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ORIGINAL

South Carolina Advisory Committee
to the
U.S. Commission on Civil Rights

1 Meeting of the South Carolina Advisory
 2 Committee, taken before Bridget Brown, Court
 3 Reporter and Notary Public, at Greenville
 4 County Square, 301 University Ridge,
 5 Conference Room A, Greenville, South
 6 Carolina, on the 1st day of April, 1992,
 7 commencing at the hour of 2:15 o'clock, p.m.

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APPEARANCES:

- Gilbert Zimmerman, Chairperson
- Bobby D. Doctor, Regional Director
- Bishop Johnny Smith

PANEL MEMBERS:

- Julia Childs Adams, Coordinator/Greenville
County Human Relations
Commission
- Rev. S. C. Cureton, Pastor/Reedy River
Baptist Church
- Lottie Gibson, Chairman of the Board/
Community Action Agency
- Bill Whitney, President/Greenville Urban
League
- Larry Byrd, National Spokesman/Black
Economic Education
- Fletcher Smith, Greenville County Council
- Rev. J. M. Fleming, Concerned Citizens
for Equal Justice

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

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25BY MR. ZIMMERMAN:

We will now have this public hearing and briefing meeting come to order at its beginning. First, I would like to say that I am Gilbert G.G. Zimmerman, Chairman of the South Carolina Advisory Committee to the United States Civil Rights Commission. And I would like to welcome each and every one of you to our first public hearing on Racial Tensions in South Carolina. Two later hearings are to be held in Charleston and Columbia, respectively. Now, other members that are seated here at the table, of course, we have our regional director here, and I will introduce him later. But to my left is Bishop Smith who is from Greenville and a member of the State Advisory Committee to the United States Civil Rights Commission. Mr. Doctor, who I will introduce to you later, is here also to aid in the facilitation and the observation of this

1 meeting. First, I want to give a few
2 comments on the subject of racial and
3 ethnic tensions in South Carolina, or
4 should I say, the nation; racial and
5 ethnic tensions that seem to be permeating
6 the very fabric of our society. Over the
7 past several years most, if not all of
8 us, that are assembled here have become
9 aware of the incidents that are taking
10 place in our nation. And it alerts us to
11 the fact that a racist serpent is
12 continuously raising its ugly head and
13 infecting our society with the venom of
14 racism. South Carolina, which is a
15 microcosm of our nation, is not immune to
16 such infection. Therefore, if we are not
17 careful, we may experience a racist
18 psychoneurosis of epidemic proportion
19 occurring within our state. And that's
20 very, very serious and that's very, very
21 dangerous. However, my personal feeling
22 is that if we continue to allow that to
23 happen, the cost of administering to the
24 needs of the psychologically wounded
25 would be enormous, and the healing

1 process quite lengthy. Thank you very
 2 much. Now, I would like to introduce our
 3 Regional Director, Mr. Bobby Doctor,
 4 Regional Director of the United States
 5 Civil Rights Commission office in
 6 Atlanta. Welcome, Mr. Bobby Doctor.

7
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STATUS OF COMMISSION

9

10 BY MR. DOCTOR:

11 Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I
 12 would like to note for the benefit of the
 13 press, and certainly for the citizens
 14 here in Greenville, that the U.S.
 15 Commission on Civil Rights in September
 16 --- pardon me --- in February of last
 17 year adopted a project at the national
 18 level entitled, "Racial Tensions in
 19 America." The project was specifically
 20 designed to look at the extent to which
 21 there is a problem in the area of racial
 22 tensions. With that particular project
 23 in mind, the members of the South
 24 Carolina Advisory Committee to the U.S.
 25 Commission on Civil Rights decided to

1 adopt the project here in South Carolina.
2 But in addition to South Carolina, we
3 also had the adoption of the project by
4 the members of the Florida Advisory
5 Committee, and, certainly, by the members
6 of the Tennessee Advisory Committee as
7 well. The idea behind this particular
8 project is to look at the major urban
9 centers of a given state. And in this
10 state we're talking about Greenville,
11 Columbia, and Charleston. Looking at the
12 urban centers in this state and other
13 states, the other states that I have
14 identified in this region, with the idea
15 in mind of inviting into what amounts to
16 an informal hearing setting or a briefing
17 setting, to try and collect information
18 from key citizens; persons who would be
19 knowledgeable, persons who would have a
20 special insight into the question of
21 racial tensions in a given locale. We
22 have had several of these meetings
23 already. We went to Miami, Florida on
24 the 23rd of January. We had an excellent
25 meeting in that particular city. As

1 you've probably heard, Miami is
2 characterized by a great deal of racial
3 conflict. And, of course, we had some
4 key knowledgeable people to come in and,
5 in effect, reinforce that particular
6 idea. We also went just about a week or
7 so ago into Nashville, Tennessee with the
8 same kind of a meeting. And in that
9 particular meeting, as well, we also had
10 key citizens to come in and to indicate
11 to us that there are some problems in
12 that particular city as well as it
13 relates to the overall question of racial
14 tensions. We're here, obviously, in
15 Greenville today, and I don't want to
16 prejudge what it is members of the ---
17 members --- well, I should say I don't
18 want to prejudge what it is that the
19 participants in this particular meeting
20 today will say, but it is clear that in
21 Miami and in Nashville there are some
22 continuing problems associated with
23 racial conflict and racial tensions.
24 With that being said, Mr. Chairman, I
25 would now very briefly like to sort of

1 share with the Committee some of what's
2 going on as it relates to the Commission
3 at the national level. And I'll be very,
4 very brief with that because I think the
5 subject at hand is much more important
6 than what I've got to say about what's
7 going on in Washington, D.C. But I think
8 it's interesting to note that the
9 Commission seems to be fairing much
10 better in the Congress these days, and
11 we're very pleased about that. There's
12 every indication at this point that we're
13 going to be receiving an increase in our
14 budget, an increase in our resources.
15 And with that being in mind, we should be
16 in a better position to provide better
17 services to the eight state Southeastern
18 region. With those comments being made,
19 Mr. Chairman, I suggest we get into the
20 brief meeting involving racial tensions
21 in South Carolina.

22
23 MR. ZIMMERMAN:

24 Okay. I would like to now ask that
25 the panel come and take the seats in the

1 front, and then I will introduce you.
2 And during that time I would like to have
3 Bishop Johnny Smith, who is from
4 Greenville, and is a member of this State
5 Advisory Committee, and he would have a
6 few comments while the panel is coming to
7 the forefront.

8 BISHOP SMITH:

9 Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would
10 only like to comment that things begin at
11 this level. I used to wonder how people
12 in Washington would make laws that govern
13 our total lives. And as it relates to
14 civil rights, it's beginning right here
15 with the panel that's going to address
16 us. And we in turn, based on what we
17 hear, will go, I'm sure, to the Civil
18 Rights Commission that in the end will
19 make their report to Congress and to the
20 President of the United States. So, it's
21 very important that, not only in this
22 area but all over, we hear what's
23 actually happening out there so that we
24 can make a report on those happenings.

25 MR. ZIMMERMAN:

1 Thank you very much, Mr. Smith.
2 Without further procrastination please
3 let us introduce our panel. If Ms. Julia
4 Adams is in attendance, would you please
5 come forward? If you would come forward,
6 please. And Rev. Cureton, Rev. S.C.
7 Cureton; if you'll both take a seat.
8 Thank you very much. And I would ask
9 that each of you introduce yourself as I
10 call on you. To my --- or should I say
11 in the forefront on the left, my left,
12 Ms. Julia Adams, would you introduce
13 yourself?

14 MS. JULIA ADAMS:

15 I'm Julia Childs Adams, the
16 Coordinator of the Greenville County
17 Human Relations Commission in Greenville.

18 MR. ZIMMERMAN:

19 Rev. Cureton?

20 MR. CURETON:

21 I'm S. C. Cureton, the Pastor of the
22 Reedy River Baptist Church, Mauldin,
23 South Carolina, suburb of Greenville.

24 MR. ZIMMERMAN:

25 Ms. Lottie Gibson?

1 MS. GIBSON:

2 I'm Lottie Gibson, President of the
3 Community Action Agency SHARE's Board of
4 Directors and I represent them at this
5 gathering.

6 MR. ZIMMERMAN:

7 Okay. And Mr. Bill Whitney?

8 MR. WHITNEY:

9 I'm Bill Whitney. I am President of
10 the Greenville Urban League.

11

12 RACIAL TENSIONS IN SOUTH CAROLINA
13 (GREENVILLE)

14

15 MR. ZIMMERMAN:

16 I would like to start with Mr. Bill
17 Whitney, if he would have his comments.

18 MR. WHITNEY:

19 Thank you, Mr. Zimmerman. I do
20 appreciate your inviting me to this
21 hearing. I only have a few comments
22 concerning racial tensions in Greenville.
23 I'll probably like to talk about not only
24 Greenville but the greater south ---
25 State of South Carolina, and also, .

1 America. In thirty years of working in
2 the area of civil rights, I have not seen
3 the kind of racism that I have met, not
4 only in Greenville or South Carolina or
5 throughout America, as I have seen in
6 recent times. And I think part of it is
7 due to the fact that we've had an
8 administration nationally for a number of
9 years who have said in so many words that
10 they have deserted, I think, many of the
11 gains that minorities and poor whites
12 have made over the last twenty years. I
13 see racism coming down nationally in
14 various kinds of tones, which has been
15 translated to people who continue to have
16 bigotry and hatred on their minds. We're
17 also suffering, and have been suffering
18 for a number of years, from a downturn in
19 the economy. And when we have an
20 economic downturn we always see people
21 become very, very selfish. At the same
22 time a few, very few, blacks have upper
23 management jobs. A few blacks have jobs
24 in middle management, and so often this
25 is translated to the fact that we have

1 made it as a race, which is not true.
2 Racism and bigotry, I think, not only in
3 the job place, is more so than it has
4 been in many years. Today in Greenville,
5 South Carolina we do not have blacks in
6 upper management in the numbers close to
7 --- even near close to the racial makeup
8 of Greenville County. And I'm talking
9 about senior management in public
10 offices, in public jobs such as
11 government. Also, Greenville enjoys
12 having the largest corporate community in
13 the State of South Carolina. Although we
14 have many blacks in middle management in
15 corporate Greenville, we still have not
16 penetrated upper and senior management.
17 And I think this is due to the tone of
18 the nation currently, that program talk
19 shows that is prevalent throughout the
20 country, and also here in Greenville and
21 many other moderators. It's not neutral,
22 that they are very much leading --- I
23 think the young conservatism is but also
24 leading towards what I consider as
25 racism. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

1 MR. ZIMMERMAN:

2 Thank you very much. Mr. Byrd has
3 just arrived, Mr. Larry Byrd. If you'll
4 introduce yourself?

5 MR. BYRD:

6 My name is L. R. Byrd. I'm President
7 of L.R. Byrd & Associates, a consulting
8 firm in Greenville, South Carolina.

9 MR. ZIMMERMAN:

10 Thank you very much, sir. Audience,
11 if you have any questions that you would
12 like to ask Mr. Whitney at this time ---
13 we'll go on through with the panel, and
14 then we'll have the questions asked.
15 We'll wait until we go through the panel,
16 then. Next I would like to have Ms.
17 Lottie Gibson, our next panelist.

