15 of Medicare and Medicaid on hospitals in Arkansas. With
16 that. If I have any time left, I would like to open up
17 to any questions you might have.

18 MS. PUINDEXTER: Yes, I am very, very much
19 concerned because the greatest industrial nation in the
20 world is the one nation in the world without universal
21 child care. How and what condition do we find child
22 care in the Delta? Everything else is sub-part. It is
23 not adequate where I live, and I would like for you to
24 speak to it and its effect on the future education of
25 this area?

1 MR. CAMPBELL: It has a profound effect. We have
2 teenage mothers with no prenatal care, who may or may
3 not be abusing substances that have an impact of that
4 baby; who will continue this cycle. They will have
5 ~~unhealthy babies and then they will be too busy taking~~
6 care of those children to continue their education.

7 Now, we have got to break that cycle. We have had
8 -- we have about 200 babies a year to teenage mothers
9 in Phillips County. And the need needs to be
10 addressed. The issue of education is an issue not of
11 resource generation and then bringing it here. It is a
12 matter of transferring.

13 I have a real problem with why some states let
14 poor community schools be funded more poorly than
15 wealthier communities. If that's not continuing a cycle
16 that needs to be broken, then nothing is. Ms. White:

17 DR. WHILE: A question, as it relates to Phillips
18 County. I have just adopted recently, the Delta as my
19 home and I am going to be asking you some of the
20 questions as it relates that part of the Delta I am
21 from.

22 But here in Phillips County, do you have the
23 problem of a lack of trust on the part of African-
24 American and poor people who need health care, for
25 mental health services or medical care services?

1 MR. CAMPBELL: Yes ma'am. We are trying very
2 hard to maintain a full service medical community. We
3 work with the other providers and with the health
4 department.

5 ~~We often find ourselves in a position where we are~~
6 trying to provide a free program on weekends or through
7 the course of the week, to help people help themselves.
8 And I think it is more a matter of trust than anything
9 else. We have difficulty getting people to attend.

10 We provide transportation. We access to services.
11 I don't pretend to understand all of the history or the
12 pain of this area. I do know that if the question is,
13 what is the best we can do today, the future belongs to
14 those who will buy into the answers.

15 We have a lot of false starts here because of a
16 lack of trust. I think that building that trust is a
17 lot like maintaining a marriage, or raising children.
18 Your trust and your attitude and your action are going
19 to be based on what the average was. And we don't have
20 a very good average.

21 DR. WHITE: The second part of my question then,
22 are there any kind of innovative strategies being used
23 to bridge this gap in trust, and to provide services in
24 some unique ways for the people who need it the most?

1 MR. CAMPBELL: Well, it is time to be humble.
2 We're doing a lot of things that probably aren't very
3 unique or innovative, but I'll tell you, that we have a
4 flower on the tray for every patient regardless of his
5 ~~ability to pay, okay?~~ And we put a newspaper on their
6 tray every evening, regardless from where they come or
7 whether they can read it or not, and that's a message to
8 our employees and to this community that health care
9 provisions are at a professional level and whether we
10 can afford it or not, it is the right thing to do.

11 The policy recommendations that I mentioned
12 earlier need to be addressed, because we are taking a
13 900,000 dollar a month hit on inadequate reimbursement.
14 And we are consuming ourselves, and if we don't get some
15 reforms in Washington and Little Rock, our hospital and
16 probably 30 others in the Delta will close within the
17 next three years.

18 MR. LEVY: Mr. Campbell to you, and maybe to Dr.
19 Elders afterwards when she speaks. I heard a very
20 alarming syndrome I guess in Little Rock, and it may
21 apply to the Delta, too, from a woman who works with
22 dropouts and trying to get them back into the school.

23 And one of the problems in terms of health is this
24 teenage pregnancy. That there seems to be some kind of
25 a macho contest among junior high school young men to

1 see how many children they can father without taking
2 care of the various mothers. And if they were somehow
3 on their clothing or on something, the little hospital,
4 half inch pictures of all the children that they have,
5 ~~and it is very much like, you know, the notches in the~~
6 gun as to how many people you can take care of. Are you
7 familiar with this?

8 MR. CAMPBELL: I can't speak to that. I can tell
9 you that if that's so, it is not necessary and that for
10 a while in Lakeview, the school had actually broken the
11 cycle of unwanted children among school --

12 MR. LEVY: How? How would that be done?

13 MR. CAMPBELL: I am going to let Dr. Elders
14 address that one, okay, in a way that would be much more
15 memorable than I could.

16 MR. LEVY: Thank you.

17 MR. MULBROW: Mr. Campbell, the focus of our forum
18 has been somewhat -- we have gotten off on many subject
19 areas, of course, but basically we are interested in
20 race relations, equal opportunity among the races. In
21 other areas, education, employment, political
22 leadership, we have heard remarks and allegations, black
23 people in the Delta area are disadvantaged. They do not
24 have the same opportunities for whatever the reason.

25 Sometimes it is attitudes, outright

1 discrimination, others it is a result of other factors.
2 What about in the area of health care? For your
3 hospital for example, how do you insure that indigent
4 patients for example, who come to your hospital, black
5 patients, receive the same treatment or care that a
6 white patient in the same condition would receive? How
7 do you assure that, and what kinds of staffing patterns
8 do you have in your hospital, in comparison to those in
9 the community which would help to set the atmosphere and
10 tone of your programs for this? Could you elaborate on
11 that area?

12 MR. CAMPBELL: Sure. Without trying to sound too
13 much like Chicken Little, you are right. Every social
14 and economic issue in the United States today comes more
15 clearly in focus in the Delta than anywhere else. And
16 in our hospital, we don't have the luxury of being able
17 to demonstrate that we turned anybody away, one color or
18 another. If they are a lab technologist or a radiology
19 technologist or a nurse or a physician, simply because
20 the homegrown talent that stays here, is so on the
21 decline that we just don't turn down anybody with the
22 credentials for training.

23 In terms of patterns, --

24 MR. MULBROW: You're talking about training, you
25 train people for medical --

1 MR. CAMPBELL: Not like we want to. I'll tell
2 you, we are so short of people right now, that they
3 can't be taken from the work place to be trained, or to
4 participate in training of other people. And what we
5 need to do is, we need to brain storm with the medical
6 schools and the university system, to have more
7 education here because there are people here who could
8 and would do better, they just can't get to Little Rock
9 and to Memphis. And we would help them with that.

10 MR. MULBROW: Well, say just -- a black patient
11 and a white patient come to your hospital under equal
12 circumstances, economic, and other quality or extent of
13 care necessary. Would they be treated in the same manner
14 by your staff:

15 MR. CAMPBELL: They better be.

16 MR. MULBROW: What do you do to ensure that?

17 MR. CAMPBELL: Well, like I said, we are trying
18 to treat everybody with the same dignity. None of the
19 financial class information leaves the admissions
20 department. The admissions and the doctors and the
21 nurses and the technicians don't have it. We're a
22 fairly -- our hospital doesn't have a new wing and an
23 old wing or an upstairs and a downstairs.

24 We have a medicine wing, we have a surgery wing,
25 we have pediatrics and neonatal. And the majority of

1 our patients in every one of those categories is black,
2 and we offer the best product we know how.

3 MR. MULDRON: Do you have black professional staff
4 people?

5 MR. CAMPBELL: Yes sir. Yes sir, the physician
6 Chairman of our Emergency Room Committee. The Nurse
7 Director of our Intensive Care Services. The Nurse
8 Director of our Neonatal Services, Nurse Director of our
9 Obstetrics Wing, and while I don't carry all that
10 between my ears, I think our leadership is well
11 represented and serve us very well.

12 MR. MULDRON: That's really -- just to follow up
13 on that a little bit, you mentioned in connection with
14 that, the difficulty of retaining trained health service
15 people in the area:

16 MR. CAMPBELL: Yes sir. Let's go back to my
17 recommendations. I am trying to compete with a hospital
18 across the bridge that has four times the Medicaid
19 revenue that I do. And if they get in a bidding war
20 with me for technicians and doctors and nurses, they
21 will win. And they are going to win. And when they
22 win, we close.

23 MR. MULDRON: Why?

24 MR. CAMPBELL: Because Mississippi does a better
25 job of funding their Medicaid program than Arkansas

1 does. And they capture the federal three to one match.
2 The same thing with the hospitals in Texarkana and in
3 Fort Smith. We can't compete for the doctors and nurses
4 like the hospitals right across the state line. And
5 that's why it is in the recommendation and that's why
6 the data is there.

7 And it is in the numbers of how Medicaid affects
8 Arkansas hospitals. Medicare is also a serious
9 problem. Because Medicare -- let's just stop and think
10 about the Medicare costing. I buy a CT scanner. I buy
11 that scanner from the same company as the Baptist
12 Hospital in Memphis.

13 Okay. The government says that my cost is less,
14 and they pay me less. The fact of the matter is, that
15 the Baptist Hospital uses that thing two shifts, seven
16 days a week. I use it five times a day. My cost per
17 case is higher, not lower.

18 The technical person, that Head Nurse, that nurse
19 went to school at Memphis, and for me to get her back
20 here, I have to pay her more than she was going to make
21 in Memphis, not less. The idea that it cost less to
22 live in Helena is a myth.

23 Buy a house, buy groceries, pay your light bill.
24 And yet the federal government pays me 40 percent less
25 for my Medicare patient days, which is half my business,

1 27 percent of my business is Medicaid. I get 360 per
2 patient day from Medicaid. Doctors Hospital in Little
3 Rock makes a thousand.

4 Now, you want to study patterns that have an
5 ~~impact on the black in the Delta, study those. And see~~
6 if I am going to be able to keep this hospital open and
7 staffed with technical people. I suggest not.

8 DR. WHITE: Let me also comment to that, we have
9 lost in Lee County a hospital and it is a very serious
10 hospital there in terms of having easy access to medical
11 care.

12 MS. POINDEXTER: I can't hear, maybe sitting down
13 here. BUT if I can't hear, then maybe people out there
14 can't hear, either.

