

The gap between income and need is particularly glaring in the rural Black Belt counties . . . where the majority of the population is poor, and where even the meager sources of tax revenue available are underutilized.

In some instances, available money is earmarked for programs that may no longer be meaningful. For example, school officials from Eufaula testified that the State and Federal governments were providing funds for teachers of vocational agriculture and home economics. They expressed doubt that any job opportunities were opened for persons taking agriculture courses while for persons taking home economics courses available jobs were in eating places and in private homes. Levi Pettway, a senior at Boykin High School in Boykin, testified that he had studied vocational agriculture for three years even though he did not plan to become a farmer. Other students were having the same experience, he said.

Comparison of Financial Resources for Black and White Schools.—There are sharp disparities between black and predominantly white schools in the hearing area. In an extreme case in Lowndes County, the per pupil value of the black schools was \$120, while for the white schools it was \$1,306. For the 16 county hearing area, the county schools attended by white students had an average value of almost four times that of the schools attended by black students. The average for the white schools was \$823.75; for the black schools it was 240.81.¹

In seven of the school districts in the hearing area covered by *Lee v. Macon*, there was a large difference between the per pupil insurance valuation of the black schools and the traditionally white schools in 1967-68. For example, in the Demopolis School System, the insurance valuation of the buildings for white pupils was \$911 per pupil and for blacks it was \$486 per pupil.² Six of the school districts in the hearing area covered by *Lee v. Macon* had a significantly lower per pupil value for furniture and fixtures at the black schools. The Marengo School System, the system with the greatest disparity, had a valuation of \$24 for the black schools and \$95 for the white schools. None of the school systems had formulated a plan to correct the disparity.³

Another indication of the comparative quality of schools for black and white students is the respective number of black and white schools with inadequate enrollments. In the 16 county school districts within the hearing area, there were 212 schools, attended by less students than the number prescribed by the State Department of Education as the minimum number that any school should have, during the 1965-66 school year; 169 of them (80 percent) were black schools.

Many such schools continue to exist. Among these schools are 11 in Sumter County, nine in Marengo County, and eight in Clarke County.⁴

Dr. Ernest Stone, when asked to explain how it was possible for the Clarke County School System to have a white school worth \$110,000 and a black one worth \$750, stated that the State had nothing to do with the building of either building, everything was planned by the local school system: "It's a little something that we call democracy and we think that it's worked pretty well," he stated.⁵

Democracy does not work so well for black persons in Bellamy either, a company town operated by the American Can Corporation. The public school in Bellamy—owned by the company and leased to the school system—is attended by the children of that company's black employees. It is a wooden structure with seven rooms, each heated by a pot-bellied stove and lighted by a single bare bulb in each room. The toilets are outdoors, more than a 100 feet from the building. On rainy days the area between the school and the toilets becomes a sea of mud, as it was on the day Mrs. Frankie M. Freeman, a member of the Commission, visited the school. The only running water available is from spigots outside of the building. All of the white residents of Bellamy send their children by bus to the county school in Livingston, Alabama, 10 miles away. Dr. Stone, questioned about the situation in Bellamy, admitted it was deplorable, but noted that this was not the only place where such a situation exists. He stated

¹ See Appendix B.

² See Appendix C-1.

³ See Appendix C-2.

⁴ See Appendix D.

⁵ Dr. Stone also noted that historically white persons "have provided more money out of their pockets to make for a quality school than the Negroes have." As of February 1, 1968, only two counties in the hearing area had black school board members, Greene (Reverend Peter Kirksey) and Macon (Dr. Charles Gomillion and Mrs. Elizabeth H. Richardson). *Political Participation*, U.S. Commission on Civil Rights (1968).