18 MS. GIBSON:

19 Thank you. I appreciate the
20 opportunity to come and share today. I
21 must admit that when I received this
22 invitation for this discussion today, I
23 thought it was an April Fool's joke since
24 it's happening on April 1. I said, "I
25 cannot believe that they're going to

1 provide for me an opportunity to say how
2 I feel about racism." Certainly racism,
3 in my opinion, is on the rise in
4 Greenville County. And I have to admit
5 that all of my adult life and many years
6 of my teen life, I've worked to make race
7 relations better in Greenville County. I
8 have been affiliated with some type of
9 race relations organization since
10 nineteen years. I see very clearly
11 racism, which I perceive to be a behavior
12 and also an emotion. You can see it, you
13 can feel it, but you can't put your hand
14 on it. And many times, you're not
15 prepared to really identify it. I think
16 it hurts most, or it affects us most,
17 through our economic arena in that we see
18 as we observe jobs through our industry.
19 We see very few minorities in
20 administrative or policy-making positions
21 where, really, the money is made. We see
22 in government very few minorities or
23 blacks in decision-making positions. And
24 when we do see one or two people, in many
25 instances they are people that do not

[Local]
JUDY COMP & ASSOCIATES

1 interact with other blacks, or people
2 that are trying to work toward progress
3 in the community. In many ways we say
4 that these blacks are handpicked, and
5 that they react in a different way from
6 many of us. In fact, it is very
7 difficult for some of us to even
8 communicate with blacks that are in
9 positions of policy making, or in spots
10 where we feel like they should be in
11 policy making or could provide for us
12 opportunities for jobs, or could say
13 something that would address itself to
14 realize that black people are still
15 struggling to just be equal; not to be
16 above, just to be equal. And we see it
17 in education. We feel it through
18 problems that are brought to our
19 attention from students. We hear
20 problems from teachers and other support
21 staff in the education system where they
22 say that people that they work with do
23 not consider them to be a part of a team.
24 They work around them and above them and
25 below them and they never work, really,

1 with them. We see students being kicked
2 out of school for ~~menial~~ ^[minor] kinds of ^[mis]
3 behaviors where whites do this very same
4 thing, and they, if at all, get slapped
5 on the wrist, and they continue to be a
6 part of the school system. Through our
7 judicial system we see police brutality.
8 We see behaviors like, for instance, a
9 young person fourteen years old weighing
10 less than 100 pounds being held over an
11 open railroad track and swung into the
12 air by four policemen. And only one of
13 them being dismissed from his job when,
14 needless to say, that this kind of
15 behavior could have caused the death of
16 that young man. We see our teenage girls
17 getting caught up in being suspended and
18 expelled from school at the age of
19 fourteen. We see first and second grade
20 students sitting in the halls all day in
21 schools, and teachers carrying on
22 instruction in the classroom and them
23 just being a part of sitting in the
24 halls. And we have blacks in positions
25 of principals and assistant principals,

1 and they do nothing to correct this. The
2 list goes on. So, racism in many
3 instances in Greenville is more than
4 alive. It's just active and sort of like
5 cutting up is what I feel. As I reflect
6 back on our first behaviors just after
7 the passage of the Public Accommodations
8 Act, I know that we held sessions
9 throughout the community through various
10 levels of relationships and kinships, I
11 guess I should say, to try to understand
12 how we would act as a people in various
13 kinds of situations. We called together
14 managers of restaurants and said to them
15 that this is the law of the land, and
16 pretty soon blacks will be participating
17 in eating at lunch counters and having
18 dinner and participating in activities at
19 night clubs, et cetera. And we talked
20 with these people and had them to
21 understand so that they could tell their
22 help that this was something that was
23 going to happen. It was the law of the
24 land, and it was time that they realized
25 that they could no longer refuse to serve

1 these people. We called together groups
2 of managers of golf courses, and tennis
3 courses, and other kinds of public
4 accommodation places and said that black
5 people will now participate in various
6 things that they've never participated in
7 in Greenville County before. And as a
8 result of these meetings and these open
9 communication discussions, we were able
10 to move, I won't say into a smooth
11 transition, as it has been said, but we
12 were able to survive the transition and
13 go forward in what is to be perceived as
14 integration. I pass people on the street
15 and meet them in grocery stores and
16 doctor's office, et cetera, that at one
17 period, say, even ten years ago, whether
18 they were glad to see me or not, at least
19 they acted like it. Now, they sort of
20 look at me and wish that I would go away.
21 But it bothers me that we've spent so
22 much time trying to build positive
23 relationships and move forward in a
24 progressive way, and at the ~~end~~ ^[turn] of this
25 past ~~century~~ ^[decade] with the election of

1 President Reagan, he made it almost
2 popular to be different, to have a trip
3 down memory lane, to have a resurrection
4 with the good old days. And as I see
5 younger people moving into leadership
6 positions, particularly whites, it seems
7 as if they're having a resurrection with
8 their grandfathers' and their great-
9 grandfathers' attitudes and ideas and
10 policies. It almost seems like they
11 think that we're back on the plantation,
12 and that we're just getting directions
13 from the master. And I hope that your
14 agency will be able to communicate with
15 the administration, and have them know
16 that the laws that they have sought to
17 change has really made it difficult for
18 those of us who are black to live in
19 America in what we perceive to be a dream
20 of everyone enjoying the life here.
21 Thank you.

22 MR. ZIMMERMAN:

23 Thank you very much, Ms. Gibson.
24 Next, we'll have Rev. Cureton.

25 REV. CURETON:

1 Thank you to the Chairman and other
2 persons at the head table. First, let me
3 say that racism is still much alive in
4 Greenville and throughout this nation, as
5 we all realize. And as Mrs. Gibson has
6 alluded to is that the last eleven or
7 twelve years, it appears that racism has
8 become more alive under the past
9 administration, as well as the present
10 administration, men who have no concern
11 about the needs of the minorities and
12 blacks in particular. And I think a
13 blind person can see it, a deaf person
14 can hear the echoes coming from
15 Washington that they support that. And
16 that's the reason why we have it within
17 our counties, our states, and et cetera.
18 When I think about here in Greenville in
19 our county, for example, where we have
20 more than 1,300 employees, and out of the
21 1,300 employees, there's only one [black]
22 individual who has a salary of \$40,000,
23 in the low \$40,000, and you've got
24 thirty-four or more individuals whose [white]
25 salaries range up to \$85,000. Out of the

1 ratio of blacks in Greenville County, I
2 think I'm in the ballpark, about 20 or
3 more percent here. So that is evidence
4 that we have racism in Greenville. And
5 when we look at our schools, even in
6 spite of having a black superintendent,
7 when I look at many of our schools, I was
8 just informed on yesterday, probably the
9 largest school in our county has a
10 principal and three assistant principals
11 and three or four counselors. And out of
12 that whole group there is only one black
13 counselor. And, of course, I understand
14 that there's 25 to 30 percent blacks.
15 That is racism. I think that we have got
16 to be concerned about having black
17 mentors in our schools at top position to
18 give leadership. When I think about what
19 we have here in Greenville, a black
20 student who committed a crime to a
21 certain degree, a very young child, and
22 was put out of the school. And, of
23 course, the judge reversed that decision,
24 and the School Board still will not allow
25 her to come back to school. And I have

1 been informed that we have plenty of
2 whites who have committed similar crimes,
3 probably even worse, and they have been
4 patted on the hand or on the shoulder and
5 have gone back into our school system.
6 So, that is evidence that we do have
7 racism in Greenville. Again, when I
8 think about our [method]ology of electing
9 government officials, whenever a black
10 run against two or three and gained
11 almost a majority, and you have a runoff.
12 And, of course, I guess it's not racism,
13 and yet, it is racism, is that 99 percent
14 of the time whenever you have a runoff
15 against a white, then automatically the
16 white will win. Also, when we look at
17 what has happened in South Carolina,
18 Operation Lost Trust, and this goes
19 beyond Greenville, but a Greenvillian was
20 involved, and I need to say something
21 about it. An individual who became a
22 State witness and was asked that --- I
23 mean, was told that they would certainly
24 consider him being a State witness and
25 gave him 20 months. And other

1 individuals on the other side who had not
2 even come forth to be a witness, and yet,
3 they were patted on the shoulder, placed
4 in a halfway house, and things of that
5 sort. When I look at another individual
6 just this past week, a white individual
7 in another part of our state, who was
8 sentenced to a certain degree several
9 months ago, and now the judge is saying
10 that it was something wrong. They're
11 going to have another hearing. This is
12 racism in South Carolina. And, of
13 course, I'm quite sure you hear all about
14 this, this Operation Lost Trust, that as
15 it appears that when you look at it is
16 that the blacks were certainly handed
17 greater sentences than the whites,
18 period. This is racism, and I think that
19 we've got to deal with the judiciary
20 system. Men and women who serve as
21 judges of our state, who have been
22 appointed by the conservative group and
23 who know that they have the backing of
24 Washington right on down to the State
25 House, is that they will certainly

1 continue to make these type of
2 accusations. Also, when I think about
3 that racism is existent in our school
4 system again is that when I look at
5 schools that once was basically in white
6 communities, and back in the middle '60s
7 that blacks had to go to court to go in
8 school, and since blacks have never been
9 to those communities and have now become
10 the majority. And not only have they
11 become the majority, but even the poor
12 whites. Now, they are ready to close
13 them and shift them to the more
14 influential communities, the east side of
15 Greenville. Well, you-all might not know
16 a thing about the east side and Golden
17 Strip. And I personally feel that at
18 this particular juncture is that these
19 communities where schools now exist need
20 to exist even in spite of having the
21 majority in that community blacks. As
22 all of us know, in the '60s and the '70s
23 in particular, is that they bused 85
24 percent of us into white communities, and
25 now, we're not willing to bus one percent

1 of whites into black communities. This
2 is racism. And I am concerned that not
3 only do we sit here today and talk about
4 these things, but if you have the power,
5 we need to do something about it. I
6 think that talk is good, but talk can
7 certainly become cheap. I think you need
8 to know it, but I think that you need to
9 put some legs on this talk that we are
10 talking about and do something about it.
11 Whenever we have presidents in the last
12 eleven or twelve years who have
13 basically, and I'm going beyond
14 Greenville, I'm going beyond South
15 Carolina, who basically appoint judges
16 who are conservative, and when I look at
17 conservatism, my definition of it is
18 racism. Conservatism is nothing more
19 than people who are concerned about
20 keeping the blacks in their place,
21 keeping them down. And I'm concerned
22 that we certainly become more equal in
23 job opportunities and job pay, because a
24 people who is not paid well will always
25 know the lower level. And I think also

1 is that we must continue to move forward
2 to become more equal of racial lines, of
3 blacks being in top paid position. Yes,
4 racism is alive, and racism is much alive
5 in Greenville, in particular.