15 DR. WHITE: I just mentioned that in my part of
16 the Delta, Lee County, we have been effected. The
17 hospital there has closed already. We do have a clinic
18 that is very under staffed, and we don't begin to serve
19 the number of people that we need to, and there is a
20 very serious issue there.

21 I have a question, actually two questions in one.
22 It is two parts, Mr. Campbell. One is just as you are
23 having problems in the area of Health Care, providers,
24 people who are trained, we are in education. And I am
25 wondering if you are aware of any willingness of the

1 medical schools to have their professors come to this
2 region to actually begin training people who are
3 graduates of Phillips County Community College, because
4 we have such a high unemployment rate and many times,
5 ~~the people who do get trained leave because they see no~~
6 viable opportunities in this area, and it just seems to
7 me that we've got to begin homegrowing the resources
8 that we need in this area.

9 MR. CAMPBELL: We are already closely affiliated
10 with the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences.
11 They come here to do the genetic screening and pediatric
12 clinics, very few of which are paid for and we're glad
13 to have that relationship, and would be glad to open a
14 dialogue for developmental education programs in the
15 Delta.

16 The seriousness of what Ms. White was talking
17 about, her hospital is closed. When you start looking
18 at the people in Deshay County who can't get to their
19 own hospital because there is no bridge over the river,
20 they are an hour and a half from us, and we are the
21 nearest hospital.

22 You look at Holly Grove and Marianna and Marvel.
23 We have a tremendously large service area. This
24 hospital is important, not only to people who live in
25 that area, but if we're ever going to be able to attract

1 more technical people and more industry, they are going
2 to need a complete community, and if this hospital
3 folds, this county won't have a complete community.

4 These chemical plants are required by law to be
5 ~~within so many minutes of a hospital emergency room.~~

6 And they are not going to have it. So when you see a
7 hospital close like the one in Marianna, we're talking
8 serious impact. Serious impact.

9 MR. PATTERSON: How many beds does your hospital
10 have?

11 MR. CAMPBELL: 155. Could I speak to that a
12 minute?

13 MR. PATTERSON: Yes.

14 MR. CAMPBELL: This idea that you have to be less
15 than 50 beds in rural to get help, is a serious, serious
16 problem. You look at the hospital in Paragould and you
17 look at Blytheville and Osceola and you look at us,
18 don't tell me we have to be small to survive. Everybody
19 should be reimbursed cost. Cost is the least we should
20 be reimbursed for everything we do.

21 MS. PULNUXIER: What do we do to help you? When
22 we start lobbying legislators, do we do it just at the
23 state level? Do we do it at the national and state
24 level?

25 MR. CAMPBELL: You have to do it at the state

1 level and at the national level, and when you go to the
2 national level, you need to not confine yourself to the
3 Arkansas delegation. There are some sympathetic people
4 on the finance committees and on the House Ways and
5 Means.

6 We have got some friends in Texas. We have even
7 got a friend in Montana. We don't have many friends in
8 California.

9 DR. WHITE: My question was in part related to Ms.
10 Poindexter asked you, Mr. Campbell. I don't know the
11 acts or the laws that have been passed, but it is my
12 understanding that patients can only remain in the
13 hospital so long if they are Medicaid or Medicare
14 recipients, is that correct?

15 MR. CAMPBELL: No.

16 DR. WHITE: Explain to me the limitations on
17 hospital stay. I don't understand.

18 MR. CAMPBELL: The hospital can keep them as long
19 as we want. We will only get paid for the first few
20 days. That's part of that 900,000 dollar a month
21 contribution. You see it's one of those damned if you
22 do and damned if you don't, because if I discharged a
23 patient who needed to stay whether we got paid or not,
24 Dr. Elders would come and say "You sent that patient
25 home too soon." wouldn't you Dr. Elders?

1 DR. ELDERS: That's right.

2 MR. CAMPBELL: See.

3 DR. WHITE: The second part of my question is, is
4 that negatively impacting the poor and minority people
5 ~~who do not have the skills and training to provide for~~
6 themselves in a follow up manner when they go home?

7 MR. CAMPBELL: Absolutely. Let me tell you about
8 my patients. All right. 77 percent government pay.
9 Okay. Only 17 percent of my patients pay anything
10 relative to price. Can anybody else in the state give
11 quite those numbers?

12 Those patients are more dehydrated, more
13 malnourished, they live further from the hospital and
14 they have less support when they go back home than any
15 where else in the country. When people talk about
16 Appalachia, I wonder what they are talking about.

17 Because from here, I don't see where they've got a
18 problem. Okay. When you look at the distances and you
19 look at the poverty, you know, we're providing
20 transportation just so we can go and look at what system
21 we're sending them back to. And what we are trying to
22 do with our nurses and our social workers is, we're
23 trying to spend less time on the output which is a
24 number one discharge, and more on the outcomes.

25 What did we discharge them to? Did we discharge

1 them to a system or a lack of support that is going to
2 bring us back in a few weeks or not? I suggest that
3 that is very difficult when you look at the size of our
4 service area, our population base and how few dollars we
5 have to survive on.

6 MS. POINDEXTER: Recently, in the legislator we
7 had a less than intelligent discussion for lack of
8 better words, concerning the nursing shortage in this
9 state. And I know very, very well, if it exists in the
10 larger metropolitan areas, if we can indeed call them
11 that, of the state of Arkansas, then it must be
12 impacting here, very, very greatly.

13 What impact did that wonderful discussion have on
14 the recruitment of nurses and what would you suggest
15 that we do in order to attract young people not only
16 into nursing, but I was delighted to hear that we had a
17 young lady who was a doctor over here. What do we do?

18 MR. CAMPBELL: The reality is, we are going to
19 have to be competitive on the market. Now, I didn't get
20 to attend that intelligent meeting, but I did send a
21 letter and I had a grocery list of about eleven or
22 twelve things that we had to do.

23 One of the things is, we have to get pas this myth
24 that women should make less money. The fact of the
25 matter is, that a nurse who chooses -- a young woman
who

1 goes into nursing today, could have gone into
2 engineering, or law or medicine or anything she wanted
3 to, and when you look at our entry level salaries for
4 nurses, and then you look at the increments.

5 ~~In other words, in some professions, you can~~
6 expect a 10 to 15 percent increase every year if you're
7 good in your profession. And we want to come up with
8 something close to 3 percent here, and one and a half
9 percent there. And then we wonder why after three or
10 four years they don't feel like they are as important as
11 we tell them they are.

12 I would suggest that every man be a nurse for 24
13 hours, or a teacher. Now, I do want to say this, Ms.
14 White, my recommendations in the blue binder have a
15 great deal to do with education. All right. Because
16 for us to survive, we also have to have people, not in
17 high school, but in the third grade, thinking about the
18 kind of work that they could do when they grow up that
19 would give them a good feeling inside, and how much it
20 costs to live and drive a car and take a vacation and
21 pay a light bill, and what careers there are in the
22 Delta already, that if they study, they can aspire to.

23 I hope this has been too unintelligent. Thank
24 you very much.

25 MR. PATTERSON: Thank you. I look forward to

1 delving into the material that is left behind. Dr.
2 Joyceln Elders, Director of the Arkansas Department of
3 Health. I have looked forward to a long time hearing
4 form you. I hear wonderful things about you. Welcome
5 to the committee.

6
7
8
9 DR. JOYCELN ELDERS

10
11 DR. ELDERS: Thanks. I am not sure I knew what I
12 was supposed to be about today, but I will say what I
13 want to and give you -- leave each of you a book of
14 facts you can read, two different sets of facts.

15 to the United States Commission on CIVIL RIGHTS,
16 the Arkansas Advisory Committee, I am Dr. M. Joyceln
17 Elders, the Director of the Arkansas Department of
18 Health. I am here today to address your committee
19 relative to race relations in the Delta, impacting
20 health.

21 Let me say initially that I am unaware of specific
22 problems effecting health in the Delta that cannot be
23 explained on the basis of poverty, education and access
24 to quality health care.

25 When we look at all of the different problems, I

1 would like to give you a few numbers again, which you
2 have before you. If we look at the economic differences
3 between the races, 9 percent of white families are below
4 the poverty level. 31 percent of black families.

~~5 15 percent of the families that have children less~~
6 of 18 years of age, 45 percent of the black families
7 that have children less than 18 years of age, are below
8 the poverty level. Therefore, black child is three
9 times more likely to live in poverty in the Delta area
10 than a white child.

11 If we look at the socioeconomic differences of the
12 Delta even compared to the rest of Arkansas, there is a
13 larger concentration of blacks in the Delta. There is
14 a far higher poverty level in the Delta. There is a
15 higher rate of single parent households in the Delta.
16 There are higher unemployment rates in the Delta.

17 There is a greater disparity between the income of
18 the lower class and middle class. In fact in the Delta,
19 we really have almost two classes, rather than what we
20 see in most of America. So because of that, I feel that
21 we could -- if just look in and corrected those
22 factors, we would have corrected a lot of the problems
23 relative to race relations in the Delta.

24 When we look the health status difference in the
25 Delta compared to Arkansas as a whole. This is just

1 forgetting the rest of the United States. We find that
2 we have a very much higher teenage pregnancy rate in the
3 Delta than we have in the rest of Arkansas.

4 When we look at the numbers of low birth weight
5 ~~infants born in the Delta, it is two to three times the~~
6 rest of Arkansas, and we look at all the minorities in
7 Arkansas, the minority low birth rate is twice that of
8 the white and the Delta is the highest.

9 If we look at the infant mortality rates, we find
10 exactly the same thing. When we look at heart disease
11 and cerebral vascular incidents, again we find in the
12 Delta the same marked increase of the problem relative
13 to that of even the rest of Arkansas. Not even compare
14 us to all of the United States.

15 These are considered major health problems and
16 major problems which we must deal with and can't be
17 dealt with like we deal with everybody else. We can't
18 pass laws that effect everybody in the United States
19 because when we do that, we have not really helped the
20 people we most need to help.

