**EDITORIALS*: Problem Finally Faced – and Action Started***

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Things may be looking up for Black Springs.

This blighted community a few miles north of Reno has been a topic of conversation in official circles, as well as among private citizens, for several years.

But that’s all it was—conversation, and rather quiet conversation at that.

Then a few weeks ago local private organizations, and notably the League of Women Voters, began to look into the deplorable conditions in the community.

Independently, the Nevada State Journal, having been the recipient of correspondence on the matter assigned a reporter to delve into community conditions at Black Springs.

How did this “disaster” are, peopled chiefly by Negro families, get started?

Why were the streets, if that’s what they could be called, left unimproved?

Why is there no sewer system?

Why are there lots in the area permitted to become dumping grounds for all manner of debris?

Why haven’t the residents of Black Springs done something? Why hasn’t the county helped them do something?

Most of these “whys” were answered in a series of articles carried in the journal on Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday just passed.

As in any civic problem of magnitude many of the reasons why Black Springs “has been allowed to happen” are founded on legitimate reasons, as far as the law and circumstances are concerned.

The basic reason is simple—Black Springs is private property, and the county cannot spend taxpayers’ money on improving private property, and the property owners are strapped for money.

But there are ways, particularly in these enlightened days, to assist people in overcoming handicaps in attempts to improve their way of living.

Improvements cannot be made though, by simply criticizing, by unfairly blaming the property owners who sold the lots, or curling the lip at residents for permitting their community to remain an eyesore on the landscape of Washoe County.

Rather, the way to go about it is to face squarely up to the situation.

This was quickly proven by the actions of the League of Women Voters, a Negro legislator from Clark County, and by the Journal. League members and the legislator both demanded, “something be done,” and the Journal articles on Black Springs put the whole matter on the front pages, getting the topic out in the open.

Now that all this has been done, there begins to be hope for improvements, and the probability off help for Black Springs residents to “clean up, pain up, fix up” and to take steps to build usable streets.

Yes, even though nothing concrete has been done yet, things are looking up for Black Springs.

The very “exposure” of the community to the public eye has brought about the revival of a Progressive Club there, and the promise of a clean-up drive starting this weekend.

Once the people of Black Springs demonstrate a desire to help themselves—they must do that or all is lost—then it is up to Washoe County, both officials and private citizens to give encouragement through finding funding methods to assist the cause.

There is a challenge here to the county as a whole—but the greatest challenge is to the residents of Black Springs.

A Negro woman teacher in Indianapolis who has stirred that entire city, including both races, to a massive city cleanup there, recently told the magazine “U.S. News and World Report” that “slums are made by people not by plaster or bricks. Bad neighborhoods develop because individuals who live in them fail to do what they can.”

Black Springs residents are not in a slum. They live in the clean desert air of Nevada. They are Nevadans, and being a Nevadan is just about the best deal you can get.

It should be less difficult to “do what you can” here than in the ghettoes of Indianapolis. The residents of Black Springs propose to make a start next Saturday. After that start they must keep going, and if they do they can and will prove that their “Operation Bootstrap” will bring them help and pride of accomplishment.