6 MR. ZIMMERMAN:

7 Thank you very much, Rev. Cureton.
8 Next we'll have Ms. Julia Adams.

9 MS. ADAMS:

10 Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I wish to
11 thank you for the opportunity to speak
12 today on racial and ethnic tensions in
13 South Carolina. And while we're aware
14 that these tensions do exist, not only in
15 South Carolina but throughout the nation,
16 and also in Greenville County. As the
17 Director of the Greenville County Human
18 Relations Commission, we field complaints
19 each day from citizens of Greenville
20 County and its municipalities. And quite
21 often these complaints that we receive
22 allege discrimination, unfair, or unequal
23 treatment in the areas of employment,
24 housing, and education. Our Commission
25 quite recently has been monitoring School

1 Board meetings and this type thing
2 looking at reassignments. In monitoring
3 the reassignments that are going on in
4 Greenville County, and in view of what
5 had happened yesterday with the new
6 Supreme Court ruling, I think we will be
7 doing more monitoring and research as it
8 relates to education. Because we see
9 this as being resegregation through
10 education, some of the recent legislature
11 that has been passed. But we have seen
12 practices as it relates to education,
13 zoning patterns, political pressures in
14 the reassignment process and education.
15 Also, we received complaints in the
16 employment area. And this is one area
17 that we feel that the Civil Rights
18 Commission needs to be aware of is that
19 people sometimes assume because laws are
20 passed, particularly under Title Seven,
21 which law, whether it's in fair housing,
22 employment, education, or whatever;
23 people assume that because there are laws
24 existing that discrimination does not
25 exist. And I'm here to tell you that it

1 not only exists in Greenville County, it
2 exists throughout this nation. It is so
3 blatant. Quite often it is subtle until
4 the victim does not even realize that
5 they have been even discriminated against
6 in any of these areas. Sometimes these
7 ugly manifestations raise its ugly heads
8 in some of the areas that Rev. Cureton
9 and Ms. Gibson --- rather than talk about
10 those issues that they have talked about,
11 because it would be repetitive, but
12 they're real. We also looked at lending
13 practices, and I think this is
14 information that you should receive under
15 the Civil Rights Commission, that there
16 are sometimes discriminatory practices
17 with lending institutions, and housing in
18 particular. Red lining does exist. I
19 think sometimes people assume because we
20 have fair housing laws that it does not
21 exist. There are other things that we've
22 become concerned about as a Commission
23 and as a community is when HUD has put
24 such explicit language into their new
25 housing legislature that says that they

1 will not subsidize housing where there is
2 drug activity where, while we do not
3 condone this, we see children in
4 Greenville County who are not allowed to
5 go back into their own neighborhoods.
6 We're talking about minors, who are not
7 allowed to go back into their own
8 particular neighborhoods because they
9 have been involved in drug activity. We
10 see families who are being exploited
11 because of this. Because this language
12 does exist, and it's a federal law, and
13 we've talked about laws as it relates to
14 the poor housing and education. These
15 laws exist, but quite often they cause
16 problems for us who are in the
17 enforcement agencies, such as Human
18 Affairs Commission, EEOC, HUD, and some
19 of the other agencies. And we appeal to
20 you, as the Civil Rights Commission, to
21 document some of these issues that we're
22 talking about today because they are
23 real, and they create tensions for
24 minorities and other ethnic groups
25 throughout this nation, state, and

1 Greenville.

2 MR. ZIMMERMAN:

3 Thank you very much. Mr. Byrd, if you
4 will?

5 MR. BYRD:

6 Thank you to our Chairman, Mr.
7 Gilbert, ^{Zimmerman} and to our Regional Director,
8 Mr. Doctor, and to my good friend, Mr.
9 Smith. I would like to thank my
10 distinguished panel members. And to
11 those present ladies and gentlemen,
12 concerned citizens of this area and
13 region, I would like to thank you for the
14 opportunity to present myself at this
15 time on the concerns for racial tension.
16 I would like to begin by giving you just
17 a little of my background to help you
18 better understand why some of the
19 positions that I take may differ from
20 some of my colleagues. Having worked for
21 both the private sector and the public
22 sector, I've had the opportunity to visit
23 some fifty of the major top flight cities
24 in the country. I've had the opportunity
25 to work in a business community with

1 multimillionaires of African American
2 descent and inner city hard core blacks,
3 whites, and others. The experiences that
4 I've gathered in that travel over the
5 past ten years have caused me to believe
6 that there are some serious concerns.
7 But at no point and at no time in my
8 travels inside or outside of the State of
9 South Carolina have I encountered any
10 person who can seriously say that there
11 are no racial tensions or racist actions
12 that are being conducted. With regard to
13 recommendations, I have three. One is
14 that communications at all administrative
15 levels, particularly in corporate and in
16 private sector, public sector, the
17 encouragement of interaction and
18 interfacing rather than policy
19 administration. The second
20 recommendation I have is for continued
21 independent monitoring of national
22 activities along the lines of racial
23 concerns, not just black or white but all
24 races in this nation, by agencies such as
25 the U.S. Civil Rights Commission, whether

1 we agree with all of your decisions or
2 not. And third is the maintenance of
3 economic regulations in the banking
4 industry and in corporate America that
5 requires participation by all U.S.
6 citizens. Certainly, these three
7 elements in my travels will help us with
8 some of the problems that we have heard
9 today. With regard to racial tension in
10 the State of South Carolina, my focus has
11 to be primarily that of the judicial
12 system. It has become obvious, both
13 statistically and humanly, as reported by
14 media, as reported by agencies, both
15 state and federal, that the discrepancy
16 in sentencing of African Americans is no
17 longer a myth. It is a genuine
18 documented circumstance. The dangers
19 with regard to racial tension is it is
20 continuously eroding progress that has
21 been developed over the years. No longer
22 can suit and tie wearing white folk
23 convince people on the street that the
24 system is not slanted. Incidents such as
25 my colleagues have reported not only in

1 Greenville but in Conway, South Carolina,
2 of which I had an opportunity to be
3 directly involved; in Columbia, South
4 Carolina; in Florence, South Carolina;
5 across the State of South Carolina; the
6 Lost Trust Operations. So, from the drug
7 dealer on the street with no education to
8 the former state representatives with
9 chemical degrees, the judicial system
10 appears to be tremendously slanted. A
11 careful review and an implementation of:
12 one, the requirement that those in
13 administrative positions in the judicial
14 system come from the ivory towers and
15 down into the streets to be sensitized to
16 the damage or the good that their
17 decisions are causing is a mandate that I
18 would encourage you to consistently
19 evaluate, not only in South Carolina but
20 across this nation. The judges, the
21 prosecutors, the sheriffs, the police
22 chiefs, and with all respect, the Daryl
23 Gates mentality is not limited to
24 California. I cannot explain to you the
25 difficulties that will exist or the

1 racial tensions that will flare in a
2 community where black people armed with
3 the mentality of Malcolm X, for which
4 they may fully or not fully understand,
5 amplified by the rhetoric of the Bob
6 Jones mentality will result in for the
7 accomplishments that we've had. There is
8 no racial tension at the corporate board
9 level for which I serve. We sit, we
10 meet, we talk. There is no racial
11 tension for the number of other
12 inaccurate boards for which many of us
13 serve. But in the communities, there is
14 little or no communications, and I would
15 encourage your agency to begin to look at
16 requiring, mandating, instructing,
17 causing, or whatever process available to
18 you, the involvement of those people who
19 hand out these sentences, the people who
20 look at and prosecute these individuals
21 to better understand the damage or the
22 good that's being caused all the way down
23 to the street. With regard to monitoring
24 of banks and lending institutions, from
25 which my background occurs, I can say

1 that based on a report that was issued by
2 a consulting firm that the Commission
3 used at one time, Barnhill and Hayes,
4 early and late '70s that indicated that
5 as some of the colleagues have pointed
6 out, blacks will achieve a certain level
7 within corporate America. When we look
8 at Greenville County and the placement of
9 blacks in high and precedented positions
10 in both the public and the private
11 sectors, it paints a disturbing picture;
12 an improved picture but a disturbing one.
13 There remains too few blacks and too few
14 high-paying positions in both public and
15 private sector in this state. With
16 regard to law enforcement, once again, I
17 echo that the concerns for the process,
18 while it remains at the availability of
19 those of us at a local level, is
20 something that must be looked at. If the
21 concept of law enforcement is relegated
22 to that of simply them against us, it
23 will increase and enhance racial tensions
24 and is probably the foremost damaging
25 circumstance that I can see because it

1 occurs every day. And last but not
2 least, my good friends in the media, who
3 continue to perpetuate, who continue to
4 project and portray all drug dealers as
5 black people, all successful business
6 people as white people, and all trouble-
7 making Asians and African Americans and
8 others as people between the process of
9 getting AIDS or something else, must be
10 reprimanded in some degree. The media
11 under the FCC's old regulations that
12 required local access for talk, for news
13 and review, would help us in this area to
14 counter some of the false images that are
15 being painted. It would allow us within
16 a forum of our own to develop our ideas
17 and concepts, and translate them to the
18 community. I encourage the commission to
19 go back and review the good or the bad
20 regulations with regard to the minority
21 requirements and the ascertainment
22 process in the communities related to the
23 FCC. Greater access to the media, to the
24 major media, would afford us a greater
25 opportunity to discuss our problems and

1 eliminate some of the myths, both pro and
2 con, related to our communities. In
3 conclusion: One, my recommendation is
4 communications be required at the
5 administrative levels, particularly in
6 the judicial system between the top
7 individuals and the communities they
8 impact; two, a continued independent
9 monitoring by agencies, such as the U.S.
10 Civil Right Commission, of racial
11 activities across this country and
12 particularly in this state; and three,
13 the maintenance of economic rules and
14 regulations requiring banks, lending
15 institutions, and private sector
16 corporations utilizing federal funds to
17 allow full participation of all
18 Americans. Thank you.