21 I gave you some data and I really didn't even have
22 time to review it myself. In fact we put this data
23 together looking at the manpower problem in Arkansas.
24 And in that again we find that when we look at the total
25 number of physicians per hundred thousand, there is 213

1 physicians per hundred thousand population of the United
2 States.

3 And in the Delta area, only 89. In Arkansas as a
4 whole, 140. So I would say that there is a marked
5 ~~shortage of physicians in the Delta.~~ Yet we know that
6 this is where 1 people usually are the sickest, have
7 more problems, and have further to travel and have a
8 less support system.

9 If we look at the RN's, just the number of RN's
10 compared to the United States there is 567 per hundred
11 thousand. In Arkansas, 553 which is not too different,
12 but when we get to the Delta, there are only 393 per
13 hundred thousand.

14 And again, I think much of the data I gave you
15 really relates to very specific counties, county-by-
16 county so you can even look to see the marked
17 differences, and you'll note -- and I just gave you the
18 Delta counties, but we have the same data for the entire
19 state.

20 Let me go and talk about some of the problems and
21 I'm going to tell you about some of the strategies which
22 I feel we must implement if we ever plan to make a
23 difference.

24 Again, I mentioned to you earlier talking about
25 the teenage pregnancy rate. In the Delta and some of

1 our communities, 35 percent of all the children born in
2 those communities, are born to people who are parents
3 before they became adults.

4 I am very concerned about a high drop out rate, 44
5 ~~percent~~ of our young black men do not have a high school
6 education. When we start looking at our young black men
7 who are involved with drugs, we find that at least 65
8 percent of those are functionally illiterate.

9 When we start looking at black men who are in
10 prison, we find in Arkansas that we have far more young
11 black men in prison than we have in college, and I
12 consider that -- and this is no different than all of
13 the United States. But when we get to the Delta, the
14 problem becomes magnified several fold.

15 Again, we have a system that is designed to keep
16 our bright young people forever poor, forever ignorant
17 and forever enslaved. I feel that we know how to do
18 something about it, but we are not willing to make the
19 kind of commitment that we need to make in order to make
20 a difference from our most valuable resources.

21 And I consider our bright young people in the
22 Delta, the most valuable resource that this Delta will
23 ever have. And some of the things that I recommend and
24 I strong recommend and feel we must start and we should
25 have started yesterday, if we plan to really make a

1 difference. One of the things I think we know works, is
2 that we need early childhood education programs in the
3 Delta.

4 We have far more early childhood education in
5 Headstart program in northwest Arkansas than we have in
6 the Delta, where the need is far greater. That's
7 because they got in on the beginning of the program and
8 the money was all gone when it came time for the Delta
9 to be funded.

10 I feel that we need to have comprehensive health
11 education programs in our schools in the Delta and we
12 need them in the Delta more than we need them many
13 places. People tell me, "Dr. Elders, let the parents do
14 it," when we have 13 year old parents in the Delta with
15 four children, 19 year olds with five children, how can
16 the parents do it.

17 We got to get involved unless we want to have
18 another generation of the same people doing the same
19 thing. We know from what we have already studied, that
20 50 percent of the young women who become pregnant early
21 will never finish high school.

22 We also know less than 2 percent will go to
23 college. We must get involved to make sure that we do
24 not have another cycle, that we do not plan to keep
25 talking about it in the year 2000. I feel we need to

1 start today and we can make a difference.

2 The third thing that I recommended is that we have
3 got to start parenting and family education programs.
4 Our parents are doing the best they can. They don't
5 know how to be good parents, and they -- they don't
6 know how, they don't do anything because they are scared
7 they may do something wrong.

8 And so I say that we really must begin to help
9 educate the parents. When we start the children, we
10 must have programs that's going to help develop and work
11 with our parents. They want to know. They want to do
12 better, but they don't know how.

13 The fourth thing that I recommend is that -- you
14 talked about the young me. We have got to start having
15 male mentoring programs and teaching our young men
16 responsibility. They have got to know that there is
17 more to being a man than donating a sperm. Which is
18 what they have done, and that's all they've seen because
19 we have so many single parent households.

20 84 percent of our children born to black
21 teenagers, and 63 percent of all the black children born
22 in Arkansas are born to unmarried women. So what do our
23 young men see? We have got to begin to address that
24 problem, and I feel it is important that we start
25 helping to sponsor those kinds of programs.

1 The fifth thing that I recommended is, I
2 recommended comprehensive school based health services.
3 These are health services that have not only physical
4 assessment and screening, nutrition, family planning,
5 immunization, ~~all the things we need.~~ Less than 30
6 percent of our 2 year olds in the Delta have had
7 immunization, complete immunization.

8 80 plus percent have had their immunizations
9 complete when they start school because they have to.
10 But what about all of our 2 year olds and today, we have
11 a physician in the hospital because they were exposed to
12 measles and we are having a measles epidemic.

13 We say we can't afford the vaccine but yet we
14 spend millions to try to control an epidemic. I feel
15 that we could reach these children if we began early.
16 And we talk about now we can't afford this. I feel that
17 we can't afford not to do it. Because one of the things
18 that we get into, we find that more than 25 percent of
19 our children in schools in Arkansas are eligible for
20 Medicaid.

21 And I want you to know, that because many
22 physicians and other places stopped taking Medicaid,
23 only 8.4 percent of the eligible, children, the eligible
24 children receive an evaluation. So our children are not
25 receiving any health care.

1 We are finding 18 year old young men with a mid-
2 shaft hyperthas, something that the doctor fixed in 30
3 minutes and the patient was home in three days. Yet we
4 allowed him to live for 18 years embarrassed, and if he
5 ~~had to go to the bathroom, have to lift up his penis in~~
6 order to void. That's the kind of thing that we have
7 allowed to happen to our most viable resources. So, I
8 feel that our nation must begin to develop and get
9 involved in our most valuable resources.

10 The last thing that I really recommended and feel
11 very strongly about that we must begin to do, is I tell
12 people -- I call it my "hope package." And my hope
13 package is, is we have got to offer children
14 hope, hope to be able to do something.

15 Hope they can get above where they are. And my
16 hope package is, is that I feel any parent, any child
17 who goes to school makes good grades or be average or
18 above and from a low income family should have the
19 opportunity of going to college. We should offer that,
20 at least tuition and books.

21 So that they can hope that they can go, but if you
22 know you don't -- can't go anywhere, what difference
23 does it make. This will also make the parents become
24 involved, and hope to do something about it. So, I feel
25 that those are some of the strategies that I feel that

1 we in Arkansas must get involved with.

2 Our children that need it the most are in the
3 Delta. Our families that need it the most are in the
4 Delta. And we know that most of those are black. So,
5 ~~all -- in our inaction, and the things we don't do,~~
6 impact them, so much more than it does in other areas.

7 For that reason, I really am pushing for our young
8 people to offer them a chance to be able to get on the
9 freeway, to somehow get to their station a little bit
10 quicker than what we have allowed before.

11 We are aware that we have a large number of
12 elderly and I feel that we are trying to address some of
13 their problems by providing in-home health care services
14 and some other services, but I feel that our most
15 desperate need and the place where we are losing the
16 ball game, is with our bright young people.

17 And so my plea is, let's begin to address the
18 children who are going to be the adults of the 21
19 century. And if we are going to do that, we must begin
20 today and so anything that can be done that will help to
21 impact our most viable resources would be a very great
22 blessing, especially to our Delta area. Thank you.

23 MR. PATTERSON: Thank you, doctor.

24 DR. WHITE: Thank you, Dr. Elders. In my area of
25 the Delta, Lee County, you have spent a lot of time

1 trying to convince my constituency of the need for
2 comprehensive health care. And with my coming to that
3 region, I tried to analyze what are the barriers that
4 keep people from wanting to avail themselves of those
5 services, because I see the impact on the young children,
6 as well as on the teenagers and particularly the
7 teenagers.

8 So my question is this: In trying to analyze the
9 situation, it appears, as I said to Mr. Campbell, that
10 there is the perception on the part of the poor and the
11 black, that those who are providing the services are in
12 some way trying to commit genocide on the children.

13 There is on the part of those in many instances
14 who provide the services, a every negative and low
15 opinion of the people they serve, and these two
16 perceptions continue to be the barriers that help
17 prevent those people from really getting the services.

18 And in talking with the health care providers in
19 my area, I have said, "When there is a lack of trust,
20 you must do something different. You can't say I want
21 to provide the services in the schools," and people say
22 "No," and just leave it there and the children go
23 unserved.

24 What would you offer your staff members in terms
25 of some suggestions for innovative ways to bridge that

1 gap, and unfortunately in bridging that gap, although
2 all of the health care people are not African-Americans,
3 I think that is where the distrust comes. It is a
4 racial thing. It is a class issue, and it is also a
5 difference between who receives and who provides the
6 services.

7 DR. ELDERS: Well, you know, you are right. We
8 certainly try very hard to serve Lee County, and I have
9 been down there at night trying to twist arms and you
10 know, -- I don't know whether you know or not, but I
11 was told that the older people wouldn't have the babies,
12 so God put them in his children, by one of your school
13 board members.

14 So what I -- I think what I am trying to say is
15 that I don't consider -- I feel that that's an
16 education problem. I feel that some how, some way, I
17 have not found the magic to convince them to sell my
18 program. I always feel when I can't get something done,
19 that I don't give up. I just go back and retrench and
20 try to find a different way to come after the same
21 problem.

22 So what we have done is, you know, we have tried
23 to open our clinics in the evenings. We have offered
24 Saturday clinics. You know, since we can't get -- they
25 don't want us at the school. And so I am saying that.

1 you know, we have been trying but my feeling was, let's
2 go where the children are.

3 And right now, I am talking with the industry
4 health care committee to give us transportation so we
5 can have a van to go around and pick people up that live
6 in the rural areas and bring them in to the clinic after
7 hours. You know, we thought that we could reach a lot
8 of the children by providing the service during the
9 school hours and on school time and we could really make
10 a lot of difference and provide comprehensive health
11 education rather than popping in and popping out.

