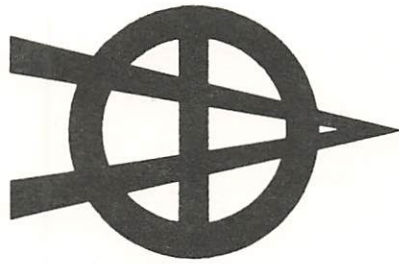


Report from

DIALOGUE 81

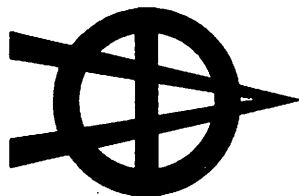
DIALOGUE



81

SHAPING A NEW CONSENSUS

For Social & Economic Revitalization of the Mid-Gulf South States



Institute of Cultural Affairs
Regional Office
5672 Rosemary Place
New Orleans, LA 70124

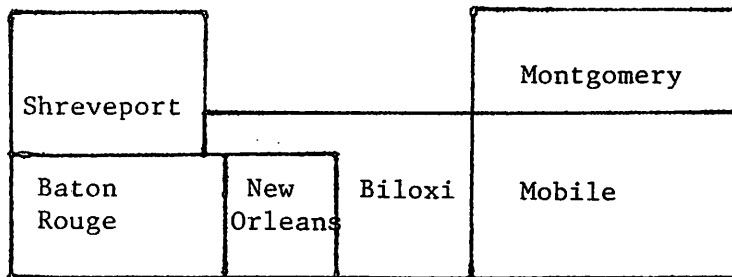
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ICA INTRODUCTION

The Institute of Cultural Affairs is a research, training and demonstration group concerned with the human factor in world development. Private and voluntary in nature, the ICA has offices in 32 nations and has worked for 25 years to design and demonstrate effective methods of community renewal.

The New Orleans Region of the ICA is divided into six metros. It covers a geography from Tuskegee, Alabama, to Lake Charles, Louisiana, and from Shreveport, Louisiana, to Dothan, Alabama. The six metros of the New Orleans Region are named according to the major city located within each one.



The ICA Office in New Orleans has worked with communities in Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama for the past ten years. Vast amounts of data have been generated from town meetings held throughout the region. From 1976 to 1978 over 200 town meetings were conducted in the three states, with at least one in each county. During 1978 and 1979 200 town meetings were held across the state of Mississippi, and from 1978 to 1979 Town Meeting: Louisiana facilitated forums in 200 Louisiana communities and neighborhoods. Interchange among those who are struggling to care for their communities is a vital sustaining factor and the occasion for creative breakthroughs. It was to bring about this interchange that Dialogue '81 was conceived.

PART I: THE SYMPOSIUM

On April 3 - 5, 1981, seventy-seven persons gathered in New Orleans, Louisiana, to participate in the first part of DIALOGUE '81. During this weekend of research participants engaged in dialogue with guest speakers and panelists, surveyed displays and recent articles from across the region, and met in a series of workshops and plenary sessions. Participants described seven underlying issues and nineteen mandates related to human development in the eighties.

The symposium used a variety of approaches to enable participants to get distance from immediate pressures in order to make realistic judgements about the future of the region. Panels of speakers, representing the public, private, voluntary and community sectors, gave a diverse picture of the pressing concerns and future possibilities from their perspectives. The opening session of the Symposium involved the group in constructing a 160 year timeline from 1900 to 2060 in order to objectify their perception of fundamental social trends. This work provided a backdrop for participants working in teams to discern 254 issues related to human development in the coming decade. These issues were gestalted to reveal seven groupings of current underlying issues across the region. The remainder of the Symposium was devoted to articulating a set of historical mandates facing the region. Participants worked in teams listing out needed actions related to each issue. These actions were prioritized and organized across the issues into nineteen mandates. The mandates are illustrated both in terms of present activity in the region and possible future directions. The illustrations were later checked for validity with many people throughout the region. These issues and mandates with illustrations are described further on in this document.

The Symposium closed with a time to reflect on the implications of these mandates for each of the four sectors.

