

Also, in Charleston County District #23 the Edisto Island Elementary School has only 42 students and two teachers though it allegedly has seven grades. This school is maintained for the exclusive use of white children. There are about 20 other elementary schools in the state with less than 100 children in each one.

In other districts in the state small inadequate schools were closed this year. The students at these schools were given a free choice as to where they wanted to go to school in the future, and the Negro children involved went either to an all-Negro school or to a desegregated school.

ESEA: EQUALITY OF SEGREGATION

There is evidence that programs funded by Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act are playing a major role in retarding school desegregation. The ESEA provides for the availability of federal funds to school districts based on the number of school-age children in the district from low income families. The money is granted to the state, and the state, in turn, is responsible for approving programs submitted from local school districts. South Carolina is eligible to receive about twenty-two million dollars under the program. Much of this money is being used for underprivileged children in Negro schools, since that is where most such children are located.

In South Carolina the projects funded with ESEA money are to provide free lunches, free textbooks, remedial reading teachers, clothing, eyeglasses, medical and dental care, social workers, mobile classrooms, etc. For Negro children and parents who live on a low income, these services are meeting a real need. If, however, a child can receive these services only by attending the Negro school he is likely to stay there and chances of meaningful desegregation in the district are slight. It is not necessary that the programs be restricted to those schools with the highest concentration of children from low income families. Commissioner Howe sent a letter this summer to the state departments of education notifying them that when utilizing ESEA funds, it was possible to devise programs to benefit the child, regardless of where he attended school. This has not been done to any great degree in South Carolina and therefore these programs tend to be available to many Negro children only if they stay at the Negro school. One South Carolina school superintendent has admitted that the ESEA encourages segregation because some Negro families would rather have their children remain in a poor school that qualifies for the ESEA funded programs.

In some school districts which had their federal funds deferred, school officials attempted to blame the federal government for the deferral and piously expressed their concern for those who would no longer benefit from the funds. Superintendent Kirkley of Marion #3 said, "Our night adult education classes will be what will hit us hardest. We'll have to cut that out." Mr. Kirkley went on to explain that there were 100 adults in the classes, all Negro. In Dillon #1 where less than 1% of the 1,246 Negroes in the district transferred to desegregated schools, the district's funds were deferred. The district had provided 425 free lunches in 1965-1966 but after the funds were deferred the superintendent suddenly found that there were 1,200 children who needed to be fed. The Chester Board of School Trustees wrote the U.S. Office of Education that, "The educational welfare of our culturally deprived Negro boys and girls would be adversely affected by the withdrawal of federal funds and that in such an event it would be our responsibility to take an action to court in an effort to protest the rights of these children." In Chesterfield #4 the superintendent warned Negro citizens that if they continued to send letters of complaint to Washington the district's funds would be in danger of being cut off and the Negroes would be ones who would be hurt by this. This threat influenced many people in the Negro community.

While all adult education programs in the state are supposedly integrated, many communities have found ways around this. The most common ploy is to hold adult education classes at both the white and Negro schools in the community. In such situations, the Negroes usually attend the classes at the Negro school and the white adults go to the classes at the predominantly white school.

DEFERRAL OF FEDERAL FUNDS

Much of the current controversy surrounding the U.S. Office of Education hinges on the question of whether or not the Office has the authority to defer a school district's funds without first having a hearing to determine whether or not the district is violating Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. Regardless