12 But you know, again, we have an education problem
13 with the politicians. We have an education problem with
14 the constituency. We have an education problem with
15 us. So, you know, I think we have all got to become
16 involved. It is going to take every one of us to become
17 involved to really overcome the problem that we're
18 dealing with with our children, if we really want our
19 children to be ready for the 21st century to do the
20 kinds of things we know they have to do, in order to
21 survive.

22 MR. LEVY: On this problem of dealing with the
23 community and the health care, what about the ministers
24 again?

25 DR. ELDERS: The ministers?

1 MR. LEVY; And their influence? I know you --

2 DR. ELDERS: Let me tell you about that. That's
3 really -- I have really worked hard with the ministers.
4 My brother is a minister. I even hired a minister on
5 the health department staff to do nothing but go around
6 to convince ministers to get involved.

7 And I think that was really very helpful, but I
8 had to call him a Special Assistant to the Director or
9 something like that. I couldn't say he was a preacher.
10 But be that as it may, that's a wonderful resource, and
11 I have really talked to lots of ministers.

12 I have spoken in more churches than my brother has
13 the past two years. But I want you to know that I think
14 they are beginning to listen, you know, and what we
15 really have to overcome, you know, everybody got --
16 well, let me say, I think that 5 percent of our
17 population has been determining what the other 95
18 percent was going to do.

19 So that very vocal far, let's say right group if
20 you will, has -- they have done a good job. That's all
21 I can say. They have done a good job. They brainwashed
22 many of our people, and they have been using the backs
23 of our children to ride on, to keep their issues before
24 the public.

25 I'm sorry about that, but that was because they

1 did a good job and we weren't doing our job, and I have
2 been running hard the past two years to try to overcome
3 that. But you know, it takes a long time. I didn't
4 realize it took this long, but it does take a long time.

5 But we have really -- we have worked very hard
6 with the ministers. I have gone to the ministerial
7 alliances and the religious forums and the -- and the
8 80s are beginning to come. I really feel that there has
9 been a real change in the attitudes in Arkansas. You
10 know, maybe I am reading that myself, but at least they
11 are nicer to me anyway.

12 MS. POINDEXTER: Dr. Elders, two summers ago, the
13 National Education Association went on record in
14 support of school based clinics and we salute you for
15 your work in that area, because it is a necessity.

16 What is of concern to me as a classroom teacher is
17 the fact that when budget cuts come, and not just in the
18 Delta, in Pulaski County, there are currently three
19 nurses, servicing over 750 square miles. Two of those
20 individuals being assigned to the community based
21 instruction area.

22 In my classroom the other day, John Robert Star
23 form the Democrat, we invite all the people to our
24 school.

25 DR. ELDERS: Of course.

1. MS. POINDEXTER: John Robert Star was in our
2 school, and he said that one of the non-essentials that
3 Little Rock still had was a school nurse, was a school
4 nursing program and that the school nurses weren't a
5 necessity to education.

6 How when you have not only politicians, but those
7 who do formulate in many instances, opinions, how do we
8 get past that, because to me it is far more essential
9 than the administration that we have, and all the other
10 things that we have, what do we do?

11 DR. ELDERS: You know, I guess we just have to
12 keep on educating. That's what I keep telling -- we
13 just have to keep on educating and working on that
14 problem. You know, I don't feel you can educate a child
15 that sick. I don't feel you can educate a child that is
16 hungry.

17 So, I feel that we've got to start with basics,
18 and that's why I feel it is so essential and we just
19 have to keep on talking about it. I want you to know
20 that our legislature -- I was just shocked. Our
21 legislators are wanting to have a conference to find out
22 what can we do about our teenage pregnancy problem in
23 Arkansas.

24 I have been talking for two years, and they
25 haven't heard me, but they have finally heard enough

1 that they want to have a conference to find out what can
2 we do. So, we're getting human services, health,
3 education, every vocation ed, JTPA, and everyone
4 together, and we are going to try and work up what can
5 we do -- what are the things we can do that cost no
6 money.

7 If nothing else, can we tell women where to go to
8 get service. You know, I think this idea of sitting
9 around just saying "no," is not where it is, and it is
10 not going to get it. We need someone to start saying
11 "Yes" to some of the things we need for our children.

12 MR. PATTERSON: Doctor, you made a reference to
13 Headstart. I have been wrong many times in my life. I
14 don't mind being wrong again. I would like to make the
15 statement and then tell me whether I am off base or not,
16 and then I'll ask the question.

17 You referred to northeast Arkansas as an example
18 of the money being used in those area. I suggest that
19 when Headstart originally was formed, it was supposed to
20 be used on a non-discriminatory basis. The student
21 bodies were supposed to be integrated. The parent
22 involvement was supposed to be integrated.

23 The teacher's aid programs, the teachers
24 themselves, the career development. All of that was
25 supposed to be integrated. I would suggest at the time

1 Headstart was formed, they were not prepared in the
2 Delta to accept those -- so that you have historical
3 discrimination there?

4 DR. ELDERS: Yes.

5 MR. PATTERSON: Because not so much the people
6 grasping for the money. Northeast Arkansas didn't have
7 the climate of fear. It was assessed more even. In
8 northwest they probably had no white population so they
9 were dealing with poverty alone. Is that a fair
10 assessment of what's happened?

11 DR. ELDERS: I think that is a very fair
12 assessment and then they got theirs. theirs was
13 started, and the money was gone.

14 MR. PATTERSON: And so now, they historically --
15 they fixed the level of funding and then they took it
16 out of the education program or put it in the system --

17 DR. ELDERS: I don't know, I don't know all the
18 details, but

19 MR. PATTERSON: But are they going to increase
20 those funds? That really is my question. Is there no
21 funds available now at all?

22 DR. ELDERS: This year -- I think Dr. White is
23 wanting to answer that. She may know more about it than
24 I do.

25 DR. WHITE: What has happened in addition to the

1 basic Headstart program is that programs that were
2 well, well-established in the northwest have been able
3 to expand through other kinds of services that reinforce
4 the services that are offered by Headstart..

5 A number of programs, for example the HIPPY
6 program that is supported by Governor and Mrs. Clinton
7 is well and alive and has been expanded in northwest
8 Arkansas. There is a new program, a federally funded
9 program, Evenstart, that was supposed to be awarded to
10 one rural site and one urban site in each state.

11 But that section of Arkansas was the only site
12 that was funded at the federal level. So they are
13 providing a wide variety of services that are not
14 available in other areas of Arkansas, particularly in
15 the Delta.

16 DR. ELDERS: And I think, you know, if -- you
17 know, if you have good grant writers, people who are
18 ready to draft funds, people that are more educated, you
19 know, groups that are better, you know, have already
20 gotten the steps organized, they go out and they
21 immediately grasp, as you said. They grasp the program,
22 and then the people that need them the most, are left
23 unserved.

24 MR. PATTERSON: In most places, those were the
25 establishment who knew how to do that and they were not

1 federal monies for this intervention called "early
2 childhood education?"

3 DR. ELDERS: You are absolutely correct. I feel
4 that we must make a real commitment at the state level,
5 and every time I am out now, I am really out talking
6 about things, politicians don't like to talk about. And
7 that is taxes, and I have said, you know, we go and we
8 talk about our poor is more disenfranchised and
9 overtaxed and all.

10 All of that may be true, but they are the most
11 needy. You see, when we don't have the tax money, it is
12 the poor child that remains ignorant, and don't go to
13 college. If we don't have the tax money, it is the poor
14 child that is in prison being paid \$22,000.00 a year to
15 warehouse them in prison and then remain uneducated.

16 And we don't have the money in Medicaid, our
17 elderly do not receive services because the other have
18 insurance. So far as I am concerned, I don't buy that
19 the poor is overtaxed. The poor is going to pay less
20 tax, because they are going to buy less.

21 But they are going to benefit, maybe not today,
22 but their children are going to benefit from the
23 services. Yes, I very definitely feel that we have to
24 fight at the state level and I tell -- in fact, I go
25 around telling them that we can't sit and wait on the

1 federal level to come, because we don't have time.

2 MR. MULDROW: I just want to make a couple of
3 comments. First of all, I want to thank you and Mr.
4 Campbell so much for the careful preparation you have
5 ~~given me in coming before us~~ here, for the substance of
6 your remarks, for the extensive background materials
7 that you have left for us to take with us.

8 I want to observe also, that despite all the
9 problems that the Delta has, there are certainly
10 fortunate to have a health care provider and policy-
11 maker such as you two, who are interested and concerned
12 about the problems of this area.

13 And I want to assure you that we as a panel and as
14 a staff, will do all we can to make your story known,
15 and your recommendations heard in places that we have
16 access to.

17 DR. ELDERS: Thank you very much. Thank you.

18 MR. PATTERSON: You hear a great deal of
19 depressing information when you come to hearings like
20 this, and one of the things that makes it joyous is
21 hearing someone like you who still cares enough to get
22 excited about things.

23 DR. ELDERS: Thank you. I'm still having a good
24 time, but it is still hard.

25 MR. PATTERSON: Don't stop.

1 DR. ELDERS: Thank you.

2 MR. PATTERSON: We have two persons who have asked
3 to appear in the open forum. I will call on them in the
4 sequence in which I have their names written. I remind
5 you that we are supposed to ask that you have five, not
6 over seven minutes, between five and seven minutes for a
7 presentation.

8 I am not sure I can read this writing. Alvin
9 Sims. Mr. Sims, would you not only identify yourself,
10 would you perhaps suggest to us whether you are speaking
11 as an individual or an organization or whatever
12 information you might care to give us.

13 -----
14

15
16 MR. ALVIN SIMS

17
18 MR. SIMS: No, I am speaking as an individual in
19 this community. I am an attorney with the law firm of
20 Sims and Sims. We have a law practice that has been in
21 this community for about 15 or 16 years.

22 And I am also speaking as a member of the East
23 Arkansas Legal Services Board of Directors, which is the
24 board I just recently left the meeting with in Forest
25 City. But I have gotten some calls about some of the

1 testimony that was coming before the Commission and once
2 I was enlightened, I wanted to come before you all and
3 speak briefly.