19 MR. ZIMMERMAN:

20 Thank you very, very much, Mr. Byrd.
21 We have Mr. Fletcher Smith, who is a
22 member of the Greenville County Council,
23 and we'd like to have Mr. Smith come
24 forward and give his commentary on the
25 subject of racial tensions in South

1 Carolina.

2 MR. FLETCHER SMITH:

3 Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Gentlemen,
4 I'm delighted to appear before you today
5 and express my concerns about what I
6 think the agenda for the '90s is going to
7 be. As we are aware, the black community
8 is facing a major health problem in terms
9 of AIDS. And none of the major medical
10 health care providers are addressing that
11 issue here in Greenville County. We know
12 that there are certain segments in the
13 populations that are going to suffer to a
14 substantial percent from this dangerous
15 disease. The other aspect is that county
16 government is basically structurally,
17 racially discriminatory. We've had to
18 fight to get a second black majority
19 district here in Greenville County. And
20 if it hadn't been for the strong efforts
21 of some strong black females who got
22 behind me here in Greenville County, we
23 wouldn't be at the table now where we are
24 going to get a 60 percent majority black
25 district in District 25, which I

1 anticipate we'll get next Tuesday.
2 Greenville County only has one black
3 female who is in a position of authority
4 in terms of being a department head, and
5 that person is primarily a puppet. She
6 can hire nobody. She can only send the
7 applications to the other department
8 heads for them to make the determination
9 as to whether or not the person will be
10 hired or not. In the Coroner's office, a
11 black female applied for one of the
12 Deputy Coroner's positions. That black
13 female was denied employment, and a white
14 male was placed in the position. So,
15 everywhere down the line we have white
16 elected officials who have the authority
17 to hire minorities. We have seen that
18 they have not taken that approach, but
19 have taken the approach of least
20 resistance and hired a person of their
21 own racial background. I find it
22 somewhat absurd that a black female who
23 is working in Greenville County at the
24 present time in the Intergovernmental
25 Relations Department is being denied the

1 opportunity to participate in a full-
2 fledged level in all of the governmental
3 business that that particular job
4 requires. And I find it rather strange
5 why this same black female is not given
6 the opportunity to have a secretary, to
7 have --- at one point it got so bad that
8 she was not even given a voice mail type
9 situation until we had to vociferously
10 protest that. So, I think on down the
11 line when we look at minority vendors for
12 Greenville County, which it cuts across
13 all racial lines, black people are not
14 allowed to a substantial degree to become
15 minority vendors. We have many people
16 who are printers, black men and black
17 females who have businesses who can do
18 the printing business here in Greenville
19 County. But as I understand it, they are
20 not given the opportunity to participate
21 in the bidding process. Gentlemen, I
22 think that basically this country of ours
23 is a great country. I think we have one
24 of the greatest countries that man and
25 woman is now devising. And I think the

JUDY COMP & ASSOCIATES

1 history of the black people in this
2 country started out to be 14th, 13th,
3 14th, and 15th amendments. But I find
4 that the EEOC, the Equal Opportunity
5 Employment Commission, falls down on the
6 job many times when it defined employment
7 discriminatory practices. And it takes
8 the least resistance type effort in
9 trying to eradicate racism in the work
10 place. As a practicing attorney, I see
11 it most often where just employment
12 policies impact upon black people to a
13 substantial degree. I will say this:
14 That if we're really serious about
15 cutting down on the amount of racial
16 tensions in our society, we need to give
17 human relations commissions, like Ms.
18 Julia Adams is a part of, enforcement
19 power. We need to give the Equal
20 Opportunity --- EEOC enforcement power in
21 the same sense that the Securities and
22 Exchange Commission has enforcement
23 power. And if a company or government
24 discriminates on the basis of race in
25 employment, then that enforcement agency,

1 such as the EEOC, ought to have the power
2 to shut it down in the same sense that
3 the Securities and Exchange Commission
4 has the power to shut down any business
5 that violates the securities regulations
6 in our country.

7 (Audience applauds.)

8 That's what we need. The whole
9 process of conciliation does not do
10 anything for black people but place us in
11 a position of always negotiating from a
12 position of weakness rather than from the
13 position of strength. So, in the future
14 I think that what we need to do in our
15 efforts is to make sure that those
16 agencies that are supposed to protect our
17 rights not only give us the facade of
18 protecting our rights, but have
19 enforcement powers to actually carry out
20 that mission. Thank you very much.

21 (Audience applauds.)

22 MR. ZIMMERMAN:

23 Thank you very much, Mr. Smith. We
24 also have in the audience another
25 distinguished guest, and that is the

1 person of Rev. J.M. Fleming. And, Rev.
2 Fleming, I would like to have your
3 comments from the Concerned Citizens for
4 Equal Justice. Rev. Fleming?

5 REV. FLEMING:

6 Let me first welcome you-all to
7 Greenville. Thank you for coming. I'm
8 going to reiterate some issues that have
9 already been touched upon, and they're
10 going to be in different areas.
11 Education is our main concern today, my
12 main concern of topic, and that is that
13 we must look at the way that the
14 educational system is structured, or the
15 educative system is structured here in
16 the State of South Carolina, and that is
17 that it is discriminating.
18 Discrimination goes on from the
19 superintendent's level all the way down.
20 We've got to get rid of those kinds of
21 laws, state laws that will allow teachers
22 --- that will protect teachers and not
23 protect students. And by that is that we
24 have certain situations that are going on
25 in this state at this particular time now

1 where the teacher is accused of
2 committing a crime, he or she will be
3 suspended with pay to their date in
4 court. It is not so with students.
5 Students that are accused of particular
6 crimes are kicked out, whether it's for a
7 year, six months to a year. And those
8 situations are taking place here in South
9 Carolina. I think we are under a blatant
10 racist attack here in the State of South
11 Carolina when we start talking about the
12 educative system, when we start talking
13 about the educational system, as
14 policies. When we say that is that their
15 policies at this particular time that
16 says that white students can be
17 reprimanded and kept in school, and I
18 have the statistics here before me that
19 have been released by the School Board,
20 that says that there are more than 7,000
21 white committed crimes in school.
22 Eventually, 3,000 were suspended. There
23 were more --- there were 4,000 blacks who
24 committed crimes but then we had 3,800 of
25 those suspended. There's something wrong

1 with those kinds of policies when an
2 individual have the right to say that,
3 "We can enforce the law this way," and
4 the law supports that kind of
5 discrimination from folk in authority.
6 We have to do something. There's a state
7 law February 1960, which was instituted
8 to protect colleges from riots, and now
9 we've taken that law and turned it on our
10 students. And that is that the school
11 district or colleges have the right to
12 police their own property and enforce
13 their law. There are certain laws now
14 the schools are saying that we are
15 greater than our courts. A young lady's
16 been exonerated through the courts and
17 said that she's not guilty, and the
18 school district still holds her guilty.
19 She has not been in school for several
20 months. Yet, there is a state law that
21 supports the school district behind that
22 kind of action. We must get rid of those
23 kinds of things in the State of South
24 Carolina. Secondly, we must also look at
25 the practices, the hiring practices, that

1 we have in our county and city
2 government. We have people --- we don't
3 have any representation in county
4 government except for one particular
5 office. If anybody with any authority,
6 then that person getting only a paper
7 pusher. I met with her last week to talk
8 about the authority that she has to hire,
9 to fire, to do these kinds of things that
10 goes along with her job. And I was
11 surprised that all she could do was just
12 listen to the people's complaint. And in
13 talking with her she asked me if I
14 happened, you know, to write it out for
15 her and to pass on to her because she
16 herself is somewhat afraid for her job.
17 And I find something wrong with that kind
18 of law enforcement in the State of South
19 Carolina. Black folk have no kind of
20 protection by the law, and I say to you
21 today, brothers, that we are at a period
22 which at a point something serious is
23 going to happen. Greenville is one of
24 those few places that have not
25 experienced an open riot where there's

1 going to be bloodshed in the street. We
2 are at that particular point now. This
3 is the pivotal point. We must do
4 something about it now or some folk are
5 going to get hurt in the street, lives
6 are going to be lost in the street again
7 in the '90s. Those are the concerns that
8 we have at this particular point here in
9 Greenville County. Now, when we start
10 looking at judges, the judicial system,
11 and we start looking at judges who have
12 the authority to use their own discretion
13 as to say who goes to jail and who stays
14 home, I keep reciting a couple of months
15 ago we went into the court room with
16 thirty-two kids. Twenty-six of those
17 kids just happened to be black. Twenty-
18 six black kids went to jail. The other
19 six kids went home under the same judge's
20 discretion. We have a solicitor here
21 that seeks death penalty for our youth,
22 and when white folk commit greater crime,
23 we only pat them on the hand. When young
24 children are molested by a white male,
25 they get probation and 500 days working

1 in the community. Black folk get years
2 in jail. It is something wrong with that
3 kind of system that black folk have to
4 live under. We're no longer going to
5 tolerate it. We're no longer going to
6 take it any longer. We're going to fight
7 back. That simply means whatever means
8 possible, we're going to fight back.
9 We're saying then that the law ought to
10 be equal and the laws ought to apply
11 equally for all of us, not just for some
12 of us, but for all of us. Judges. We
13 look at the prison population of our
14 children zero to sixteen. Seventy-five
15 percent of them in prison are black. We
16 look at across this nation eighty percent
17 of the folk in prison are black. We look
18 at the ratio of prison. Who commit
19 crime? Eighty percent of the crime
20 committed by white folk. Eighty percent
21 of the folk in jail are black folk. It's
22 something wrong with that kind of system.
23 And you can't tell me it's not a
24 selective targeting process going on
25 here. Even though we turn our heads when

1 we hear those things saying that it's
2 racism and that we are targeted, folk get
3 upset when they hear that, but it is the
4 truth. How can you justify the numbers?
5 We have concerns, and we're asking ---
6 well, let me say it this way. We don't
7 have any place to turn now for
8 protection. Certainly with the Reagan
9 administration and the Bush
10 administration, they're going to favor
11 --- there's nothing in the courts that we
12 can get from them but hell. So, it's not
13 but one thing left for us to do now, and
14 that is to arm ourselves, to protect
15 ourselves, fight back for ourself.
16 That's how we feel in our communities.
17 We're saying that the law --- and look at
18 this new Supreme Court. Thomas that we
19 put on there, he's not helping our
20 situation at all. There's some things
21 that we're going to have to do for
22 ourself. Thank you.

23 MR. ZIMMERMAN:

24 Thank you very much for those
25 comments, definitely.

1 (Audience applauds.)

2 Okay. Let's see. We're now at the
3 point where we have comments from our
4 audience. And in doing so, since the
5 panel has their back to you, I'd like for
6 you to if you have a comment, if you'll
7 just come to the side, and if you're
8 sitting on this side, if you'll just come
9 forward and when you raise your hand,
10 I'll recognize you. If you're sitting on
11 this side, raise your hand, I'll
12 recognize you. Just come forward so that
13 the panel won't have to turn around and
14 respond.

15 (Member of audience raises hand.)

