



**Fitness
gala**
Page 2

**Family
harassed**
Page 3

**1985
NBA
PLAYOFFS**
Page 6

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All that is left of Osage Avenue in West Philadelphia after the MOVE bombings.

(Philadelphia Daily News photo by Gerald Hilton)

The fire this time

by Lanita Duke

GRASSROOT NEWS, N.W. — Vibrations from a bomb, dropped by the Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Police Department in an effort to evict a klan known as MOVE, sent shock waves throughout the country as the flames ignited the destruction of an all-Black neighborhood. The final toll: 11 MOVE members dead, 61 homes destroyed and 250 Philadelphians are now urban refugees.

As an outsider looking in, I spent seven days in the so-called City of Brotherly Love letting residents vent their anger, confusion and shock as a klan bent on destroying the system caused the system to destroy the property of innocent neighbors.

MOVE, a group basically comprised of one extended family, had challenged and confronted the system since its inception in 1970. To residents on 62nd and Osage Avenue, MOVE's anarchistic behavior, radically different lifestyle, rhetoric and uncompromising actions led to a public S.O.S.

Chuck Stone, a columnist for the Philadelphia Daily News, said Mayor Wilson Goode's refusal to intercede a year ago led to the police barricade and bombing.

"It was only when the neighbors called a press conference that Goode decided to act. There is an underlying suspicion that had MOVE been in a predominately white neighborhood, Goode would have moved faster and he wouldn't have dropped a bomb," Stone added.

He called the decisions made by the police and city officials on May 13th a series of "misjudgements, miscalculations and mishandling."

Mayor Wilson Goode, the city's first Afro-American mayor, took full responsibility for the resulting destruction. Goode was notified 17 minutes prior to the decision to drop the bomb. City managing director Leo Brooks and Fire Commissioner William Richmond decided to let the resulting fire burn for a while to get rid of a bunker atop the MOVE house.

"If Goode was set-up, he was set-up by his own managing director. And if Brooks is representative of generals in the American army, then we're going to be defeated by the Russians very shortly," Stone added.

The real victims

To the urban refugees, the official and unofficial accounts and excuses mean very little. Kenny Jackson, a Philly cab driver, described Osage Avenue as a private residential area.

"Those families struggled to make it this far. That's why some of the neighbors do not have enough insurance to cover themselves. They're shocked that they worked all those years for someone to blow it up that fast."

"They are somewhat ashamed that we have a Black mayor and something like this would happen under him. These are the people who voted to put him in office," Jackson noted.

Marie Fields, who lived four doors down from MOVE, said she has not slept well since the tactical bombing of her neighborhood.

"I can still hear the gunshots and see the fire. I don't know how to take it. I'm hurt. I had a lot of nice things that I lost. I'm just trying to deal with it," Fields stated sadly. "I like the mayor. If he ran again, I would vote for him."

Ginny Johnson lived around the corner from the MOVE house.

"The neighbors were saying they wanted MOVE off the block. If the

mayor would not do it, they would take things into their own hands. That's what kicked it off," Johnson added. Her home was destroyed by water and smoke.

"Everything went down wrong. I wish they had stopped the fire. All that stuff (bunker) MOVE built on their home was unnecessary. I will still support Goode," Johnson said.

One unidentified resident who had lived on Osage for 28 years sat quietly at the Cobbs Creek Recreational Center waiting for the city to process her claim for compensation. Her home was completely destroyed. She said, "Items from my deceased husband such as tools and pictures are gone. I had a lot of things which cannot be purchased. Everything is gone but I feel fine. I believe Goode is doing what he can, but I think he started late. Something should have been done years ago when those children were walking the street and not in school."

Richard Peoples, who runs a market in the neighborhood, called MOVE members regular customers. "They bought food like everyone else." As he glanced at the rubble of brick and stone, and as the smell of smoke stops at his doorway, he comments, "You can't say the neighbors wished for this to happen. They just wanted to live in a peaceful surrounding."

Not all the neighbors were anti-MOVE. Faith Jackson lives on the perimeter of the rubble once called Osage Avenue.

"I don't fault the MOVE or the mayor. It was the neighbors who kept pressing him. When people ask me where I live, I say I live in Beirut. If they can drop a bomb anytime they get good and ready, you don't know what to expect."

The bullhorn

One common complaint among residents was the bullhorn MOVE used to get their message across. MOVE used urban street profanity to make their points.