The seven underlying issues are:

1. Inaccessible means of survival
2. Restricted employment opportunities
3. Random exploitation of the environment
4. Global breakdown of the environment
5. Disrupted individual and community roles
6. Ineffective education system
7. Deprivation of human spirit

The seven arenas in which the nineteen mandates are located are:

1. Increased socio-economic growth
2. Planned resource use
3. Enhanced human dignity
4. Empowered educational system
5. Enlivened community life
6. Redirected political system
7. Effective cooperative action

SYMPOSIUM SPEAKERS

Welcome:

Ms. Cheryl Cramer, Representing the City of New Orleans

Keynote Speaker:

Mr. Moon Landrieu - Former Mayor, City of New Orleans;
Former Secretary of HUD

Community Leaders Panel:

Ms. Emelda Washington - Director of Carrollton Senior Citizens
Community Center

Mr. Hugh Allen - Mayor, Demopolis, Alabama

Mr. Kirby Verret - Chairman, United Houma Tribe

Mr. Kenneth Ferdinand - Board Chairman, E.J. Morris Senior
Citizens Center

Ms. Emily Diamond - Manager, Greater Covington Federal Credit Union

Mr. Antonio Naranjo - State Director, League of United Latin American
Citizens

Sector Leaders Panel:

Dr. Lee Gary - Business Task Force on Education, New Orleans

Mrs. Ruth Wilson - Director of the Governor's Office of Voluntary
Citizen Participation, State of Mississippi

Mr. Jay Handleman - Public Affairs Director of Freeport Sulphur

Mr. Quentin Dastugue - State Representative, Louisiana

ICA Speakers:

Mr. Titus Jayasekera, Institute of Cultural Affairs, Chicago

Mr. Richard Zufall, Baton Rouge, Louisiana

THE UNDERLYING ISSUES FACING HUMAN DEVELOPMENT IN THE EIGHTIES

1. Inaccessible Means of Survival

In the arena of secure existence, the underlying issue is the failure to provide the basic means of survival to large segments of society. Related issues are inadequate knowledge of health care and nutrition, lack of public health doctors and nurses, lack of organization and effectiveness of public health care, substandard housing, and the high infant mortality rate. This cluster of issues is illustrated in the New Orleans Region by many houses with no indoor toilets and running water; the long distance in rural areas to basic services; disease in flood areas; and high rents which are driving the poor into increasingly crowded conditions.

2. Restricted Employment Opportunities

In the arena of human resources, the underlying issue is the inability of unemployed to meet the requirements of available job openings. This is accompanied by the related issues of limited, seasonal employment, the prevalence of minimum wages and racial and sexual discrimination. This cluster of issues is illustrated by the large number of low paying want ads; early marriage and children leaving people trapped in low paying jobs; the low salary scale for women and the large number of people choosing welfare over low paying jobs.

3. Random Exploitation of the Environment

In the arena of natural resources, the underlying issue is the inadequate and poorly planned development of safe, economical energy. Related issues are haphazard waste disposal, slow development of alternative energy sources, and the threat to land, water, wildlife and woodlands. This issue is illustrated by chemical dumping in the Mississippi River; the poor and elderly unable to afford energy; and the reduced availability and high cost of energy related products and services; and the decrease in farm land.

4. Global Breakdown of Order

In the arena of corporate order, the underlying issue is the breakdown of order and the prevalence of local crime. Related issues are an increasing vigilante mindset, unsafety at home and on the streets, and widespread drug traffic. This cluster of issues is illustrated by the high rate of crime throughout the region, drug traffic from Florida to Louisiana, youth vandalism and police brutality cases.

UNDERLYING ISSUES

5. Disrupted Individual and Community Roles

In the arena of community style, the underlying issue is the chaotic pattern of development of age, sex, family and community roles. This is accompanied by the related issues of the collapse of the nuclear family, unacceptable youth role models, and societal indifference to elders. This cluster of issues is illustrated in the New Orleans Region by a teenage pregnancy rate among the highest in the nation, prevalence of drug use among all segments of society, increasing child abuse, and an increase in single parent families.

6. Ineffective Education System

In the arena of communal wisdom, the underlying issue is that the education system is not preparing its graduates for the future. Related issues are low standards for teachers, unfocused, inadequate skills training, and the failure of integration. This cluster of issues is illustrated in the New Orleans Region by having no compulsory school attendance in Mississippi, the truancy laws not being enforced by local government, by a large number of school graduates being functionally illiterate, by inadequate grade and promotion standards, and by the lack of quality skills training for available jobs.

7. Deprivation of Human Spirit

In the arena of common symbols, the underlying issue is the lack of depth and loss of common symbols to sustain individual and community spirit. This is accompanied by the related issues of public apathy, powerlessness of the religious institutions, and insufficiency of new meaningful art forms to express the present struggle of humanity. This cluster of issues is illustrated in the New Orleans Region by corruption in government; for example, a Louisiana incumbent police chief is running for office from the cell of his own jail. Other illustrations are a decrease in church attendance, the poor self image of individuals, and people being unable to identify with and be responsible for their communities.