16 MR. ZIMMERMAN:

17 Yes, come forward, please.

18 MICHAEL CURETON:

19 Thank you very much for calling me
20 up.

21 MR. DOCTOR:

22 Could you identify yourself, your
23 name?

24 MICHAEL CURETON:

25 Yes, my name is Michael Cureton.

1 MR. DOCTOR:

2 Okay.

3 MICHAEL CURETON:

4 I would have to agree with Rev.
5 Fleming, though. We have no place to
6 turn and bloodshed will fall because
7 young people are not, especially young
8 black males, feel there's no place to
9 turn. It gets to a point to where you
10 actually have to take out the police
11 before they take you out. That is the
12 belief. There are no young brothers
13 that's not packing nine millimeters. Why
14 the police department have nine
15 millimeters? I don't know. Who do you
16 need to shoot seventeen times? Nobody.
17 With no disrespect to the Committee,
18 civil rights is not an issue. We don't
19 need civil rights. Basically what we
20 need is human rights. We don't have
21 human rights. If you have human rights,
22 there's no need for civil rights. Human
23 rights are rights that you are born with.
24 Civil rights is only a contract with the
25 government, and we all know how this

1 government works. We have been here for
2 four hundred plus years, and every ten
3 years we have to review a contract? We
4 have to review a contract? The next
5 thing you know, we'll have to pay for
6 that. But one thing I have to say that
7 this country champions the rights of
8 every other country. We go to Iraq, send
9 people over there to die because we
10 champion the rights of Kuwait, and then
11 we can't get human rights here. Our kids
12 can't get a good education. We can't get
13 a job. I mean, we can't ride the bus.
14 You can't go over there and ride down the
15 street and pull up next to a white person
16 without them locking all their doors.
17 I'm looking my doors, too, because I'm
18 scared, too. That does not make sense.
19 That is my basic point. I think that we
20 need to go today, and we need to stop
21 saying "minorities." Because when we say
22 "minority" white folks think that mean
23 only blacks. We need to say "blacks and
24 minorities" because Hispanics and Indians
25 need rights just as we do. Just as they

1 say "women," they mean white women. They
2 don't mean black women, also. I think
3 another point of it is it has become ---
4 during the Reagan and Bush administration
5 it has become fashionable to take away
6 peoples' human rights and civil rights.
7 That's why we're in the situation we're
8 in right now. Thank you very much. I
9 appreciate the time.

10 (Audience applauds.)

11 MR. ZIMMERMAN:

12 Thank you very much.

13 MR. DOCTOR:

14 Mr. Chairman --- Bill before you
15 leave ---

16 MR. ZIMMERMAN:

17 Why don't you go ahead?

18 MR. DOCTOR:

19 Yeah. Mr. Chairman, I want to raise
20 before --- and I know you've got to
21 leave, Bill. But before the panel gets
22 away, I'd like to raise several different
23 questions with you. And, Bill, I've
24 jotted it down. If you had a magic wand,
25 let's pretend you do, how would you

1 address some of the problems related to
2 racial tensions here in Greenville?

3 MR. WHITNEY:

4 I think the peak in every city, may
5 it be Greenville or whatever city it is,
6 there's always the leadership of the
7 city. And the leadership of the city,
8 and that usually, usually, is the people
9 who have a very serious investment in
10 that city or their county. I think the
11 business people in Greenville must come
12 together to address their problems. They
13 are the ones that pays the taxes, the
14 majority of the taxes. They are the ones
15 that have the biggest, largest investment
16 here. So, therefore, through whatever
17 mechanism it might be, they have to
18 address the problem, may it be via the
19 city or the county government, or any
20 other entity that perpetuates our old
21 system, a system of racial attitudes; a
22 system of racial tensions. I think the
23 people who have made the greatest
24 investment must do this, and I think
25 throughout as we look at the history of

1 civil rights in this country, or human
2 rights, may it be in South Africa, the
3 thing that brings down those kinds of
4 systems is economics. This is a
5 capitalistic system, and I think we have
6 to remember this is a capitalistic
7 system. I don't think there's anything
8 wrong with it other than the fact that we
9 don't get to participate.

10 MR. DOCTOR:

11 Okay. Very good. Thank you.

12 MR. ZIMMERMAN:

13 Thank you very much.

14 MR. DOCTOR:

15 I would also like to direct a
16 question or two to the other members of
17 the panel. Ms. Gibson, you made a number
18 of different comments about the school
19 system here in Greenville. Given the
20 recent Supreme Court ruling, that
21 obviously concerns itself with the DeKalb
22 County situation in the metro Atlanta
23 area, what sort of reaction do you have
24 to that particular decision, and how do
25 you think it will impact the schools here

1 in Greenville?

2 MS. GIBSON:

3 Well, I think it will impact the
4 system negatively, and I guess if I had a
5 magic wand, I would place some other
6 people on the School Board. I would
7 place people of conscious. I would place
8 people who will speak out, and people who
9 are sensitive to the problems of the
10 school system; people that will take a
11 vested interest in what has actually
12 happening as it relates to instructional
13 education. That is, what happens in the
14 class room, et cetera, and commitment
15 from that part of the school staff. But,
16 also, commitment from administrators in
17 terms of how the behaviors of the
18 instructors impact on the lives of those
19 persons that they're supposed to be
20 developing. Personally, I feel that
21 while we have a recommendation from our
22 superintendent, and I'm sure you've heard
23 it because everybody's talking about it,
24 that he wants to go to larger schools.
25 And that means that we will be closing

1 --- well, his recommendation is to close
2 all the smaller schools. And those of us
3 who have a vested interest in education
4 realizes that small schools play a more
5 important part in the lives and in the
6 development of students because they have
7 an opportunity to interact one on one
8 with instructors as well as classmates.
9 We feel, as Dr. Cureton said, that this
10 idea should --- this recommendation
11 should not be implemented based on the
12 fact that when we first went into the
13 unitary school system in 1970, the black
14 community allowed the School Board to
15 close all of the schools in the black
16 communities. And this, of course, took
17 away the rights of our kids in terms of
18 being able to walk to school, to
19 participate in many of the
20 extracurricular activities by needing to
21 remain at school after school hours. And
22 transportation being a problem through
23 their having been bussed, many of them
24 for fifteen or twenty miles each way,
25 which is a problem and continues to be a

1 problem for our youth. I feel that if
2 this Supreme Court decision is really
3 followed, and I have to say I read it
4 twice and many, many areas of it I really
5 still did not understand. I needed to
6 talk to somebody who is more intelligent,
7 I guess, than me, and that's hard to
8 find.

9 (Audience laughter.)

10 But by the same token, it is an out,
11 in my opinion, to have schools in all
12 white elite neighborhoods, and older,
13 poorer neighborhoods not having schools
14 will certainly not build the kind of
15 character that we need in all of the
16 communities. I mean, while we realize
17 that many of the churches are still left
18 in communities, to a large extent in
19 Greenville, many of our churches are not
20 right in a cluster of the community as
21 we, you know, once had when we walked
22 every place we went. So, for those
23 reasons, I feel that it will impact
24 negatively on us as a people.

25 MR. DOCTOR:

1 Okay. The next question is to Rev.
2 Cureton. We'll get to you in just a
3 minute. Rev. Cureton ---

4 MR. ZIMMERMAN:

5 She's got to leave. She's got to
6 leave.

7 MR. DOCTOR:

8 Oh, she does? Okay. All right.

9 MS. ROBINSON:

10 Sir, I'm going to have to leave in a
11 few minutes, and I'm just dying to ask
12 this question, and to also make a
13 recommendation.

14 MR. DOCTOR:

15 Could you give your name?

16 MS. ROBINSON:

17 My name is Leola Robinson. And, I,
18 too, am always interested in any
19 discussion on racism because I started
20 out, I suppose, when I was fourteen
21 during the Civil Rights Movement. I'd
22 like to ask a question of you. Is this a
23 hearing for blacks only?

24 MR. DOCTOR:

25 No, it's not.

1 MS. ROBINSON:

2 Because as I look around the room, I
3 see that we have no leaders from the
4 white community present. As I look
5 around the room I see no leaders from the
6 private sector, none from the public
7 sector, none from the prison systems,
8 from the school system. I would like to
9 recommend to you that another hearing be
10 called, and at that hearing that the
11 white community be mandated to appear.

12 MR. DOCTOR:

13 Well, let me say this. I think it
14 should be noted that an invitation was
15 extended to several leaders in the white
16 community and, obviously, they're not
17 here. But your suggestion and your
18 observation certainly is justified.

19 MR. ZIMMERMAN:

20 I would just like to comment on that.
21 That was my observation, too, and I've
22 heard some of the panel talk about things
23 that race relations --- and certainly,
24 race relations are a two-way street. You
25 have to have people to cross cultures

1 interactive and speaking to one another,
2 talking to one another, and sitting down
3 at the table in negotiation and
4 compromise with one another. And that
5 can't be done if you're not going to have
6 different segments of the community
7 present, you know, to see what's going
8 on, to hear what's going on, to talk
9 about what needs to be done and whatnot.
10 But certainly that in itself is an
11 indication or an implication of some very
12 negative overtones, and I was observing
13 that, and I'm certainly happy that others
14 have observed that same thing.

15 MS. ROBINSON:

16 I agree with you. You know, we can
17 fight racism, but we cannot fight racism
18 alone. White people have got to come to
19 grips with their own racism, and they
20 need to be here. All of the concerns
21 that were raised today need to be heard
22 by the leaders in our community. If they
23 are not sensitive to all the racial
24 tensions that are permeating this
25 community, then they will continue to

1 mount. So, we certainly need to have
2 hearings. The U.S. Commission on Civil
3 Rights definitely needs to be involved.
4 But we need, by hook or crook, to get
5 into this room everybody from mayor to
6 the city administrators and county
7 administrators. We need the heads of
8 these agencies that deal with the issues
9 affecting black people from the Health
10 Department to the Welfare Department to
11 the Food Stamp office, to the penal
12 institution, to the courts, to the
13 judges. They need to be here. We talk
14 about what's happening to us all the
15 time. Now, we become frustrated because
16 we see a whole other era of racism
17 emerging on our children. Our children
18 have to deal with the same racism that we
19 dealt with. Why don't ---

20 MR. DOCTOR:

21 Your point's well taken and certainly
22 well made, but let me respond, if I may.
23 I think that it should be noted that the
24 mayor was invited to participate in this
25 particular program. I don't know what

1 his reasons are for not having done so,
2 but the invitation was extended. It
3 should also be noted that this Advisory
4 Committee does not have subpoena powers.
5 We only have the power to invite, and for
6 the most part, if you don't see people
7 who are --- I mean, people sitting here,
8 many of them have been invited, and they
9 chose not to take part in this meeting.

10 MS. GIBSON:

11 Well, her first question was would we
12 have another hearing; can you speak on
13 that?_

14 MR. DOCTOR:

15 Well, let me say this, and I wanted
16 to finish the process of asking questions
17 as opposed to having you ask me
18 questions. That's good, too, but I
19 wanted to sort of reserve that for the
20 end so that I could share with you what
21 it is we're going to deal with and what
22 all of this will mean for the City of
23 Greenville and, hopefully, for racial
24 tensions in the country. But we're going
25 to do a report of this particular meeting

1 and a report of the other meetings that
2 will follow. And those reports are going
3 to be fed into a national report, which
4 will subsequently be presented to the
5 Congress and to the President so that
6 they can deal with the question of racial
7 tensions in America. But we think that
8 we have an obligation, whether all of the
9 folks in a given community participate or
10 not, to call the shots. And believe you
11 me, we will be calling the shots. You
12 have helped us tremendously in that
13 effort. I regret to no end that we don't
14 have a more inclusive type of
15 participation here today, but it happens.
16 A lot of folks don't want to talk about
17 racial tensions, and we need to
18 understand that. But that does not
19 obviate our responsibility to talk about
20 racial tensions, and we're going to be
21 doing that.

