

Once the affliction was limited to one hand or arm of the nation. Now the whole body politic, body intellect, body nervous system is suffering from the infection. Black Grove exhibits the symptoms of all the "Black Groves" of America.

What is needed is a mutual reinforcement of badly needed humanness between the professional and the people of the community. The project needs to study itself, as a way of documenting this reinforcement of humanness, in this small manageable situation.

The purpose of BLACK GROVE, INC. is to develop the total potential of a community, offering to the people and the local institutions a permanent association with professionals of national reputation, offering to the professionals a place and a continuity for the development of new concepts. What is occurring with Black Grove is a positive way of seeing problems and seeking solutions.

BLACK GROVE, INC. is dedicated to making this area a pilot model for the nation. The Black Grove Community Planning Workshop held October 26th-28th of this year was a beginning in bringing people together to focus on the problems. The sessions began with residents telling of the good way of life they had known before the building of the apartment units. The people believe they have little control over the influx of people that has become such a burden. There was agreement to find a way to bolster the economic situation of the neighborhood and a great yearning to express their commonly-shared cultural values in the physical planning of the area. One of the members of the National Board of Trustees, Daniel Urban Kiley – the distinguished landscape architect planning Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington, D.C. – is enthusiastic about the opportunities here. "There is a message that I think Black Grove has: *that man and the environment can be one*. We see the environmentalists working in our cities always in isolation. They have to understand that only with people living and developing properly within the environment, can we achieve a totality. I believe that Black Grove is a chance to achieve a beautiful interrelation of people, and land, and healthy economic development, through an interdisciplinary planning process."

The challenge of Black Grove is to create a National Demonstration Model, a pragmatic approach to each and every one of the complex situations and attitudes that cause and then maintain the concept of a ghetto in a society which basically respects freedom and justice.

If we want to assist the people in the Black Grove area in this day and age – we need to develop relevant programs so that the sophisticated skills which are required will be operational. We need to reach out all over the country to devise policy, plans, projects and procedures that will give this place every special advantage that varied professional experience and deeply shared personal experience can give.

The ultimate challenge of Black Grove is to look at the whole situation, to discover the means for phasing out the ghetto with its psychological, emotional and economic pathology.

BLACK GROVE asks: how do we establish the means of creating a new morale, out of which the individual can develop? How can a new, healthy environment for all men be realized?

On the national level BLACK GROVE, INC. will make itself a voice concerned with the future planning of cities. The

scope of our projected goals requires the input of interdisciplinary knowledge. It requires a long-range program of highly motivated people who see the whole environment as the *matrix* of our problems. It requires the teamwork of professional talent, of a quality usually unavailable to the ghetto, and unsought by the total community.

The people involved in BLACK GROVE, INC. do not have solutions to all of the problems of the ghetto. No one does. But they believe that by bringing to bear their many skills, knowledge and commitment, they can help to create a climate in which solutions will be possible. The size and nature of the Black Grove area makes it a natural for this type of frontal approach, for a realistic Master Plan. The coming together and cooperation of the BLACK GROVE, INC. staff with the expertise gathered from other parts of the country, who serve as professional advisors, has created a unique team involved in long-range thinking and planning to provide a National Model for understanding and action.

The Greatest Challenge

The greatest challenge facing this country is the condition of the nation's inner cities. As we move toward the year 1976, marking the Bi-Centennial Anniversary, we must give a strong priority to solutions of our people's problems. By 1976 there should be several models throughout the country where black communities have achieved a new sense of self-awareness and self-motivation, leading to a healthy economic development, appropriate environmental design and most important – a rapport among all peoples.

The time has come when we must bring into being a new social system of balances. We must go about it in a systematic way with all disciplines involved, with planners, scientists, and artists. We must consider the problems that are constantly arising from technological transformations, and we must make use of all of the current skills, new thinking and knowledge of today.

BLACK GROVE, INC. seeks to initiate a total assault against the concept of a ghetto, with its obvious destruction of identity and mental health. We are speaking of a total planning program to discover and meet the needs of people.

BLACK GROVE, INC. can demonstrate the environmental rewards of the black contribution to the American experience: a humanness and warmth of life-style which is the only foundation for a satisfying human environment.

BLACK GROVE, INC. is an experimental undertaking. It means long-term involvement over many years. It means a continuing search for new human relationships. It means searching for what a human community can be. In concentrating on the people of Black Grove, by working to solve their problems, we touch on the problems of all people in America.

About the Authors:

Julie Allen Field, environmental planner, is Vice-President of Black Grove, Inc. USA. She is also Vice-President of Amazonia 2000 and a member of the Presidential Advisory Council, called The Group of the Year 2000, in Colombia, SA.

Walter Green, a businessman, and artist, is the President of Black Grove, Inc.