HISTORICAL MANDATES FOR HUMAN DEVELOPMENT IN THE EIGHTIES

Innovative Resource Schemes		Creative Social Style			Recovered Responsibility Means	
Increased Socio-Economic Growth	Planned Resource Use	Enhanced Human Dignity	Empowered Educational System	Enlivened Community Life	Redirected Political System	Effective Cooperative Action
Comprehensive Development Planning 1	Ensuring Ecological Stability 4	Revitalization of the Extended Family 6	Effective Educational Methods 9	Unifying Community Events 12	Local Global Contexting 15	Responsive Community Action 17
Integrated Economic Community Development 2		Assured Human Rights 7	Job Oriented Education 10	Catalytic Religious Institutions 13		Effective Leadership Development 18
Local Needs Determination 3	Enabled Resource Conservation 5	Improved Quality of Life 8	Quality Basic Education 11	Meaningful Affordable Lifestyle 14	Structured Leadership Accountability 16	Expanded Self-Sufficient Services 19

HISTORICAL MANDATES FOR HUMAN DEVELOPMENT IN THE EIGHTIES

1. Human Development in the '80's requires **COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT PLANNING** through greater citizen and volunteer participation with public and private planning bodies. Current activities include government inventories of regional resources for the purpose of regional development; regional planning studies, and the construction of the Tennessee Tombigbee Waterway; and the Tuskegee Ministers Council which is approaching city leaders to get delivery of basic services to residents based on a new needs prioritization. Examples of possible future activities include the creation of four sector local planning boards, tax equalization studies and greater utilization of university research and expertise for the education of the public and for advice to policy makers.
2. Human Development in the '80's requires **INTEGRATED ECONOMIC COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT** through supportive government policies and innovative private and voluntary programs. Current activities in the New Orleans Region include the creation of minority businesses by the Mississippi Gulf Coast Community Development Corporation, Opportunities Industrial Corporation in Montgomery and non-profit Credit Unions serving low income families such as Greater Covington Credit Union; and an appropriate technology project by the Alabama Council on Human Relations concentrating on housing and employment. Examples of possible future activities include giving tax incentives to encourage development of distressed areas, imaginative low income housing development and more selective recruitment of industries that place an emphasis on jobs for local people and use ecologically 'cleaner' processes.
3. Human Development in the '80's requires an articulation of **LOCAL NEEDS DETERMINATION** by citizens working together to identify community needs and achieve the common goals. Current activities in the New Orleans Region include the Gulfport downtown development by a Community Commission, and a community forum in Lake Providence, La. to identify community needs and carry out proposals. Examples of possible future activities include local surveys and workshops aimed at identifying community needs, establishing ways of arriving at consensus on community responsibility, forming a regional network to lobby for solutions previously decided upon and communities developing alternate funding sources for continuance of vital services which will be affected by Federal Government cuts.
4. Human Development in the '80's requires an emphasis on **ENSURING ECOLOGICAL STABILITY** through increased industrial research and experimentation and focused legislative action. Current activities in the New Orleans Region include the development of thermal-mechanical energy by the wood-pulp mills of the region, to use what was formerly waste, such as sawdust and bark to generate steam and electricity. Examples of possible future activities include further work on diversification of energy sources, (such as solar and wind), intensified research into new, less harmful forms of energy, and ensuring renewal resources through legislation like reforestation.