22 MR. ZIMMERMAN:

23 But I would suggest to you, because
24 we'll be leaving, and you're going to
25 stay in this community --- of course, we

1 still see this community as a part of
2 South Carolina, the larger community, but
3 I would suggest to you that that concern
4 is a very valid concern, and I would
5 certainly write to those persons, or let
6 them know or write to the news media and
7 let them know that such a meeting was
8 held. And the absence of people that you
9 felt should have been there certainly had
10 some effect on how you perceive race
11 relations in Greenville County. I would
12 certainly let it be known.

13 BISHOP SMITH:

14 And let me say to Ms. Robinson before
15 she leaves that Mr. Doctor and I talked
16 about certain individuals in the
17 community. We wanted to make sure we got
18 all of the cross section, the Jewish
19 community as well as the business
20 community, and these people were
21 contacted, and your observation is
22 correct, but they were contacted.

23 MR. ZIMMERMAN:

24 As well as Native Americans. Chief
25 Blue and one of his representatives were

1 supposed to have been here, and I'm not
2 sure why they weren't able to make it,
3 but they were concerned about it._

4 MEMBER OF THE AUDIENCE:

5 How do you view that, them not being
6 here?

7 MR. DOCTOR: -

8 What's the question?

9 MEMBER OF THE AUDIENCE:

10 How do you view that, them not being
11 here? Since you contacted them and
12 they're not here, how do you view that?

13 MR. DOCTOR:

14 Well, I view that as evidence that
15 there is a severe racial tension problem
16 here in the City of Greenville, and
17 that's certainly been reflected by the
18 comments made up to this point. That's
19 how I view it. Could we very quickly ---
20 there are a couple of questions, and I
21 have to ask these questions so that we
22 can get that information into the report
23 that we're going to be doing. And then
24 after we get through with those
25 questions, then we can open up for

1 everybody else. But very quickly, Rev.
2 Cureton, could you --- you made some
3 comments, for example, about your
4 perceptions of discrimination in public
5 employment here in Greenville. And you
6 indicated that there's a 20 percent black
7 population here in the city, but by
8 inference you suggested that blacks don't
9 hold anywhere near that percentage in top
10 echelon jobs in government or throughout
11 the other jobs. Is that the case?

12 REV. CURETON:

13 I think the statistics will bear my
14 statement out, and I think that, for
15 example, the county government, I alluded
16 that out of the more than 1,300
17 employees, of course, there are 35 who
18 receive more than \$40,000, up to \$85,000
19 per year. I think I'm right on the
20 figures, and only one person received in
21 the lower 40s, and that was one black
22 person, and that is certainly out of
23 harmony with the ratio of blacks to
24 whites in Greenville County.

25 MR. DOCTOR:

1 Okay. Very good.

2 MS. GIBSON:

3 Plus that the educations level is ---

4 REV. CURETON:

5 Let me point --- excuse me.

6 MS. GIBSON:

7 Excuse me. Go ahead. Speak on it.

8 I just don't want it to get ---

9 REV. CURETON:

10 All right. I made mention also in
11 that some of our schools in
12 administration areas, I think it's the
13 largest high school in the county,
14 fourteen or 1,500 students, and out of
15 what, I believe, it's three or four
16 counselors and principal along with three
17 assistant principals, there's only one
18 person who is a colored, black, is a
19 counselor. And, of course, we do know
20 that those positions pay much more than
21 the classroom teacher. And, of course, I
22 don't know who is responsible. I think
23 that people have used the criteria that
24 they are not qualified or don't --- can't
25 find them. But I think all of us know

1 that most of these principals when they
2 select an assistant principal or
3 counselor is that whether John Doe is
4 black and Jane Brown is white, they will
5 go through probably twenty applications
6 to find John Brown to put him on his
7 staff. And I think that this is
8 something that ought to be brought to the
9 attention not only of the principal but
10 the Board of Trustees as well as the
11 superintendent, as well as the area
12 superintendents. I think that they ought
13 to be held responsible to see to it that
14 all schools have at least one black
15 person in a top position.

16 MR. DOCTOR:

17 Very good. Thank you very much. You
18 wanted to comment on it?

19 REV. FLEMING:

20 Yeah. In conjunction with what Rev.
21 Cureton is saying is that there is a
22 study going on now about the Concerned
23 Citizens of Greenville to look at the
24 folk that are hired into the school
25 system. We have a college up the street

1 here, the Bob Jones University, is racist
 2 from grade one to grade two all the way
 3 through. And now we begin to get a great
 4 number of these folk from Bob Jones into
 5 the school system. And a great number of
 6 the children that are having problems are
 7 having problems from those teachers who
 8 come out of Bob Jones. We will release
 9 our report to the public in the very near
 10 future.

11 MR. DOCTOR:

12 We would appreciate receiving a copy
 13 of that, too. Thank you very much. Ms.
 14 Adams, you talked about racism in the
 15 community. Obviously, there's several
 16 different types of racism, but I'm more
 17 concerned about two in particular. One
 18 has to do with individual racism, and the
 19 other has to do with institutionalized
 20 racism. How would you classify or
 21 categorize institutional racism here in
 22 Greenville?

23 MS. ADAMS:

24 I guess if I looked at the
 25 institutional racism as it effects the

1 community, I'm thinking of an incident
2 that happened more than a year ago
3 whereby you had a group of parents from
4 the elite side of town that were
5 concerned that certain children of a
6 certain race and a certain social
7 economic group would lower the standards
8 of education for their school --- of
9 their school on the east side.
10 Consequently, these children were
11 shuffled. They lived in a housing
12 project up off the Laurens Road, and the
13 school that these children would be
14 attending was on the east side, which is
15 one of the most affluent communities.
16 And you have parents who will stand in
17 front of a TV camera blatantly and say,
18 "We do not want these children at this
19 school because they will lower the
20 standards of education of our children."
21 These children were, again, hustled from
22 that school to another school. The
23 parents from this school will come to a
24 School Board meeting and say, "We do not
25 want these children at our school because

1 it will lower the standards of
2 education." Then they are reassigned to
3 a third school. That's why we need to
4 monitor our School Board. We sit at
5 School Board meetings and see parents who
6 will come and say, "We do not want these
7 children because they're black. They
8 will lower the standards of education.
9 They're from a lower socioeconomic group,
10 and we do not want them in our particular
11 schools." We saw children shuffled to
12 three schools.

13 MR. DOCTOR:

14 Okay. Generally speaking, then,
15 would you say, then, that institutional
16 racism is strong in this area, weak in
17 this area?

18 MS. ADAMS:

19 Very strong.

20 MR. DOCTOR:

21 Very strong?

22 MS. ADAMS:

23 Very strong.

24 MR. DOCTOR:

25 Okay. Very good. One other quick

1 --- well, a couple of quick --- other
2 quick questions. Mr. Byrd ---

3 MR. ZIMMERMAN:

4 This gentleman wanted to respond to
5 that specifically. I think they wanted
6 to respond to that.

7 KEN GIBSON:

8 Can you define what you mean by
9 individual and institutionalized racism?
10 I think you should maybe --- what I
11 understand institutional is is ---

12 MR. DOCTOR:

13 Could you identify yourself?

14 MR. GIBSON:

15 I'm Ken Gibson. I'm her son. What I
16 understand institutional racism to be is
17 like racism that is built into the system
18 and into the procedural things like, say,
19 a corporation or a company has a job
20 requirement that says, "You have to have
21 a certain educational level," even though
22 that certain education level may not be
23 necessary to a particular job. And,
24 therefore, it discriminates against
25 minorities and other underprivileged

1 persons who may not have that level of
2 education but can still do the job.

3 MR. DOCTOR:

4 Okay. I just want to talk about
5 systemic racism as opposed to
6 institutional racism. I use the terms
7 synonymously but systemic, institutional
8 like wide-ranging, ingrained racism that
9 effects institutions, that effects large
10 industries, corporations, and so on, as
11 opposed to individual racism, obviously
12 exhibited by individuals.

13 MS. GIBSON:

14 I tried to allude to that when I said
15 that we have racism through governmental
16 agencies, meaning city and county, in our
17 educational system. That we have racism
18 through the institutional ---

19 MR. DOCTOR:

20 I picked up on that point.

21 MS. GIBSON:

22 And industry as well as community
23 wide.

24 MR. DOCTOR:

25 Right. Right.

1 MR. ZIMMERMAN:

2 You have a gentleman in the back
3 wanted to respond to that.

4 MS. GIBSON:

5 Dr. Robert Young of the NAACP.

6 MR. DOCTOR:

7 Okay.

8 DR. YOUNG:

9 I'd like to comment on institutional
10 ---

11 MR. DOCTOR:

12 Dr. Young, would you identify
13 yourself?

14 DR. YOUNG:

15 Yeah. Robert Young.

16 MR. DOCTOR:

17 And your position?

18 DR. YOUNG:

19 President of the Greenville branch
20 NAACP.

21 MR. DOCTOR:

22 Okay.

23 DR. YOUNG:

24 I would like to comment on
25 institutional racism. And I feel that

1 institutional racism is very, very
2 prevalent in our city. And it's one of
3 the reasons why it's so difficult to get
4 a handle on many of the problems because
5 they're intertwined and interwoven with
6 several systems. To give you an example
7 of that, I just left Greenville Tech,
8 Greenville Technical College, where I was
9 talking with the head of the department
10 concerning a student and black teachers
11 there. And I discovered in my discussion
12 with them that they have a system where
13 students evaluate teachers to determine
14 whether or not they are employed in that
15 department, and each department has its
16 own method of determining who gets hired.
17 Now, if you go to the hospital and you
18 don't see any radiological technicians,
19 and you say, "Oh, the hospital is
20 discriminating." The discrimination
21 involves Greenville Tech plus Greenville
22 Hospital. Both are interwoven. So, you
23 have two or three systems coming together
24 making it impossible for black teachers
25 to get in, making it impossible for black

1 students to survive because there was
2 only one black counselor involved in that
3 program. And, consequently, these kids
4 are pushed out, black teachers are pushed
5 out. So, what you have there is a form
6 of institutional racism, which means that
7 you have to go back to Greenville Tech
8 and root out there, and then go to
9 Greenville Hospital and root out there,
10 and you still may have some racism.
11 Racism exists in practically every
12 institution in Greenville. It's the
13 level of racism that makes the
14 difference. Some institutions have a
15 high level of racism, some institutions
16 have a lower level of racism dependent
17 upon how much input we have into that
18 particular institution. For example, I
19 believe around 1977 or near about, we
20 started getting black elected officials.
21 So, we saw a decrease in the level of
22 racism because we had expectations from
23 black elected officials to do certain
24 things to deal with a certain problem.
25 But still, with them there, there is a

1 level of racism which must be dealt with
2 at even a lower level. So, institutional
3 racism exists throughout. It's just a
4 matter of determining which institution
5 has a higher level and which institution
6 has a lower level.

