I have lived in and around Ruleville all my life. I have
eight children and all have gone to the Ruleville Negro schools.

In 1962 my daughter, Ida, was a senior in Ruleville Central
High. She brought a corsage home from school one day. She said
she just had to sell her corsage. She tried very hard to sell it
in the community, but could not. She took it back to her teacher,
Mrs. Mitchell, and said she just couldn't sell it. Mrs. Mitchell
told her and the rest of the class that she couldn't come back to school
unless she sold it. Ida stayed away for part of a day until I
phoned the Principal, Mr. Smith and asked him about it. He said to send
her over and after a meeting with the teacher and the principal, no
more was heard about the corsage.

I think there is more concern for raising money than there is for
school work over at these schools. The kids come around here all
the time selling cosmetics, candy, doughnuts, tickets and all kinds
of things. I don't think they know what they're selling it for - they
just say it's for the school. They frequently say that if they don't
get the money the teacher will give them F or not pass them or some-
thing.

In November my kids come home and get dressed for the field.
They say we got to go to the field today. One day in November I
remember it was so cold I went out to get my son Eddie from picking
cotton. When I got to the field there were the kids picking on a
day too cold for grownups. There was a barefoot girl out there that
I took in as well as my son. When I took her to the Principal, he said
"I didn't know she didn't have any shoes. If she hadn't had any I
would have given her some." I told him the kids could get very sick
from picking on cold days. He never answered this except to say that
there are 1400 students and he couldn't keep up with them all. He
said these are volunteers - we don't make them go, we just ask them
to go. I said but this is the teacher who asks them. He didn't say
much to answer this.

I really don't know where the money goes. I heard about a county
bus they were trying to buy by each class raising $50 or more to get
the bus. The kids really worked a lot and they raised a lot. Mr.
Smith went out and bought an old beat out bus and it broke down after
a time or two. At the same time he got a new car; the kids thought
he used their money to buy the new car because he raised much more than
the bus ever cost.

My kids often say to me at home, I gotta have some money for school
today. They don't know what it's for - they just say they have to have
it.

Ever since Smith got in as Principal they have been worrying about
money. I don't remember how long ago that was.

Signed

Witnesses

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