HISTORICAL MANDATES

5. Human Development in the '80's requires ENABLED RESOURCE CONSERVATION through education of local citizens on the interdependence of humanity and nature, and the promotion of efficient use of energy resources. Current activities in the New Orleans Region include the increasing use of wood fire boilers rather than oil and gas, which eliminates the water-polluting sulphates; weatherization programs by the Community Action Agencies; and the car pool organized by the Regional Planning Commission based in New Orleans which has 4470 participants. Future possible activities include holding energy forums, and training volunteers in weatherization techniques to assist the elderly, disabled and low income families.
6. Human Development in the '80's requires REVITALIZATION OF THE EXTENDED FAMILY through structures for new relationships across generations that focus care on targeted needs. Current activities in the New Orleans Region include the foster grandparent programs at the Belle Chasse State School; Big Brother Programs such as in New Orleans and family retreats sponsored by local churches in Baton Rouge. Possible future activities include healthy senior citizens living together and a skills resource library of retired persons available for voluntary community service.
7. Human Development in the '80's requires ASSURED HUMAN RIGHTS for all through education, and implemented legislation. Current activities include legal services for low income clients such as the North Louisiana Legal Assistance Program; the Alabama Rural Council which is working with rural churches to help low income families get bathrooms, running water and weatherization; the Gulf Coast Battered Women's Center in Biloxi, and the uniting of the Houma Indians in order to be recognized as a tribe. Examples of possible future actions include the education of people of all sectors on the advantages gained by sharing and recognizing the unique contribution of each person in society.
8. Human Development in the '80's requires IMPROVED QUALITY OF LIFE for all by assuring minimum standards for all citizens and the opportunity for life with dignity. Current activities include a joint project by the Presbyterian and Catholic churches in Baton Rouge to found an elders' home which is now self-supporting; the Coastal Family Health Center, and the work of the Joint Center for Political Studies based in Biloxi and serving seven states which assists communities in obtaining grants to improve sub-standard housing. Examples of possible future activities include stricter enforcement of housing codes by city governments; a tenants' association to provide advocacy for low income home buyers and renters; and citizens acting together to implement needed changes.
9. Human Development in the '80's requires EFFECTIVE EDUCATIONAL METHODS based on innovative techniques that allow for creative expression and preparation for everyday living. Current activities include the "Workshop Way" based on individual freedom at St. David's, Orleans Parish; Tuskegee Laboratory Learning Center, and the Laubach Literacy Program in: Gulfport. Possible future activities include expansion of special emphasis Magnet Schools.

HISTORICAL MANDATES

10. Human Development in the '80's requires JOB ORIENTED EDUCATION through expanded vocational/technical systems. Current activities include minority training and placement by Opportunities Unlimited, Pascagoula, Ms.; the Business Task Force on Education New Orleans; and Briarsfield School in Monroe using volunteers to train students in job skills. Possible future activities include establishing vo-tech schools in northern Louisiana using industrial skills for training in mining.
11. Human Development in the '80's requires QUALITY BASIC EDUCATION through a system that maintains high standards and is also accessible to all. Current activities include the establishment of a "magnet school" system in Shreveport which specializes in basic education, a high quality integrated school in Demopolis, Ala., and the Headstart Program in Lake Providence, La. Examples of possible future activities include planning for "womb to tomb" training, and educational task forces which would build cross-sector consensus through educational forums.
12. Human Development in the '80's requires UNIFYING COMMUNITY EVENTS which establish local identity, stimulate pride and create cohesiveness among neighbors. Current activities include the annual Lowndes County Fair in Alabama; the pirogue races in Raceland, La.; Blessing of the Fleet in Biloxi; Gumbo Festival of the Universe in White Cypress and Mardi Gras. Examples of possible future activities include the World's Fair in 1984 in New Orleans and heritage festivals.
13. Human Development in the '80's requires a new formation of CATALYTIC RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS which deal effectively with innocent human suffering and ethical standards. Current activities include the work of the "Church In Community" Task Force, First United Methodist Church, Baton Rouge; the marriage preparation and parenting program by Catholic Welfare Services, Biloxi; and B'nai Brith. Possible future activities include work parties to community development projects.
14. Human Development in the '80's requires demonstrating a MEANINGFUL AFFORDABLE LIFESTYLE through re-imagining a more simple way of living that fosters neighborhood initiative and self-sufficiency. Current activities include energy efficient homes in the Venitian Isles, New Orleans; progressive institutional care for elders with emphasis on maximum independence in Meridian, Miss. Examples of possible future activities include supervised condominiums for the elderly, with planned events and a community formed to develop agriculture and low cost housing.
15. Human Development in the '80's requires LOCAL-GLOBAL CONTEXTING through structures that increase regional awareness of global interdependence and provide impetus to participation in a globally based economy and policy. Current activities include the functions of the International House in New Orleans, the exchange programs of the American Friends Service Committee and Sister Cities Programs such as the program linking Mobile, Ala. to Malaga, Spain. Possible future activities include controlling military expansion, holding international forums, and cultural festivals and strengthening the United Nations as a peace-keeping body.