7 MR. ZIMMERMAN:

8 But if I may comment on that. We
9 have to understand that institutional
10 racism most certainly is a result of
11 intellectual and subtle kind of racial
12 activity being allowed. You know, what's
13 happening is that institutional racism
14 comes about when we look at what you just
15 said. That was a very good analysis and
16 example of what is happening. We would
17 go right to the hospital and say, "Well,
18 they are the racists, and this is where
19 racism occurs." But then, it's
20 systematic as well. Then, of course,
21 that institutional system is a part of
22 it, or the institution is a part of the
23 system. So, institutional racism is
24 nothing more than a reflection of the
25 system, and it's systematic racism, and

1 it all comes from what's happening now
2 with subtle kinds of racist acts and
3 whatnot. And, again, I heard some of the
4 panel was talking about the
5 administration in Washington, and before
6 this administration and, most certainly,
7 this administration is carrying out what
8 went on eight years before. And we have
9 a level of tolerance with racism that is
10 so prevalent in this country that the
11 mark of approval or the stamp of approval
12 is very evident, and that's why you have
13 so much racism occurring now. You have
14 the neo-Nazis, and you have the Ku Klux
15 Klan starting to rise again.

16 MR. SMITH:

17 Lyndon Larouche.

18 MR. ZIMMERMAN:

19 Definitely. Where you have the, you
20 know, but the racist zealots now are all
21 not just out there marching in silk or
22 satin robes and having, you know, real
23 spectacular exhibitions or
24 demonstrations. A lot of them come in
25 four piece --- or should I say double

1 breasted suits and three piece suits, and
2 they sit around the table, the Board
3 tables. They are on the appointed
4 governments, they are elected officials,
5 they are appointed officials. They are
6 in the decision making, you know, areas,
7 and they are the ones that you really
8 have to be aware of, you know. You don't
9 have to worry about the Grand Wizard, and
10 that kind of thing anymore, you know.
11 But you have to worry about those people
12 that come in and sit around and will tell
13 you that I've appointed you to this
14 board, and now you feel very, very
15 fortunate. But just keep quiet and stay
16 in your place. That's racism, and those
17 are the kind of people that we have to be
18 cognizant of and aware that they are the
19 ones that are starting to cause the
20 problem of racism to be on the rise
21 again. And as you said, racism is well
22 and kicking, believe me. We just have to
23 put it back where it belongs, out of our
24 system.

25 MR. DOCTOR:

1 Mr. Chairman, well put. Mr. Byrd,
2 you talked about regulatory enforcement.
3 I think it's a matter of fact that during
4 the mid '80s and the early '80s clearly
5 the federal government pulled back on not
6 only regulatory enforcement but civil
7 rights enforcement as well. I think
8 statistically speaking, if you check the
9 budgets of those agencies that had civil
10 rights enforcement programs, clearly they
11 received tremendous cuts during that
12 particular period. I guess the question
13 that comes to my mind, and believe you
14 me, the Commission which during that
15 particular period had its civil rights
16 monitoring responsibility cut along with
17 the federal civil rights enforcement
18 responsibility. But be all of that as it
19 may, if you had a recommendation to make
20 regarding civil rights enforcement in the
21 country as it relates to federal
22 agencies, what would you say? I think
23 you sort of alluded to that in your
24 presentation, but what would you
25 recommend to us? Would you recommend

1 that we get back to a vigorous monitoring
2 of the civil rights enforcement efforts
3 of federal agencies, or do you think
4 that's not necessary, or what?

5 MR. BYRD:

6 Well, Mr. Doctor, I don't think that
7 we're going to be afforded that luxury
8 anymore. I would love to see it. I
9 think that from the public side, because
10 my evaluation of agencies is that they
11 cannot have an advocacy role in the
12 public they can evaluate and implement.
13 But I don't see a commission of the
14 federal government coming into the
15 communities and doing some of the things
16 that ultimately the people that are under
17 these systems have to do themselves. But
18 certainly, if there was something that
19 would be done paperwise, it would be as
20 the attorney had alluded to. In the law
21 enforcement area, I'll just go to that
22 for a second, certainly if a law
23 enforcement officer realized that he or
24 she were punishable not only by the
25 courts but by the individual with regard

1 to the removal of protection for limits
2 with regard to suits against these
3 people, the decision by their superiors
4 to continue their services would be
5 gravely reevaluated. In other words, if
6 a police officer knows that when he hits
7 somebody in the head, not only can they
8 sue the police officer, I mean, the
9 agency, but he can lose his house and his
10 trailer or whatever, he may reconsider.
11 Likewise, in corporate and public sector,
12 when the individual realizes that
13 likewise, when discrimination, even if
14 the burden of proof is on the plaintiff,
15 can be proven, they are no longer
16 protected under that agency, but then
17 they, too --- because in my travels, I
18 have found only a reduced percentage of
19 these policies that we allude to here.
20 We negotiated with some twenty-six major
21 U.S. corporations. Myself and a
22 gentleman by the name of Fred Rashid
23 returned to black America more than a
24 half a billion dollars in negotiated
25 contracts without one federal law. It

1 was simple. If you don't do this, it's
2 no longer profitable. The economics of
3 racism is what eliminated it from our
4 society. People that --- we didn't
5 desegregate because somebody good-hearted
6 decided that we now need to go to school
7 with these people. It cost too much
8 money to build two equal schools. It
9 just didn't make sense, and we realized
10 what "equal" meant. The civil rights
11 movement started, as many of you well
12 know, not because we wanted to come up
13 front in the bus. It was because we were
14 saying if black people can't cross the
15 line to go up front, white people
16 shouldn't be allowed to cross the line to
17 come in the back. That was what Rosa
18 Parks triggered. So, people who don't
19 know that --- so, folks who say that if
20 we get enough money we'll be all right,
21 don't know the history of Oklahoma. If
22 you don't know your history, that's ---
23 black people who feel like enough money
24 will get us out of this don't understand.
25 Enough money, enough education, and

1 enough commitment will do it, so the
2 commitment has to, one, focus on the
3 dollars. When agencies, both private and
4 public, and the individuals who
5 manipulate those policies to cause
6 discrimination can be personally liable
7 for it, I think you'll see a reduction in
8 it. So, if you could do anything, I
9 would ask you to go back and in a
10 skillful way, without regard to race,
11 creed, color, or national origin,
12 implement the process that would cause an
13 individual, as well as that agency, if
14 they were determined to be
15 discriminating, to be liable for the
16 damages. And I think you'd see some
17 serious situations from people in our
18 hospital who just don't like women or
19 blacks making that decision versus just
20 --- you know, because it's just not
21 happening. We have to remove the
22 protection that they feel, I think, under
23 the system.

24 MR. DOCTOR:

25 Okay. Very good. Then Rev. --- no,

1 Mr. Smith, I believe it was.

2 MR. SMITH:

3 Yes, sir.

4 MR. DOCTOR:

5 You made the comment then,
6 apparently, about civil rights
7 monitoring? Was that not the case?

8 MR. SMITH:

9 Well, yes, sir; enforcement as well.

10 MR. DOCTOR:

11 Enforcement, yeah.

12 MR. SMITH:

13 I was just saying that we know that
14 black people are well qualified for the
15 positions. Rev. Johnny Smith right here
16 came in to being the chairman of our
17 transit system, and he got it back on
18 track and made sure that black people, as
19 well as white people, could ride the
20 buses in Greenville County when many on
21 the County Council wanted to take that
22 right away. And, so, I know he's on the
23 right side of the issue. The fact of the
24 matter is when I talk about enforcement,
25 I believe that the EEOC is a sham

1 organization because of the fact it has
2 no enforcement power. It says, "We can
3 conciliate an agreement," but it doesn't
4 do anything. A person does not comply
5 with the conciliation agreement and
6 nothing comes about. We need to have
7 enforcement power with regard to our
8 civil rights organizations. The other
9 aspect is the Supreme Court case won't
10 make a hill of beans to Greenville, South
11 Carolina, because some years ago it was
12 compromised out in another case where
13 blacks had the momentum on their side in
14 the school district, and the whites would
15 have to prove that they were
16 discriminating by clear and convincing
17 evidence. A few black youths got
18 together and joined a lawsuit which took
19 Greenville County out from under a court
20 order. And that court order means that
21 blacks now have to go back into court and
22 prove that the system is actually
23 discriminating. So, the case happened in
24 Greenville County some five, six, or
25 seven years ago, that is why we're having

1 the racially discriminatory practices in
2 the school district today. Because it is
3 almost impossible for people to finance a
4 major civil rights case to challenge the
5 system. So, that is where we are. The
6 fact is that we're going to have to make
7 sure that some of these black leaders
8 understand that we're all reading off the
9 same sheet of music in terms of making
10 sure that we have equal justice for all
11 people in Greenville County.

12 MR. ZIMMERMAN:

13 So, the burden of proof is on the
14 victim?

15 MR. SMITH:

16 Is on, back on the victim.

17 MR. ZIMMERMAN:

18 The victim; right.

19 MR. SMITH:

20 Where it was, it was on --- before
21 that when blacks --- Mr. Whittenburg, who
22 is an elderly gentleman, and his
23 daughter, along with other black
24 citizens, and Donald James Sampson and
25 Judge Smith, they brought a civil rights

1 case here which said that the --- it got
2 rid of segregation. Okay? And it put
3 the Greenville School System under court
4 order, as many of the school systems in
5 South Carolina were under. So, that
6 meant that the school system could not
7 discriminate, and if it did, a plaintiff
8 coming into court had an easy burden
9 because the school district would have to
10 prove by clear and convincing evidence
11 that it was not discriminating. What
12 these leaders did, they compromised it
13 out. We got a black superintendent. I
14 don't know whether that was ---

15 MR. DOCTOR: -

16 Believe you me, Greenville is not the
17 community that happened in. It's
18 happened in Atlanta, too.

19 MR. SMITH:

20 Well, I'm not attacking anything.

21 MR. DOCTOR:

22 No. Right. It happened in Atlanta.

23 MR. SMITH:

24 Basically, now, the plaintiff, the
25 victim, has to prove discrimination,

1 which is a heavy burden because the court
2 in this case that just was handed down
3 says that you have to prove intent, and
4 if the person does not call you a racial
5 apathy, it is almost impossible to prove
6 racial intent. We can show
7 discriminatory effect, but it's hard to
8 prove racial intent.

9 MR. DOCTOR:

10 Intent. Yeah. Thank you very much.
11 Mr. Chairman? Thank you.

12 MR. ZIMMERMAN:

13 Thank you very much for your
14 comments. I'd like at this time to ask
15 Mr. Dan Avery if he would come forward
16 and just give us your commentary on this
17 very important subject, if you would.
18 Mr. Avery?