4 I will try to keep my comments and my statements
5 within six minutes. ~~Initially or first of all, I would~~
6 like to speak about a lawsuit in which I was involved in
7 in Phillips County. The style of the lawsuit was
8 MacGruder vs. the Phillips County Election Commission
9 and others. That was a lawsuit that went from here,
10 United States District Court, Eastern District, all the
11 way to the Eight Circuit Division, in St. Louis.

12 We lost the case, but I want to raise some of the
13 issues to establish that in Phillips County we still
14 have a lot of problems in terms of race relations.
15 Initially we started the lawsuit out, framing that some
16 ballots had been illegally marked, and after
17 investigating that, we learned that there were other
18 allegations, other factors that occur in Phillips
19 County elections that we wanted to bring out and those
20 are some of the things I am going to try to bring out
21 briefly.

22 MR. PATTERSON: May I interrupt just a minute.
23 Before I frighten you into going too fast about the five
24 to seven minutes, and what you're saying is important.
25 Let me tell you that anyone -- this was an announcement

1 made earlier. Anyone wishing to make a statement during
2 that period, written statements also may be submitted to
3 the committee members or to the staff here today, or by
4 mail.

5 If you would like to ~~amplify your remarks later or~~
6 send the entire written statement, you may submit this
7 to the committee members or the staff here, and you can
8 get the address, the specific address. I won't take up
9 any of your time giving it, but we will give it to you
10 afterwards, if you would like to send additional
11 information. As long as it is received by April 6th, it
12 will go into the information in this hearing.

13 MR. SIMS: Okay. Thank you.

14 MR. PATTERSON: Excuse me for interrupting you.

15 MR. SIMS: The basic thrust of that lawsuit dealt
16 with irregularities that occurred during that election.
17 I am not going to go into that, other than to cite that
18 and hopefully make that a part of the record. You all
19 who are trying to determine what the race atmosphere is
20 like. If you read that lawsuit yourself, then you would
21 know what the facts were.

22 And if you want to take the transcript, it was a
23 four day trial, that would be voluminous but it's in
24 there as well. But there are race allegations dealing
25 with black candidates that their votes were not

1 counted. A controversy over absentee ballots and the
2 procedure in which they were supposed to be complied
3 with under the state statues, and also voter's
4 intimidation.

5 We contend ~~that certain election polling places~~
6 are at areas that are intimidating in and of themselves
7 to blacks. For example, the banks. We make that
8 contention on the economic factor of Phillips County, in
9 that Phillips County is one of the poorest counties in
10 the nation.

11 Not to mention one of the poorest in Arkansas.
12 And that having poor black people who don't in many
13 instances have bank accounts, go to a bank to vote is a
14 very, very devastating act for them to do. They are not
15 accustomed to going to the bank, in the first place.

16 You know already about the large amount of federal
17 aid that is dumped in Phillips County per month, whether
18 your talk AFDC, all of those governmental programs, we
19 are at the top of the list when those funds are
20 distributed at the end of the month.

21 We don't have jobs, we don't have the economic
22 climate here that we would like to have, and a lot of
23 that is because of the problems we had in that election
24 and also, as it relates to education, which will
25 probably be my second, and last point.

1 Currently we are having a lot of problems in the
2 school system as it relates to education. We have a
3 seven member school board. Currently, we only have one
4 black member. That one black member has gone on
5 inactive status because he feels basically, and this is
6 quoting from the paper, basically that "the board has
7 been insensitive to black needs."

8 I feel that the board has historically been
9 insensitive to black needs. I am an attorney on record
10 in a lawsuit and styled Whitfield versus the West Helena
11 School Board, which we are seeking to attack and have
12 declared unconstitutional an at-large scheme of elected
13 school board members and go to districts.

14 That has been done in Phillips County in Perkins
15 versus the City of West Helena. And also, on a state-
16 wide level in Jeffers versus Bill Clinton, and others.
17 Stating the same contention, the delusion of black
18 voting strength.

19 We have not gotten -- we don't have situations
20 where white candidates will come to the black community,
21 meet with the black community and support black issues.
22 That's not on record. You're not going to find it on
23 record.

24 If you search the last year's record of the West
25 Helena School Board -- excuse me. First of all, the

1 West Helena City Council meeting, you'll find that most
2 of those votes were on racial lines.

3 You go over the Helena, and look at their minutes
4 for the last year, you'll find that most of those votes
5 ~~were along racial lines, when race was an issue.~~ And if
6 you go to the school board, you'll find this same thing.

7 So I am going to conclude there in making my point
8 that the racial atmosphere in Phillips County is not
9 what it should be. White politicians generally have
10 been insensitive to black needs and there is a lot that
11 this commission can do to improve the plight of blacks
12 in Phillips County.

13 MR. PATTERSON: I have taken the last question at
14 almost every session, so I am going to take the first
15 question.

16 MS. POINDEXER: You did that earlier.

17 MR. PATTERSON: I did that earlier?

18 MS. POINDEXER: Yes.

19 MR. PATTERSON: It was just one time, wasn't it?

20 MS. POINDEXER: Okay.

21 MR. PATTERSON: One statement, I want to emphasize
22 again, an urge that you do particularly representing
23 Legal Services, if you would put this in writing and get
24 it to the Commission, I think it would be extremely
25 valuable.

1 My comment, the most shocking thing you said,
2 voting at a bank? Are there no public buildings where
3 they -- they don't use libraries or city halls or
4 anything like that?

5 MR. SIMS: A bank, a branch bank.

6 MR. PATTERSON: A privately owned bank?

7 MR. SIMS: And when that lawsuit was initially
8 filed, we had a three member election commission that
9 was all white. This county is 50 percent black. Since
10 that lawsuit, even though we did not prevail at the
11 Eight Circuit level, a black has been appointed to the
12 election commission. But that does not cure all of the
13 election problems as they exist, and all of the -- I
14 should say the concerns that blacks have about an honest
15 and outright election in Phillips County.

16 MS. POINDEXTER: Mr. Sims, I spoke with Senator
17 Benham who is less than enthusiastic about the
18 reapportionment which is taking place in this area to
19 impact the electoral process. And I asked him what he
20 planned on doing as a state official to make sure that
21 voting machines are brought into Phillips County.

22 We have heard that McGehee does have them and
23 McGehee is far, I think, poorer than Helena-West
24 Helena. What is your group doing to -- in your
25 lawsuits to guarantee that you will not have paper and

1 pencil ballots anymore, so that people can look at what
2 you're doing, but that indeed, you have voting machines
3 where people can go in, close the door and cast their
4 ballots secretly?

5 ~~MR. SIMS:~~ -- Again, that is an issue that is in my
6 opinion would be left to the -- first of all, the
7 central Democratic Election Committee, and then
8 secondly, maybe the members of the Phillips County
9 Election Commission.

10 MS. POINDEXIER: Are you planning on lawsuits,
11 because they don't do -- they are inactive?

12 MR. SIMS: Generally, any avenues that -- any
13 progress that is made in Phillips County, is as a result
14 of a lawsuit. We now have a predominately black state
15 representative district, not because the board of
16 apportionment felt that black votes were being diluted,
17 but because blacks -- a group of black plaintiffs felt
18 that way and were -- their position was affirmed by the
19 Eighth Circuit group or the circuit of judges who heard
20 the case, which is not on appeal at the United States
21 Supreme Court.

22 MS. POINDEXIER: Well, I guess my concern is
23 this? We have the reapportionment, we have all that
24 going, it will mean nothing if blacks do not have
25 guarantees of privacy in the voting place?

1 MR. SIMS: I agree with you.

2 MS. POINDEXIER: So, I am wondering if there are
3 lawsuits anticipated, should the election committee not
4 decide to live up to its responsibilities?

5 MR. SIMS: ~~It hasn't in the past, in my opinion.~~

6 It hasn't. And we use the Civil Rights Election
7 Commission study for 1980 I believe in our lawsuit in
8 MacGruder versus the Phillips County Election
9 Commission. That should be another interesting point.

10 We introduced almost all that committee's
11 investigations and findings as a part of the record, to
12 show that black men in Phillips County, for example, at
13 that time only held a eighth grade education on the
14 average, a eighth grade education.

15 And that in and of itself is one of the reasons
16 why you have a disproportionate number of whites
17 representing an area that is majority black. Because we
18 have not generally understood the need to have our own
19 representatives, particularly in an area that has
20 progressed as much as Phillips County within the last
21 twenty years.

22 I wish my former professor was here, Morton
23 Gillman, because I can recall some of the statements he
24 made because he was on that committee at that time.

25 MS. POINDEXIER: Thank you.

1 DR. WHITE: You described some problems with
2 absentee voting and I know that that is not just an
3 issue for Phillips County. It has been a problem in the
4 Delta, and not only absentee voting, but even for voter
5 registration, in terms of how people are treated when
6 they go into the courthouses for registration.

7 Would you describe some of those problems and what
8 your organization would offer as solutions to both voter
9 registration and absentee voting?

10 MR. SIMS: A thorough accounting, first of all,
11 from the state election commission, that the Phillips
12 County Election Commission does follow the rules. I was
13 a student at ASU at one point, and I had filed as an
14 absentee ballot candidate. I never received a ballot.

15 What I did was, register to vote in Craighead
16 County. I went on to law school in Fayetteville, and
17 filed the same thing. I never received a ballot. I
18 voted in all of the Fayetteville city elections. I had
19 no interest in Fayetteville. I am from Helena. I was
20 raised here.

21 And so I guess what I am saying is, we're talking
22 procedure. We know what the statutes are, but are the
23 procedures being followed and we have numerous occasions
24 and some individuals such as the NAACP of Phillips
25 County can document this much better than I, where

1 individuals have not received their absentee ballot.

2 Okay. And they have not been allowed to
3 participate in their local election.

4 MR. PATTERSON: Thank you.

5 ~~MS. POINDEXTER: Thank you for allowing me to be a~~
6 part of this. I apologize for having to go to Little
7 Rock. Thank you.