HISTORICAL MANDATES

16. Human Development in the '80's requires STRUCTURED LEADERSHIP ACCOUNTABILITY through responsible citizen organization to articulate issues, express concern, and measure effective representation. Current activities include recent organization in New Orleans for investigation of police killings in Algiers-Fisher, the city of Biloxi turning to an aldermanic form of government, and statewide demonstrations for responsible leadership accountability. Examples of possible future actions include the innovative forms of local government involving local citizens and building a more effective judicial system.
17. Human Development in the '80's requires RESPONSIVE COMMUNITY ACTION through a greater participation by citizens in consensed upon activities to achieve neighborhood objectives. Current activities include neighborhood crime watch efforts in many cities of the region; the South Marengo Emergency Rescue Squad serving all those in need across the southern part of Marengo County, and active neighborhood associations such as Old Dauphin Way in Mobile which gives awards for the yard of the month and holds celebrations twice a year. Possible future activities include improving the school curriculum on citizens' roles in community responsibility, holding community forums, and town meetings; and greater scrutiny of candidates for political office.
18. Human Development in the '80's requires EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT through creative programs that push current potential to maximum advantage by enabling individuals to respond to critical challenges such as greater human dignity and the protection of human rights. Current activities include the Alabama Religious Council Leadership Training program, the Louisiana Bankers Association seminars on money and banking, and the Associated Catholic Charities program in the Miss. Gulf Coast to develop black entrepreneurs. Examples of possible future activities include conducting citizens' programs on methods of leadership, identifying and engaging previously untapped sources of leadership and creating situations in which various community members get to play up-front roles.
19. Human Development in the '80's requires EXPANDED SELF-SUFFICIENT SERVICES by voluntary responses to unmet human needs. Current activities include the Rescue Squad in Marengo County, Ala.; provision of free landscape services to poor communities by Louisiana State University; solar greenhouses to provide food for elders in Mobile, Ala.; and the R.S.V.P. (Retired Senior Volunteer Program), F.I.S.H. and the Meals-on-Wheels program throughout the region.

PART II: THE FIELD RESEARCH

The intent of the Field Research was to test the issues and mandates from the Symposium.

From April 6-9, 1981, six teams traveled across the New Orleans Region to the metropolitan areas of Shreveport, Baton Rouge, New Orleans, Biloxi, Mobile and Montgomery. They visited many communities and interviewed 530 people from the public, private, voluntary and local sectors. These individual and group meetings added valuable local illustrations to the issues and mandates. Particular highlights were a group of 50 "medical explorers" at Charity Hospital in New Orleans and the Town Meeting held in Lake Providence, Louisiana, with 125 community residents.

PART III: THE ASSEMBLY

On April 10 and 11, 1981, participants gathered for the third part of Dialogue '81, the Regional Assembly. A core of people who participated in the Symposium and Field Research were joined by others to interpret and integrate data from the first two parts of the conference.

In order that local communities be enabled to move toward fulfillment of the mandates required to experience rejuvenation of the civilizing process that cares for all strata of society, the intent of the Assembly was to delineate the strategic components of the future direction for human development.

The work of the Assembly involved hearing reports from each of the six Field Research teams and reflecting on implications for action. This process involved workshops which analyzed the regional intents and clarified the emerging strategic components. Each team reported the recommended bold moves in human development needed in their respective geography and reports were organized into master intents for the region. Lists of activities required to implement these intents were discerned and organized into twelve strategic components. The Assembly concluded with a celebration of the decisions made and a commissioning or declaration of commitment by participants.

As a postscript, but closely related to the work of the Assembly, on the weekend of April 24-26, 1981, visits were again made to each of the metros by circuit teams. The intent of these meetings was to consense on examples of activities already happening that provide needed demonstration of mandates and strategic components. These meetings also served as a stepping stone to future activity in each metro by people working in their local communities toward a vision corporately forged. New linkages were formed in the network of those who care, concretizing the fact that the work of Dialogue '81 was not a one time event but a launching of new corporate ventures.

A NEW DIRECTION:
 COOPERATIVE CROSS-SECTOR PARTICIPATION
 IN
 COMMUNITY-BASED DEVELOPMENT
 using the key of
 EFFECTIVE LIFE-RELATED EDUCATION

STRATEGIC COMPONENTS					
COOPERATIVE CROSS-SECTOR PARTICIPATION		COMMUNITY-BASED DEVELOPMENT		EFFECTIVE LIFE-RELATED EDUCATION	
Cultivating Unifying Interchange	Organizing Structural Response	Strengthening Economic Base	Catalyzing Community Models	Revamping Educational Structures	Training Community Leadership
Breaking Down Traditional Barriers which create isolation and hostility	Precipitating Cross-Sector Networks for linkages to work toward community betterment	Planning Economic Development using an integrated not fragmented approach	Establishing Community Demonstrations that are models for effective comprehensive needed action	Demonstrating Effective Schooling to provide examples of outstanding basic education	Organizing Leadership Training by identifying and developing staff, programs and potential
Significating Community-Wide Activities to rebuild community identity	Engaging Volunteer Efforts to carry out needed community services	Prioritizing Community Needs by residents looking at consensed objectives	Developing Community Funds from broad-based alternatives. with authorization & promotion	Assuring Vocational Training relevant to market needs and with quality standards	Rebuilding Community Responsibility by reimaging family's role in community responsibility

