

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The Florida Institute of Education's study of the educational condition of black males in Florida should be seen as a *beginning*, not an end in itself. We will have accomplished our purpose if this report is read in the light of what it says as well as in the light of what it *cannot* answer.

We can say, for example, that:

- (1) Black males in Florida schools are not achieving academically on a par with their racial and gender counterparts.
- (2) Black males in Florida are under-represented in positions of authority.
- (3) Black males in Florida schools are the recipients of a disproportionate share of school disciplinary actions.
- (4) Black males in Florida make up a disproportionate share of the prison population.
- (5) Black males are disproportionately represented among the unemployed.
- (6) Black males are disproportionately represented among the underemployed.
- (7) Black males are underrepresented in the tally of high school graduates, college entrance, degree recipients and professional and graduate school credential holders.

Questions still needing answers include:

- (1) What is the relationship between conjugal power structure and black male achievement?
- (2) What is the relationship between "positive" modeling experiences and actual achievement?
- (3) What is the relationship between the maturation of self-image and the media portrayal of stereotypic image?
- (4) What organizational configuration is needed to insure maximum effect of program initiatives?
- (5) How can the educational plight of the black male in Florida be described to appropriate stakeholders in an effective and empathetic manner?

In sum, the condition of the black male's educational experience in Florida seems to be this: While there are a number of black men who succeed in translating their potential into achievements that we all admire, they are too few. There are far too many black males who begin life confined by problems of poverty and end life within the confines of prison. There are far too many black men who leave or are "pushed out" of schools and colleges, graduate programs, and professional schools. There are far too many black males who find themselves unemployed or underemployed after leaving high school. Many find difficulties put in the way of their ascent up the career ladder. The problems of black men are visited subsequently upon black families and represent a major contribution to their diminution.

Our findings indicate that there is a complexity of factors that contribute to the scholastic situations of black males in Florida. Our study has attempted to illuminate a few of those factors and to point the way for further investigations. There is no doubt that the state multi-faceted attack on this problem may serve to halt and reverse the present squander of black male potential. There is also no doubt that this problem is deserving of our most sincere consideration and our most serious effort.