8 (Ms. Linda Ann Poindexter left the meeting)

9 MR. PATTERSON: We have one final person to
10 appear, Theo Parham. You didn't tell me when we were
11 visiting earlier that you were going to appear?

12 MR. PARHAM: No, I hadn't made a decision then.

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15
16 MR. THEO PARHAM

17
18 MR. PARHAM: This is going to be real short. I
19 think it would be safe to say that what we are living
20 under in Phillips County is a cloud of suspiciousness
21 and distrustfulness, and basically what that boils down
22 to is we're living under a cloud of beliefs, whether
23 those beliefs are true or not true about whatever
24 system, whether that system be either an educational
25 system or political system or economic system, or what

1 have you. There is still a tremendous amount of
2 suspiciousness and distrustfulness.

3 . Now, what I have decided to talk about just a
4 little bit, the possibilities of alternative schools or
5 ~~alternative educations.~~ And the reason why I wanted to
6 address that, I know in our general education system
7 right now, that there is a belief that children are not
8 being given an equitable education.

9 And the reason being is that there is a tracking
10 system, and also there is a -- in addition to that
11 there is special education. A lot of our black males
12 are being herded into special education at a record
13 number. And being also a person who is licensed to
14 practice psychology in the State of Arkansas, I have
15 given a number of intelligence tests to a number of the
16 students who are attending. Right now, I am also a
17 coordinator of an alternative school here and Helena-
18 West Helena.

19 I have given a number of our people who come
20 there, who attend that school, intelligence tests and
21 what I have found is that a large number of those
22 students, if they were back in regular school, that they
23 would be qualified for -- they would be qualified for
24 special education services, and that doesn't mean that
25 they have lack of capacity.

1 But what I have found is, that mostly what I am
2 measuring is lack of exposure. One of the other things
3 I found, too, and this has just been from being a
4 special education teacher myself, is that in Helena-West
5 ~~Helena, students, especially once you get into~~ high
6 school, students slips into or sneak into these special
7 education classes.

8 Now, I know that one of the things that we say is
9 that if a student experienced more -- or the more
10 experience or the more success experience a student has,
11 then these will raise -- these successful experiences
12 will raise his self-image, or how he feels about
13 himself.

14 And that is one of the reasons why we have special
15 education, so we can individualize the student's
16 instructions, so he can be successful and therefore feel
17 good about himself. But we can see that if a student
18 feels so ashamed of being in these classes until he
19 actually slips into them, that that is very, very
20 damaging to his self-esteem, which is the same thing as
21 self-concept.

22 So what I propose instead of, and I know there are
23 state mandates and there are federal mandates or federal
24 guidelines that determines how and under what kind of
25 circumstances the money for special education, how it

1 should be spent and this, that and the other.

2 What I propose in a place where racism,
3 suspiciousness and distrustfulness is experienced at the
4 level that it is experienced down here in the Delta,
5 ~~that special education as mandated by federal policies~~

6 and also state policies, that -- I don't know whether --

7 it doesn't seem to me, it doesn't appear that people
8 who are making these mandates are sensitized to the type
9 of pressures that a person who is experiencing these
10 tremendous pressures as a result of the color of their
11 skin should be subjected to this type of an educational
12 setting.

13 In an alternative school, alternative education,
14 if you will, it kind of functions as a magnet school
15 type setting, you know, where the student is not
16 necessarily labeled as mentally retarded or learning
17 disabled, or emotionally disturbed in order to receive
18 some of these types of services but, his program is
19 individualized the same way that it is supposedly
20 individualized in a special education type setting, and
21 he can receive whatever types of other support help that
22 he needs to compliment his education in these type
23 settings, but without having to experience the
24 tremendous amount of negativism, if you will, of having
25 to subject himself to be labeled "special ed" and

1 have to slip into these classrooms, which really damages
2 their self-concept more so than improving it.

3 And I think that's one of the reasons you'll find
4 a large number of students who are in these classes
5 ~~experience more frequent~~ discipline problems than
6 students who are not subjected to this type program.

7 MR. PATTERSON: Question?

8 DR. WHITE: Mr. Parham, I have a series of
9 questions. Please describe by sex and gender and total
10 number the alternative educational program that you
11 direct?

12 MR. PARHAM: Do you mean the students who are
13 participating?

14 DR. WHITE: Yes.

15 MR. PARHAM: Okay. I can tell you just generally
16 speaking. I don't know the total break out, okay. A
17 large number of our population is black and male. And I
18 would say probably 90 percent of them probably fall
19 below the poverty line.

20 DR. WHITE: The second part of my question, in
21 talking about providing adequate enrichment and
22 resources for students, are you saying that the kind of
23 program that you're describing where black male students
24 are removed from the mainstream of the school system
25 would be provided in the services in an isolated

1 setting, the first part of the question.

2 And second, am I naive in believing that there is
3 no way those students are going to be provided the
4 resources that they need to be on an even par with their
5 students - or to be able to be competitive because they
6 are removed from the mainstream of the system, and is
7 that the answer?

8 MR. PARHAM: Hopefully I understand your
9 question. Okay. I think one of the things your saying
10 is, that they are going to be more isolated by removing
11 them say from the mainstream and to an alternative
12 setting. That's what you're contending, right?

13 DR. WHITE: Yes. I guess I am responding to your
14 question because I have had -- asking the question
15 because this has been proposed before, that for the most
16 part, when we look at who is not making it in education,
17 you're talking about black male students.

18 And one person has said "Well, why don't we just
19 remove the black males from the system. That will do
20 two things. It will give us an opportunity to
21 concentrate on the black male students but it will also
22 remove that barrier that serves as a fear-inducing
23 element for many people in the public setting,
24 particularly caucasian parents and their off spring.

25 And so I wonder about what are the real effects of

1 making that kind of decision and if there are other
2 alternatives we could use, rather than that particular
3 measure.

4 MR. PARHAM: Okay. To me, there is two ways you
5 can approach the problem. You can -- ~~well, there is two~~
6 ways you can approach anything. You can wait until it
7 becomes a problem and then you can look at it from a
8 remediation standpoint.

9 And the other way is to prevent it from becoming a
10 problem. And to do that, I think one of the things
11 that's been talked about today, is early intervention,
12 before the student enters school. And certainly, I
13 think that is probably the best way to deal with it, is
14 to deal with it on an intervention rather than a
15 remediation type -- but just you know, for all the
16 people who are in school right now, and let's just say
17 people who advance beyond second grade, third grade or
18 what have you, and who already have difficulties in
19 reading, et cetera, okay, as far as their academic
20 achievements are concerned.

21 Then I propose that instead of taking them and
22 giving them some kind of psychological evaluation, and
23 then labeling them as mentally retarded or learning
24 disabled or emotionally disturbed or what have you, and
25 tracking or tracking which is the same thing, I propose

1 to remove that labeling and have an alternative
2 educational program that address whatever deficiencies
3 or deficits that those students bring.

4 Whether they are primarily educational or whether
5 they are a combination of both educational and
6 behavioral.

7 DR. WHILE: I guess -- and I won't ask another
8 question after this for you. I guess my question is
9 this: When we remove the students, are we viewing the
10 students as being the problem or do we have the
11 responsibility for having the system respond more
12 appropriately to the needs of the students, i.e., when
13 we -- in testimony earlier today, a person said that
14 black students, particularly black male students, are
15 three times as likely to be suspended as their white
16 counterparts.

17 Not based on the acts they commit, but based on
18 the lack of quality interactions between the teacher and
19 the student in the classroom, that students are more
20 likely to be referred to EMK classes, not because they
21 are innately inferior, but because people have not been
22 trained to teach them effectively.

23 Then if that is the problem, the system, then do
24 we change the system or do we pull these kids out and
25 say "All right, you guys, there is something wrong with

1 you all. We're going to fix you."

2 MR. PARHAM: Okay. One of the things that I have
3 found from dealing with, you know, just the discipline
4 problems if you will, is that you're going to have
5 basically two type kids that presents discipline
6 problems, and one of them is going to be the child --
7 most likely is going to be the child who is low -- not
8 low functioning, but has disconnected from school for
9 one reason or the other.

10 It may be because they have poor reading skills,
11 poor math skills or what have you, and the other may be
12 the child who is at the other extreme of that. And most
13 of the -- from being a teacher myself and I'm pretty
14 sure in your experience in being a teacher, that a
15 teacher is more likely to tolerate a student who is high
16 functioning who acts out, than a student who is low
17 functioning that acts out.

18 So what happens is, the teacher pulls the student
19 out and the one who is low functioning, they will
20 recommend that that student get evaluated. And upon
21 evaluation, that's the way the student is going to fall
22 out, you know, and like I said, it is not anything that
23 is innate or genetic or what have you.

24 But the student is going to fall out functioning
25 with an IQ that suggests that the student is mentally

1 retarded. He is going to -- you know, he is going to
2 score 69 or below on an IQ test, and that's -- if you
3 look at his reading skills, they are going to be poor
4 also, so this student is going to qualify for one of
5 those type classes.

6 And so therefore, he is going more likely to end
7 up on one of those type classes, when the problem
8 started at a much earlier age. It started before the
9 student got to school. You know, because he was born to
10 probably a single parent, teenage, and so he came to
11 school without those readiness skills that he needed,
12 you know, to access reading and those things he needed
13 to do once he got to school.

14 So he was behind when he got there and there were
15 no programming that was in place to you know, to impact
16 this, so what happens, the student gets farther and
17 farther behind and he you know, about the second grade
18 or third grade he disconnects from school.

19 DR. WHITE: I have no problem with your
20 identification of the problem. I guess my concern is
21 what you offer as a solution and I recognize your right
22 to have that as a way of responding to the problem.

23 MR. PARHAM: Okay. Well, more or less -- I'm
24 not saying that an alternative school or an alternative
25 education if you will, should be provided only for

1 students who are low functioning. But I think it should
2 be provided for students who are not making it in a
3 regular school setting, and that all these students
4 should be housed together and they should not be
5 isolated from each other.