COOPERATIVE CROSS-SECTOR PARTICIPATION

Cultivating Unifying Interchange

Breaking Down Traditional Barriers

Lake Providence, Louisiana

In East Carroll Parish, 57.9% of the population is black and 50.4% of the population has below poverty level income. The parish has experienced a steady decline in population in the last decade.

On April 7, 1981, a bi-racial town meeting was held with 125 people participating, with all sectors represented, looking seriously and in depth at a common vision for the future, the major challenges facing the community, and proposals to overcome the challenges.

Out of this gathering, on May 7, 1981, the first meeting was held of the bi-racial Citizens for Progress group who decided to work on concrete issues by interest groups as task forces.

Responsibilities assumed by the organization are to coordinate citizen attendance at city council, police jury and school board meetings; to insure comprehensive use of resources for children's summer recreation programs; to investigate alternatives to welfare; to look into the industry and employment situation; to provide a vehicle for concerned parents; and to initiate community-wide cultural events.

Significating Community-Wide Activities

Avoyelles Parish, Louisiana

Avoyelles Parish, with a population of 38,000, for many decades had annual festivals centering around the French and Creole Cochon de Lait. In the early 1970's it was discontinued due to disruptive behavior of young visitors.

In 1975, a group of citizens organized Le Theatre des Bon Temps, Inc., to provide parish wide involvement in and opportunity for exposure to cultural entertainment.

Residents from every town in the parish have taken part in the full season productions to packed houses of such dramas and musicals as: "The Egg and I", "Fiddler on the Roof", "The Glass Menagerie", and "The Sound of Music".

The Bailey Theatre, built in 1824, was purchased for \$15,000 after one month of fund raising from parish banks and businesses. A grant of \$50,000 was secured from the Louisiana legislature for basic remodeling and renovation. Local artisans have volunteered their labor. Bank directors and orchestras from all parish schools have participated in productions. Schools bus students to special matinees. This year they, in cooperation with the bi-racial Arts and Humanities Council of Avoyelles, have sponsored two productions from the New York travelling companies.

COOPERATIVE CROSS-SECTOR PARTICIPATION

Organizing Structural Response

Precipitating Cross-Sector Networks

Gulfport, Mississippi

Mississippi has an unemployment rate of 6%, with black unemployment standing at 10%.

The non-profit Mississippi Gulf Coast Community Development Corporation, Inc., started on March 13, 1981, with an initiating grant of \$130,000 from the City of Gulfport. Its 19 member Board of Directors, both black and white, represents business with bankers, attorneys, accountants, and contractors; the public sector with a state legislator; and the voluntary sector with chairpersons from various civic clubs.

Out of this umbrella organization, a community owned profit-making corporation has been started. The capital for this comes from shares sold locally and statewide. This corporation is set up to compete with other businesses but also to enable the success of small businesses.

The intent is to promote and generate minority small business activity. Entering a long-term relationship with small companies, it does training in business administration and sound business practices such as bookkeeping, time sheets, job sheets, etc. Where the corporation elicits contracts, the small sub-contractors pay no fees. If a small company wishes to bid on another contract and requires help a small fee is paid.

The corporation works primarily with construction, janitorial and food service industries. A HUD grant is in application to construct housing for senior citizens which will be sub-contracted out to a number of small businesses.

Engaging Volunteer Efforts

Marengo County, Alabama

Marengo County has a population of nearly 24,000 and is one of the 16 Black Belt counties which stretch across the state. Marengo has few services, such as doctors and hospitals (a total of 99 beds in 1978), and these are beyond the reach of many people who do not have transportation. One of the results is a 31.9% infant mortality rate, fourth highest in the state.

In response to many needs, the South Marengo Rescue Squad was formed with 60 members, both black and white. The squad members are volunteers who see themselves responsible for the entire lower half of the county. Their services include fire-fighting, car and river accident rescue, and full ambulance service. Many of the members are fully trained paramedics.

