

6. Miami's Concerned Black Organizations for Justice Issues a Manifesto of "Collective Needs," 1980

A community-based group, Concerned Black Organizations for Justice, Wednesday asked that Gov. Bob Graham approve a list of "collective needs" for black residents.

The group asks that funds be allocated for black businesses, schools, and a hospital, and for "reinstatement of the Bill of Rights" for black residents.

A spokesman said the list was based on the result of interviews with hundreds of residents in all of Dade's black communities.

"If there is a serious commitment to restore some kind of order to the community, then there must be a serious effort to respond to the needs the masses have voiced," said spokesman Bill Robinson Parks.

"We were born and raised in the community," Parks said. "We work here. We live here. We've been here all our lives. We're not trying to get any grant money."

The group serves as an umbrella organization for several grassroots groups.

Other members of the group said the violence that erupted in Liberty City after the McDuffie verdict was a "spontaneous rebellion" and not a riot.

"We want the white media to immediately discontinue calling our legitimate black rebellion a riot," Parks said. He said the rebellion was not a "planned uprising."

"This is the result of historical neglect," he said. "It has been seething for the past couple of years. A riot is what the police were doing when they slashed tires and vandalized cars."

The group also called the visits of prominent out-of-town blacks "irrelevant . . . We respectfully ask that they return to their own repressed communities," Parks said.

The list of needs included:

- Withdrawal of National Guard troops, FBI agents, plainclothes policemen and special agents.
- Sufficient investment funds to establish black businesses, schools, a hospital, and provide food, medicine and phone services for families and the elderly.
- Reinstatement of the Bill of Rights [in black areas], including freedom of speech and of assembly, an end to illegal search and seizures and the right to bear arms.
- Restitution for cars and property damaged by police and National Guard troops, and an agreement not to use cars marked "looters" as evidence in court.
- A comprehensive job program for blacks over 13 with "minimum living" salaries of \$15,000.
- Police surveillance in white communities to protect blacks who live, work and pass through.
- Removal from office of both State Attorney Janet Reno and County Manager Merrett Stierheim and an investigation of the criminal justice system by an "acceptable international organization."
- Refugee status granted to all black immigrants.
- The hiring of black contractors to remove burned-out buildings
- Twenty-four-hour access to radio and television stations.