6 And if you don't have that type of labeling et
7 cetera that is going on, saying that you've got to have
8 a 69 IQ in order to get placed in this class, and
9 everybody know you are there because you have a 69 IQ.
10 Well, that's a little bit different than a student that -
11 - we have a student now over at the alternative school
12 that just didn't like being on big campuses. You know,
13 he didn't like being around 800 kids.

14 And he didn't go. But since he has been over with
15 70 kids, he attends regularly. He has not missed.
16 That's a little bit different than saying this kid is
17 there because he has a 69 IQ and therefore he is labeled
18 as mentally retarded.

19 He does not slip over to the alternative school
20 like some of the kids slips into the classrooms.

21 MR. WILLIS: Mr. Parham, I can recall my days of
22 elementary school and I know we grow and we develop new
23 concepts and so forth and make improvements in all
24 professions. Prior to integration, we didn't have such
25 concepts as LD and all this stuff.

1 When I was in school, I mean, some individuals
2 learned at a slower pace than others, but I can't recall
3 people who couldn't function. I don't remember that. I
4 mean I was pretty good at math and went to the board and
5 ~~there were some that didn't catch on as fast as I did,~~
6 but the objective was that we got those individuals to
7 perform, the end result.

8 Now, my wife is a special education teacher, and I
9 have got a real serious problem with what's going on
10 today, as far as carving out certain students and
11 putting them over here and I just think that's a bad
12 thing.

13 Now, I want to ask you a question. Do you think
14 there is a correlation between integration and this new
15 phenomena we are seeing right now?

16 MR. PAKHAM: I think certainly -- sure. I am
17 pretty sure there is. There has got to be. You know,
18 you're dealing with -- you're dealing with people,
19 caucasian and also some black people, whose only
20 interaction, you know, they went to all white schools
21 and they have never had any cultural experiences of that
22 group of people.

23 So certainly -- and too, I think that one other
24 basic thing you're dealing with too, is basic respect.
25 you know, if you don't feel that that person is a human.

1 then you are probably more likely to -- if you don't
2 communicate that verbally, you're going to communicate
3 that non-verbally to that person that, you know, you
4 don't see him as a human. Do you know what I mean?

5 That caring is not there. And certainly if that
6 caring is not there, then you're not going to go that
7 extra mile if you need to go that extra mile, in order
8 to make sure that that person grasps whatever it is that
9 you're trying to get across to that person.

10 MR. WILLIS: So what you're saying is, integration
11 is a failure?

12 MR. PARHAM: Yeah, but you know, one other thing,
13 too, that you must understand, is that when you and I
14 was coming up through school, that a person could drop
15 out of school and you know, if they weren't good at
16 school, they dropped out of school much more readily
17 than they drop out now, and they worked at the local
18 service station or they went and worked on the farm and
19 all those jobs that did not require an education if you
20 will, they are no longer available.

21 And if they are, they no longer as plentiful as
22 they used to be. So, that's one of the other things
23 that you're dealing with now. You know, people are
24 staying in school longer, you know, because there is
25 really nothing else for them to do. And I think that is

1 part of why we have more people labeled as special ed or
2 what have you.

3 MR. WILLIS: You know something, I beg to differ
4 and this might be unpopular, but I'm going to tell you
5 something. I'm going to tell you what I see, as far as
6 the crisis in our education system today, is that the
7 lack of parental involvement.

8 You can't teach values and you can't teach the
9 basics of education, you just don't have enough time in
10 the day. I am an educator, among many other things by
11 the way. You can't do it. You can't teach values.
12 That has to come from the home, and you know we fall
13 down on that, and then want to place the blame on a lot
14 of other folks.

15 You know, and I am sick and tired of hearing that
16 issue. The critical issue is, that parents have got to
17 take a more responsible position towards educating their
18 children. In fact, it is kind of like a triangle. You
19 have the parents involved. You have the educators
20 involved, and you have the administrators involved.

21 Whenever you have those three entities working
22 together in concert, then the student will be best
23 served. When you have a break down between either one
24 of those entities, then who is going to suffer? The
25 student. And that's what we are saying right now.

1 We're seeing more and more parents who are not involved
2 in the education of their children.

3 MR. PARHAM: Let me -- you know, one of the
4 things I said when I first came up here is that one of
5 the primary issues that we're dealing with here in
6 Helena, Arkansas, is that we're living under a cloud of
7 suspiciousness and distrustfulness.

8 One of the other things that has been brought out
9 today, is that we have a -- I bet you our school
10 district has about 75 to 77 percent black student body.
11 And our school board consists of six Whites and one
12 black. Okay. And that black as you said, or somebody
13 said earlier, has taken on an non-active role.

14 Now, people here in the Delta, they just don't
15 believe that these six white men who are sitting on that
16 board, have the sensitivity or the best interests of
17 their children at heart. They just don't believe that.

18 You know, because what you get is, you get people
19 who will elect these six white people to the board, but
20 then the black people will be against the millage, okay,
21 who are running for the school board, okay, and the
22 white people who were running for the school board will
23 be for the millage but the white people will win, okay,
24 the seat and the black people won't win the seat and the
25 millage won't pass. You see?

1 MR. WILLIS: I am a champion of democracy, you
2 know. Why do we have six whites and one black? Now, I
3 have served in the military and I continue to serve
4 today. Do you where the blame is at? I'm going to tell
5 you. I'm going ~~to lay it squarely on the black~~
6 community's doorstep. And until people deal with the
7 truth, you can crush it today, but she'll rise again
8 tomorrow.

9 We can have four blacks, three blacks on the
10 school board. All you've got to do is get up and go
11 vote. You all keep throwing the numbers out there. Go
12 do it what you got to do. That's all --

13 MR. PARHAM: Okay. I know you are from West
14 Helena, and you are aware of the population of West
15 Helena.

16 MR. WILLIS: That's true.

17 MR. PARHAM: Okay. And right now, you all went
18 to ward voting in order to get representation on city
19 council, right?

20 MR. WILLIS: That's right.

21 MR. PARHAM: And before that, you did not have
22 any type or you had very limited representation as far
23 as the city council is concerned. Now in Helena, we
24 have a little -- I am city councilman by the way up in
25 Helena. And over in Helena, we have a different type of

1 a racial make-up. I think the -- we have about --
2 well, the population break down is about 65 to 68
3 percent black, and it is about 35 to 32 percent white.

4 And over there, we have been able to -- this is
5 ~~voting at large, we have been able to win city wide~~
6 races over in Helena which you have not been able to do
7 over in West Helena.

8 So -- and the population of West Helena is larger
9 than the population of Helena, which means that you're
10 going to have to a lot more white people over in West
11 Helena who are eligible voters than you would over in
12 Helena, more or less. And that's what makes it
13 difficult to win elections when you run in both cities.

14 Plus there is an economic factor that you're
15 dealing with. There are a lot more poor black people in
16 both Helenas than there are white people, and that means
17 that if you have -- and I'll give you an example. If
18 you have a person that lives down at Helena Crossing, a
19 person that lives at Helena Crossing has to come about
20 three miles, travel three miles to their voting place
21 and three miles back.

22 The only source of transportation is a taxi cab.
23 It is going to cost them \$5.00, \$5.00 to \$6.00 to come
24 and vote. So that is going to be very, very
25 discouraging. If the person doesn't have a car, and

1 they don't want to walk that far on voting day, they may
2 not go and vote, even through they are registered to
3 vote.

4 So, you know, you can't -- and I heard Senator
5 ~~Benham today talking about 50-50. And you can't go 50-~~
6 50 because you have got to look at it -- unless you go
7 50-50 economic. If you go 50-50 economic wise, then
8 certainly that's something that's different because then
9 you start talking about people having similar access to
10 similar things.

11 But in this case, you know, you are talking about
12 people who don't have the same access to the same kinds
13 of things, so you're dealing with a situation that is
14 not equal. I don't know whether that answers your
15 question.

16 MR. WILLIS: You didn't answer the question. You
17 didn't answer the question about why we have six whites
18 on the school board and one black. That's what I want
19 you to answer for me. And you say that we have the
20 numbers.

21 MR. PARHAM: No, I didn't say that. I didn't say
22 that. I think -- I said that you have more white
23 people in West Helena than you do in Helena. Okay.

24 MR. WILLIS: I'll tell you what I believe, I think
25 we could have black school board members if we did one

1 thing. It is simple. It is not complicated. Just to
2 go vote.

3 MR. PATTERSON: I hate to interrupt. This is kind
4 of turning into a local situation. You both will be
5 ~~here and you can continue the debate.~~ We do have one
6 other presenter coming, and so I think I need to break
7 this at this stage of the game. I think you very much,
8 Mr. Parham. I think you brought a dimension to the
9 discussion we would have missed otherwise. Thank you.

10 At this time, I would like to call on Shirley
11 Armstrong, representing the Arkansas Education
12 Association, is that correct?

13 MS. ARMSTRONG: Yes.

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16
17 MS. SHIRLEY ARMSTRONG

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19 MS. ARMSTRONG: Good evening, everyone. I am very
20 glad to be here this afternoon. I heard about this and
21 I always wanted to be a part of trying to help solve
22 problems of eastern Arkansas.

23 First of all, I am a native of Marianna, Arkansas,
24 Lee County and I also teach school, and I am also a part
25 of the Lee County Corporate Clinic board, during the

1 early stages of that clinic. I have seen a lot of
2 problems that have been compounded in eastern Arkansas.

3 First of all, eastern Arkansas was a major
4 agricultural area. After that area was closed out in
5 the 60's by machinery, a large number of blacks were
6 dislocated per se of not having jobs, and that has
7 compounded our problems.

8 I see students being educated in eastern Arkansas,
9 but they leave. The ones who are left in eastern
10 Arkansas, are those who got caught in the trap of being
11 mis-educated. I call it "mis-education." I heard what
12 the young man said a while ago, about problems that we
13 have created.