The town of Sweetwater, where the squad is based, heavily supports the work. The town has given the old town hall and land for the use of the Rescue Squad, and support from the bank, businesses, churches and individuals has enabled the purchase of equipment and vehicles.

The squad members, who volunteer their time for rescue, train in special skills and donate their own financial resources, have done complete overhaul work on the vehicles. The field ambulance and crash pick-up have been transformed by their efforts from regular vehicles to fit the particular tasks for which they are used.

COMMUNITY-BASED DEVELOPMENT

Strengthening Economic Base

Planning Economic Development

Shreveport, Louisiana

The Coordinating and Development Corporation (CDC) of Shreveport is a private non-profit corporation. It was established in 1953, when local businesses realized that the cost of hiring independent consultant services was far higher than creating a central office with specialized staff.

The CDC provides several services -- they assist with renovation and rehabilitation of old houses; they work with tourist development and promotional work on the beneficial aspects of the Shreveport area. They have the management capacity to take projects like housing rehabilitation and water and sewerage through to completion. They have a large clientele including 91 municipalities and 10 counties.

Over the years, the CDC has maintained a high level of professionalism and has a proven track record -- each dollar invested in the corporation has an annual return of \$490.00 in services through projects generated from CDC. In the 28 years the corporation has been operating, \$3.2 billion in projects has been brought into the North Louisiana area they serve. They are not solely responsible for this, but it comes from projects in which they have played a major role. Because of the high performance level and amount of activity, the CDC was named the outstanding Economic Development District for 1980.

They will be affected by the cuts in federal grants, especially in the area of rural construction, but membership dues paid by the local businesses and offices that support them will ensure the continuance of this organization.

Prioritizing Community Needs

Baton Rouge, Louisiana

In the midst of the uncontrolled economy, with inflation having reduced the quality of life locally as well as nationally, with a lack of trust in traditional structures, Baton Rouge with 314,000 residents has industries of oil, port, and state government.

The Louisiana National Bank realizes that its future is integrally bound with the welfare of the city and area. Therefore, it has determined to invest, with finances, expertise, time and manpower in broad-based efforts with a priority on economic education.

As a part of the Louisiana Council on Economic Education, it supports Free Enterprise Week and recognition of the Free Enterprises of the Year. With the local bankers association it sponsors a one week money and banking seminar offering 45 hours in class with a full day spent in class with a full day spent in the bank. It offers a family debt counselling program with the Bar Association, which deals with 900 cases annually with an average debt of \$12,000 to prevent bankruptcy and stabilize the family's economic situation in an average of three years. With the Chamber of Commerce the bank sends its staff to teach in high schools a day at a time and offer two seminars for high school students to gain information on practical economics.

The bank also supports such efforts as the summer clean-up campaign, which hires older teenagers to work in crews picking up litter. It supports Baton Rouge General Hospital, the Symphony, the bond on drains, art and cultural events as well as encouraging all staff to serve as volunteers in community and school activities.

COMMUNITY-BASED DEVELOPMENT

Catalyzing Community Models

Establishing Community Demonstrations

Leakesville, Mississippi

In Green County, Mississippi, one of the most economically depressed counties of the state, lack of jobs in the rural areas is a major concern. Many residents commute long distances to shipyards along the Gulf Coast.

In Leakeville, in January, 1979, the only factory in the county, Nicole Sportswear, hosted a community meeting to look at local issues and alternative solutions. From that meeting came others, out of which was born the Greene County Development Foundation, a non-profit organization set up to improve the county's industrial base.

At the first meeting of the Development Foundation, five members of the Board of Directors were chosen. The County Board of Supervisors and Town Council appointed members.

The Development Foundation has purchased land using locally raised funds for a new industry to provide needed employment. In addition, when Nicole Sportswear relocated out of the county, the Development Foundation secured the attention of a Florida based garment factory which moved in promptly to fill that vital gap. Instead of a dying community, concerned citizens with focussed effort have brought practical hope and concrete care.

Developing Community Funds

Gibsland, Louisiana

Gibsland is one of several small towns in northern Louisiana which in the 1960's felt the effects of instant isolation at the opening of Interstate 20. The by-pass has resulted in the closing of 23 of 35 businesses, which forced the local residents to look at the question of the future.

On March 4, 1980, ninety residents met in the school to look at the issues and challenges facing their community's future development. One of the largest such gatherings ever in the town, with blacks and whites, professionals and laborers, they built proposals which would enable the community's efforts to be focussed on consensed upon development goals.

Gibsland has received \$1.24 million in grants for sewerage system and housing development.