19 DAN AVERY:

20 Speaking from a business perspective,
21 I'm delighted, first of all, to see that
22 you're down here and you've come to
23 Greenville. I just recently found out
24 about the meeting, and I'm concerned
25 about the time element. And out of all

1 the people that I polled personally in
2 Greenville, some fifty that was not aware
3 that you were here in Greenville. I
4 would like for you to take that under
5 consideration, and I don't know who you
6 utilize in terms of letting the community
7 know about your presence, but it was not
8 known by quite a few people whom I feel
9 personally should be aware of your
10 presence in Greenville. From a business
11 perspective, Greenville has a very small
12 minority business community. And without
13 repeating some of the things that have
14 been stated here from the educational
15 point of view, from law enforcement point
16 of view, from personal and individual
17 experiences here in Greenville, and since
18 I came kind of late, I know if many of
19 these things have already been covered,
20 but I would highlight some from business
21 and personal. Personal, in reference to
22 not only state, county, and city law
23 enforcement, problems in those areas with
24 citizens. Some of the ones that have
25 occurred such as a young man being held

1 over a bridge and intimidated in that
2 fashion. I don't know if that has been
3 covered with you here. So, the other
4 situation, the City refusing to take the
5 necessary prosecution against an
6 individual on the City Police force. And
7 from what I read in the paper, this
8 decision was made by Steve Kerns, who is
9 our City attorney. But we all know that
10 Steve is an appointee, and the City
11 attorney, and all of that goes back to
12 the City Council. The other situations
13 that have occurred in Greenville,
14 individuals being given tickets by the
15 State Highway Department on charges that
16 are totally false, and they are being
17 prosecuted on fraudulent charges. The
18 other situation is individuals I have
19 talked with, homes being entered,
20 electronic surveillance, and things of
21 this nature that are occurring in this
22 community. And many do not, like I said
23 before, I think of what you stated, do
24 not have the financial resources to take
25 agencies on and have these individuals

1 prosecuted. Many individuals in this
2 community, except for a very few, are
3 muzzled. They don't speak their mind in
4 terms of the problems in the community,
5 what's going on, and many, a few who are
6 here today, do speak out. I feel that we
7 need more cooperation from agencies such
8 as you represent to come more often, have
9 a designated time to be here, and
10 preferably, to have it after 5:00 p.m.
11 If you could do that, I think you would
12 have a overflow here within the
13 facilities that you presently have that
14 would not accommodate. The other
15 situation as it relates to businesses,
16 there has been and still is going on a
17 process where minority businesses are
18 being eliminated within the municipality
19 of Greenville. I personally talked with
20 individuals in reference to this, and I
21 want to call a name here, especially in
22 reference to Dazzlers and Mr. Charles
23 Harris, who I wasn't able to get on the
24 phone; his particular situation and the
25 problem that he has incurred with law

1 enforcement, and the situation there.
2 And several others in the community that
3 have experienced this type of
4 discrimination within law enforcement
5 locally. And these agencies are a hybrid
6 situation, which is a combination of both
7 federal, state, county, and city law
8 enforcement officers. And that is a
9 very, very deep concern of mine as a
10 business person in Greenville County.
11 And, also, the economic situation of, as
12 you're well aware, of the dollar did not
13 turn over .001 percent in the minority
14 community. This and with the economic
15 situation, which means we are not allowed
16 the privilege of hiring additional people
17 within our business, that there is a
18 systematic situation going on that
19 alleviates minority businesses. We need
20 more enforcement. We need continuous
21 vigilance of your agency in coming in and
22 talking with people within the community,
23 both professional and the
24 nonprofessional. And I'm finding many
25 times it seems the professional end is

1 aware of meetings and situations, and
2 so-called designated leaders, and not the
3 people in the community who really need
4 to know what's going on and can
5 articulate their concerns to you. Thank
6 you very much.

7 MR. ZIMMERMAN:

8 Thank you for your comments. Are
9 there any other comments from the
10 audience? If not, we will conclude this
11 meeting, and in doing so, I would just
12 like to commend all of you that attended
13 and just to be a fact that you are here
14 tells us that you are interested and
15 concerned about race relations in
16 Greenville, and certainly in South
17 Carolina as well as these United States
18 of America. And I do want to say that it
19 is quite gratifying as a member of this
20 State Advisory Committee to the United
21 States Civil Rights Commission to see and
22 hear the intensity of your participation.
23 It tells us that you are very, very
24 interested in what's going on, and that
25 you are willing to work towards better

1 race relations in Greenville County.

2 BISHOP SMITH:

3 Mr. Chairman, I would just like to
4 say before leaving that concern that we
5 have is that as you pointed out the
6 previous administration, I think, got
7 started out with a plan to really not
8 have a Civil Rights Commission, and we've
9 been fighting to bring it back. Now Art
10 Fletcher has fought to get funds, and
11 we've gotten, I think in the next budget
12 coming up, a few more dollars to be able
13 to do a little more of what you're
14 talking about. For example, you
15 mentioned about having more meetings.
16 Well, very frankly, we don't have the
17 dollars nor the staff to do a lot of
18 that. But we're working on that aspect,
19 and I don't want you to leave thinking,
20 "Well, we told them they need to come
21 back. They need to check our community,"
22 and so forth, and our hands are tied
23 because this gentleman has, what, six
24 states?

25 MR. DOCTOR:

1 Six.

2 BISHOP SMITH:

3 Six states that he has to cover, and
4 he has very few staff people. We are the
5 South Carolina Advisory group, and
6 perhaps we can ourselves do some things.
7 But in terms of having the funds to do
8 what I feel is adequate for all of us,
9 we're still fighting for that, and I want
10 you to understand that.

11 MR. ZIMMERMAN:

12 And we certainly will take your
13 recommendations under advisement, and
14 when the report is put together we will
15 analyze what has been said here today and
16 certainly look at trying to come about
17 with some resolutions to a problem that
18 is very, very serious, and coming up with
19 an agenda for better race relations in
20 the State of South Carolina, and most
21 certainly Greenville, as well.

22 MR. DOCTOR:

23 Mr. Chairman, I would like to make a
24 closing comment, too, if I may. On
25 behalf of the U.S. Commission on Civil

1 Rights, I would like to thank the members
2 of the South Carolina Advisory Committee
3 to the Commission. We have State
4 Advisory Committees in all of the states
5 throughout the country, as well as the
6 District of Columbia. And we look at the
7 members of these various advisory
8 committees as the eyes and ears of the
9 Commission on Civil Rights in the
10 respective states. We are, indeed, very,
11 very pleased with the performance of
12 these two gentlemen here today and the
13 other members of the Committee who are
14 not here today. We happen to think that
15 South Carolina is one of our better
16 committees. It's certainly one of our
17 more aggressive committees. And I think
18 once we get the additional funding that I
19 made reference to a bit earlier, you're
20 going to see much more of the South
21 Carolina Advisory Committee in the City
22 of Greenville and in other cities around
23 the state, for that matter. Just a word
24 of two, if I may, about what is going to
25 happen with all of this, again, because I

1 think it's important that you understand
2 what role you're playing in dealing with
3 the question of racial tensions in
4 America here today. The Commission on
5 Civil Rights adopted this project, as I
6 indicated, in February of last year. And
7 we thought at that particular time at a
8 retreat in Richmond, Virginia that if
9 there were one problem in the country
10 that we faced that demanded a serious
11 amount of attention, it was racial
12 tensions. If you look at the facts and
13 the figures, it is very, very clear that
14 hate group activity is on the increase;
15 that hate groups are increasing in size;
16 that conflict exists in practically every
17 institutional level that you can possibly
18 think of from the schools, health,
19 economics, employment, you name it. It
20 is very, very clear to us that because of
21 the crucialness of this particular
22 problem, we thought that we should
23 provide an assistance and a service to
24 the country in terms of bringing folks
25 together, knowledgeable folks in key

1 communities around the country, to come
2 in and just share with us their
3 perceptions of racial tensions in their
4 respective communities. You have
5 provided us with that very valuable
6 service here today, and I can assure you
7 that once we have pulled all of this
8 information and all of this material
9 together, your comments here today are
10 going to impact the national scene. I
11 promise you that. Not only will it
12 impact the national scene, but it's also
13 going to impact race relations in this
14 region. And while we are very, very
15 small in size, the commission is just now
16 reopening its Southern regional office.
17 I was privileged to work in that office
18 from '69 until '86. And then, of course,
19 under the Reagan administration we ended
20 up being rified (sic); we were reduced
21 from ten regional offices down to three.
22 But this new administration, headed up by
23 Art Fletcher and Willie Gonzales, are in
24 the business of expanding the agency once
25 again. And the very fact that they asked

1 me to once again become a regional
2 director of this office down here in the
3 south, I think, typifies where they're
4 coming from. Because they know that I'm
5 very serious about civil rights, and
6 very, very aggressive about civil rights
7 enforcement. And, so, today you have
8 made a very valuable contribution to the
9 question, to the debate, and once we pull
10 all of these reports together from all
11 over the country, they are going to be
12 fed into Washington. And, of course, the
13 idea is to have all of this impact in a
14 positive kind of way on public policy.
15 Comments, the reports are going to be fed
16 to the Congress and to the President,
17 with the idea in mind that they are going
18 to act in a very positive, responsive way
19 to what you have said around the country.
20 Thank you very much. Mr. Chairman?

21 BISHOP SMITH:

22 Mr. Chairman?

23 MR. ZIMMERMAN:

24 Yes.

25 BISHOP SMITH:

1 Yes. Although I'm on the Commission,
2 I think I speak for the people here. I'd
3 like to thank you, Mr. Chairman and Mr.
4 Executive Director, for coming to
5 Greenville. For hearing some of the
6 concerns and problems, and I think this
7 is just the tip of the iceberg. It gives
8 you some indication of what's happening
9 here and we do appreciate your coming.

10 MR. DOCTOR:

11 Thank you very much.

12 MR. ZIMMERMAN:

13 And we will be in Columbia later in
14 the year, and if any of you wish to come
15 down at that time and attend that public
16 hearing, and you will be able to make
17 comments at that time, and you may want
18 to let us know how things have turned out
19 from this day forth until the time that
20 we meet in Columbia. Again, thank you
21 very much. And in the words of your
22 native son, Rev. Jesse Jackson, let's
23 keep hope alive. Thank you very much.

24 (MEETING ADJOURNED)

1 STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA)

2) CERTIFICATE

3 COUNTY OF GREENVILLE)

4 I, BRIDGET BROWN, a Notary Public, duly
5 commissioned and qualified in and for the
6 State of South Carolina, do hereby certify
7 that the meeting of the South Carolina
8 Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on
9 Civil Rights was transcribed under my
10 direction, and that this is a true record of
11 said transcript.

12 IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my
13 hand and affixed my official seal this -----
14 day of -----, 1992.

15 -----

16 Notary Public for South Carolina

17 My commission Expires: 10-10-01