14 We created a monster and it is very hard for us to
15 slay that monster now, because I see so many young
16 children being mis-educated before I get to see those
17 children. I take those same kids in the 11th and 12th
18 grade and I see a change in their life and I see those
19 children coming by and making way more money than I
20 make, because that little touch I had with their lives,
21 they saw what they could do.

22 Another thing I would like to say is that health
23 problem in our area are still low, although we have come
24 a long ways, we have a long, long way to go. Teenage
25 pregnancy is a part of our problem in eastern Arkansas

1 and I was talking about Welfare.

2 We created the Welfare system, the Welfare system
3 has destroyed I say the makeup of the black family. I
4 say that because one young lady last summer went out to
5 chop cotton. You know, chopping cotton is hard work.
6 It was 90 something degrees.

7 It was found out that she had chopped cotton a
8 number of days, she was called in to Welfare, and she
9 had to pay back that money that she had made in the
10 field. That is no incentive for going out to work. The
11 incentive that I would see, is by persons who are
12 receiving aid, should be allowed to maybe keep their
13 Medicaid card, unless you have a very sickly child, you
14 don't get sick every day. There are still some
15 stipulations on how many times that you can go to the
16 doctor.

17 All right. There also should be some other things
18 left so that they can pull away from it, because a large
19 number of times as a whole, most people want to have
20 their own money. Most people want to have the control
21 of their lives. And with the Welfare system, there is
22 no control.

23 Somebody is always coming in telling you what you
24 can do and what you cannot do. And with that, if we
25 can get that moving where we know we are an agricultural

1 state, part of the state. We have peaches that go
2 unpicked because people who used to pick those peaches,
3 if they go out and pick them, then they will lose their
4 aid. And see, three or four weeks cannot take care of
5 you the other months that you need to have some
6 assistance.

7 And we can look at that and see where those things
8 can help our people. I think that would bring up the
9 self esteem, morale of the young mothers who are kind of
10 trapped into a system. As I said before, a large number
11 of our people who are educated in east Arkansas, they
12 leave the state. They don't even come back this way,
13 because there is nothing to do except -- the factory
14 jobs here are minimum. They are not high paying, tech
15 jobs that a large number of our students can acquire,
16 and those kinds of things.

17 We must work with our educational system. We must
18 also work with our health and especially with our
19 teenage pregnancy problem in eastern Arkansas. And this
20 goes all the way back to home, and I always say
21 parenting. We have the young mothers tied to the
22 Welfare system.

23 I think there ought to be some parenting classes
24 going on at the same time, you know, we said we can't
25 make people do something. But if you're giving them

1 something, I think there ought to be some giving in
2 return. Parenting classes have helped with knowing how
3 to talk with your children, knowing how to give them
4 that quality time that should be there.

5 A lot of the parents are there in the home, but
6 there is no quality time. You know, we say the mothers
7 should be there. A lot of them are there, but they are
8 watching what, the soap operas. They are not caring
9 about what their children see, nor what they hear.

10 When the child comes up and says something, "Mom,
11 I want to do this," they do this to them. (indicating)
12 And that type of thing. And this is why when the child
13 comes to us, he has already been beaten down. We have
14 to take that child where he is and try to do as much as
15 we can possibly do with him, and because of those
16 things, it has become very hard for teachers to work and
17 take care of the job that should be done.

18 I am a firm believer that everybody can learn
19 something. I am a firm believer in that. And we are
20 always talking about what the parent does not have in
21 the home. My mother taught in a one room school.
22 parents could not read then. They did not have
23 magazines, newspapers in their homes, but those children
24 learned.

25 And I still say that we work with what we have.

1 We have more contact with that child sometimes than that
2 parent does with that child. If we work hard with that
3 child when he is there with us, especially elementary
4 school, they are there in a one -- mainly self-
5 contained ~~classroom~~ ~~most~~ of the day, as most of our
6 programs are still set up.

7 If we work closely then to get that child on the
8 right road and let him know that he can learn, and not
9 worry about -- so much about behavior problems.
10 Behavior problems come because sometimes that child does
11 not have anything -- we're not prepared. When we walk
12 in that room, if we're not prepared when that child
13 walks in that room, quite naturally, just as we do, if
14 we walk in a room and there is nothing going on -- what
15 do we do? We talk and there is quite a bit of noise
16 until something starts.

17 Because of our upbringing, we know how to turn it
18 off. But because of the upbringing of our children, we
19 do not know how to turn it off, and those are some
20 things that we must address, and see what we can do,
21 especially with work ethics. Letting people be able to
22 work and also at the time, maybe be able to keep some of
23 their service until they can cut all the way from
24 welfare. Thank you.

25 DR. WHITE: I have a question related to a comment

1 that Mr. Campbell from Dr. Elders made about the failure
2 of many of the Delta patrons to avail themselves of the
3 health services and perhaps more directly teenage health
4 services.

5 ~~In Lee County and other areas of the Delta, there~~
6 seems to be a lack of trust between health care
7 providers and the constituents, particularly African-
8 American parents. Consequently, many of the children
9 who need just basic health services are not receiving
10 them. I am not talking about contraceptives and sex
11 education.

12 Being a native of this area, can you offer any
13 suggestions to the Advisory Committee to offer back to
14 the state in terms of how do we begin to bridge that
15 gap. What can we do to make sure that not only the very
16 young children, but also our adolescents get the kind of
17 support that they need in order to be fully functioning?

18 MS. ARMSTRONG: I am glad you asked that. I must
19 say that it comes from how they are treated. I have
20 seen some very severe cases when I was in there they
21 changed their tone in their voice. They recognized who
22 I was. I am talking about public health services. And
23 it is the people who work there, and once you have
24 people who are downtrodden go in for services, they are
25 talked to down, they don't return any more.

1 And I have seen that happen a lot of times in
2 their welfare system. I have seen it happen especially
3 in the health care program, because I was treated very
4 badly one time. I have a granddaughter. The head nurse
5 told me -- about the working hours, the head nurse told
6 me on Wednesday that the health office would be open to
7 X number of hours, and that any time within that period
8 of time that I could come in and bring her in.

9 When I went in, the person talked real ugly and I
10 was very professional with her, and very kind with her.
11 And eventually I said "The head nurse told me to do
12 this. I would not be doing this if it had not been for
13 her."

14 And I said "Since these services are part of our --
15 my tax dollars, I feel like I should be a part of the
16 program, although I could probably go to a private
17 doctor to get her shots." But I said "My tax dollars
18 are providing your job at this time, and I feel that we
19 should work out a compromise."

20 And then she kind of calmed down. But it is
21 attitude, how they talk to people when they go in.
22 That's got a whole lot to do with whether or not people
23 go in for services. And I have experienced that
24 myself.

25 DR. WHITE: Thank you.

1 MR. PATTERSON: Thank you, Ms. Armstrong. I
2 appreciate very much your willingness to present this
3 information to all of us.

4 DR. WHITE: I have a question and I guess it is a
5 two-part question, stemming from Mr. Willis' comment,
6 and also some things that you said. I certainly do not
7 in any way negate the importance of parent education and
8 parent involvement. There is much work to be done.

9 Will you comment as to what you think, and I am
10 talking about the Delta in general, not just one
11 specific area, what are some of the things that you
12 think that we, who are in educational systems, need to
13 do to respond to the needs of the children in the Delta?

14 MS. ARMSTRONG: First of all, in the Delta, we are
15 going to have to get back -- make the contact to the
16 home ourselves, too. When I went to school, and all of
17 us mostly in the classroom, our teachers went to church
18 with us on Sunday morning most the time.

19 I knew that whatever I had done that week was
20 going to be told on Sunday or whatever. I make a
21 practice myself, when I see my parents in the grocery
22 store or whatever, I tell it. And I tried to build up
23 that trust with my parents. And they see that I am
24 concerned not just from 8 to 3:00 with their child, it
25 makes it a little bit better for me.

1 Because one of my students came back and said,
2 "She told it on me the other day." Because I told him,
3 "When I see your mother and father, I will definitely
4 tell them what you've been doing this week." And I
5 did. And we as educators, we have got to get back to
6 doing that so we can build that trust.

7 Also say, and I may be stepping on a lot of toes,
8 when we integrated, we told the parent "We don't need
9 you." The atmosphere that I picked up. Before then,
10 whatever way the parent dressed, how they came up to
11 school, we accepted them. And I noticed the first years
12 of integration in Lee County, it seems as if we got on
13 this high horse and said "Send us a child, we'll do what
14 we have to do with him. You stay at home. We don't
15 want that child knowing that you look like this, you
16 smell like this," or whatever.

17 And that is the message I received. And a lot of
18 people have told me that, said "Well, you all just kind
19 of shoved us out a little bit." And I see that
20 happening, you know, we used to have parents involved
21 with activities. We got where schools didn't have any
22 activities going, except a basketball game or football.

23 That's not the whole program of education. In
24 Marianna, Arkansas, we didn't go that whole route. We
25 still kept activities in. We got to the point where

1 parents as a whole kind of got sent away. You just send
2 your child and we'll take care of this. At 3:00 we sent
3 them home. We don't you need to come out for anything
4 but maybe a football game or basketball.

5 Your actions speak louder than words. And when
6 that happens, a parent diggs just a little more in. And
7 it is hard to get them back, and by now we have what,
8 younger parents. They were -- a lot of them were
9 dropouts, they were turned off when they were there.
10 They said "Oh, this is not worth a nickel. Why should I
11 care." You know, and they tell their kids this, their
12 experiences they had.

13 Parents who have had very good experiences in
14 school, you usually have them cooperating more with your
15 system.

16 MR. PATTERSON: Thank you, very much. It is time
17 for us to wind it down. I commend most particularly Ms.
18 Shelton, who has sat here for two days, and hasn't
19 missed a session, and I think has out-lastcd obviously
20 some of our own committee. If there are no further
21 questions, we stand adjourned.

22
23 (ADJOURNMENT)
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3 C E R T I F I C A T E
4

5 This is to certify that the attached proceedings
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10 DATE: March 22, 1990
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12 were had as herein appears, and that this is the
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14 Commission.
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