The people have succeeded in pulling together the necessary resources in order to realize another goal of a community center where creative and unifying activities might take place. The Center, which opened in May, 1981, is a sign of the strength and determination of the people in rebuilding the community of Gibsland.

EFFECTIVE LIFE-RELATED EDUCATION

Revamping Educational Structures

Demonstrating Effective Schooling

New Orleans, Louisiana

The Business Task Force on Education, Inc., was started in May, 1978, with initial financing from 30 businesses in the City of New Orleans.

The aim is to improve the quality of elementary, secondary and voc-technical education through better management of resources. Their ultimate goal is that every household will have one job.

They have completed a management assistance study on reforming physical plants, internal controls for business and finance, and budgeting. They work closely with the school board, which is very supportive. Eventually, the expectation for the public schools is that students will be able to read, write and compute at the 50 percentile level. The Business Task Force also supports the "Adopt a School" program. Several businesses are involved in this program in which each business works with a public school, providing staff volunteers, time, training and advice, outing and financial aid to the school.

Assuring Vocational Training

Opelousas, Louisiana

Unemployment in St. Landry Parish was 13.5% in 1975, with 23.2% of the population on food stamps, evidencing the need for vocational and technical training to provide a stable and adequately prepared work force.

T.J. Harris Vocational-Technical School was established in 1938 by the Louisiana Legislature and has been operating in Opelousas since 1940. In 1975, two schools merged, one black and one white, to bring about the present institution which charges no fees to Louisiana residents. The school is distinguished by three characteristics: entry requires an application representing the student's decision or commitment; there is close rapport with business and industry, causing placement of graduates to be almost 100%; and it is widely recognized as having high standards, producing skilled workers in auto mechanics, electricity, plumbing, radio surveying, etc.

T.J. Harris enables women to enter non-traditional fields and is one of four in the nation offering Non-destructive Testing of Metals. It maintains full capacity of more than 1800 students annually, with graduates securing jobs with starting salaries of \$1000 per month and above.

EFFECTIVE LIFE-RELATED EDUCATION

Training Community Leadership

Organizing Leadership Training

Desire Community, New Orleans, La.

Orleans Parish has a population equally divided between white and black, with growing minority racial units of Hispanic and Vietnamese. For the last few decades a growing number of people, mainly black, have been housed in projects where overcrowding, inadequacies in heating and cooling, low standards in education, and a disparaging public image have mitigated against leadership emerging with moral strength capable of dealing with that population's contingencies.

The Desire Community Center, located in the midst of the city's largest housing project (15,000 residents), programatically enables the young people to engage in activities that minister to body, mind and spirit. It attacks structurally the problems of drug and alcohol abuse and absentee parents and provides a journey in leadership training that builds confidence, reliance and sufficiency.

Training occurs in areas of team leadership in a multi-faceted sports program; in junior staff positions where youth who graduate from various programs such as dance, sewing, arts and crafts become teachers and organizers; through writing and editing a newspaper distributed to the total community; and through special programs such as youth forums and imaginal bulletin boards where pertinent issues are explored.

More than 100 youth a year are active members of the center. Responsible leadership nurtured by the center is evidenced in the lives of graduates who have become: a state legislator, a professional fighter, members of two professional football teams (Houston and Miami), an Olympic runner, doctors and lawyers.

Rebuilding Community Responsibility

New Orleans, Louisiana

The New Orleans School Board has more than 130 public schools serving 83,000 students with basic and specialized education. As the major port in the nation, New Orleans has relatively easy access to the international drug trade and the student population makes use of it. The average percentile in the Standard Achievement Testing for graduating seniors is below 50%, among the lowest in the nation.

In response to these mutually reinforcing problems, the Orleans Parish School Board, under the leadership of the Child Advocacy Hearing Commission, has established two major programs: GRASP Alternative Schools, and the VASA program, which act to re-engage youth constructively through reimagining and redefining the family's role in community responsibility and the student's role in life.

GRASP (Guaranteed Respect, Acceptance, Scholarship Improvement and Problem-Solving) has four alternative schools, having begun with one in 1974. The schools work with students and families who cannot function in other school settings and offer basic education, an opportunity to experience success, counselling and referral services. The family and student enter into contract agreeing to counselling and Family-Building Relation Workshops where other community people may also be invited to participate in role playing and planning.

In 1978, 2500 students participated in the program, and the number has since expanded. This total program is complemented by Volunteer Alternative to Smoking and Alcohol Use (including drugs), which relates the students and their families through counselling to various resources available in the city.

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