Fields said on the 4th of July during a family Bar-B-Q, MOVE was on their bullhorn saying, "All you M----- f----- do is get out and buy a lot of meat to celebrate the white man's holiday."

HB 2001 passes Senate

by Nathaniel Scott

The uncertainty remains but House Bill 2001 moved one step closer to becoming law Monday, June 10, when it passed the Senate by a vote of 16-14. The bill now goes to the Governor for whatever action he will take.

The anti-apartheid bill, introduced by District 18 Representative Margaret Carter, will set guidelines for companies doing business with the white racist regime of South Africa. Rep. Carter said she was excited about the Senate passage of the bill because Oregon has been trying since 1979 to get this kind of legislation passed.

However, she said, the State Accident Insurance Fund (SAIF) has joined forces with the State Treasurer and the Oregon Retirement Fund to lobby against the bill.

Their position is that such legislation would endanger some state investments and reduce interest yields.

However, in a quote from The Oregonian, Sen. Bill McCoy, a Democrat from Portland, said, "It is blood money and it is wrong."

Some activist groups, such as

Johnson said MOVE members would amplify threats against the mayor," they said if he came around they would kill him. There was a lot of cussing. It was like someone walking down the street with a loud radio."

However, Jackson said whenever she didn't want to hear it, she would close her windows. "Their whole argument was about politicians."

One MOVE supporter said, "The reason why MOVE was on the bullhorn was to let those stupid-assed niggers get prepared. "When they come get us, they get you, too."

Reconstruction

Currently, the city has cleared the rubble. Ed Murra, Jr., Director of Contracts and Services for the city's License and Inspection Department, said everything on Osage and Pine will be taken out. "Every brick, stone and all underground mains will be removed. Everything going in will be brand new," added Murra.

Jim Gohana, social worker for Human Services, said the mayor has set up teams to work with displaced families. "A person from Human Services, the redevelopment authority and the Red Cross will assist families."

Goode has allocated \$6 million to rebuild the area. However, two lawsuits were filed in federal court on May 15. The suits said defendants Goode, Brooks and Police Commissioner Gregore Sambour failed to remove MOVE from the house earlier, for dropping the bomb, and the resulting firestorm.

The lawsuit alleges that city officials violated the constitutional rights of residents by "knowingly, willfully, recklessly and without justification destroying homes and depriving homeowners of their liberty by forcing them to evacuate their houses before the seige began."

The suit seeks \$10 million in punitive damages.

Stone said Philadelphia wants to forget MOVE, the fire and the destruction. "Along with the Liberty Bell, we have the Bomb."

(Next week: The fire this time, what MOVE stands for, and more reaction to the chain of events.)

Kunstler defends Siletz Indians

by Robert Lothian

An afternoon gathering of Native Americans and supporters at the Northwest Service Center May 18 announced the move to Portland of the Society of People Struggling to be Free.

The group is organizing support for Dino, Gary and Robert Butler, Native American activists accused of murdering a man who was allegedly robbing Indian graves in Siletz, near Newport.

Attorney William Kunstler is defending the three brothers, and a hearing in their case has been scheduled for Sept. 2 in Portland, according to Nilak Butler, spokeswoman for the group.

Grace Castle, a writer and former news reporter who grew up in Siletz, told the tragic history of the Siletz Indians.

By 1848, she said, pioneers were flooding into Oregon and encroaching on Indians in Western Oregon. The government guaranteed land and hunting and fishing rights to the Indians, said Castle, but those rights were soon eroded as pressure from the settlers increased. Settlers' rights came before Indian rights in Oregon, as everywhere else, she said.

"Homesteaders took over Indian houses, fishing sites, whatever was there, because the government had given them that right," Castle said.

Indians in Southern Oregon resisted, and that led to violence, so the government set up a reservation in the Siletz area. Native people from throughout Western Oregon were forced to walk over the coast range and resettle there.

"The people who came to the Coast Reservation had their own trail of tears," said Castle. "A lot of people died on the trip."

Victimized by disease brought by the whites, the coast Indian population went from about 6,000 in 1852 to about 2,000 in 1856, according to Castle.

The government taught the Indians to be farmers, which conflicted with their traditional hunting and fishing lifestyle, she said. "They wanted them to be civilized."

But from 1856 to 1872, according to Castle, the government gradually took more reservation land away, including many Indian farms.

Newport now stands on some of that land, she said, and Salishan

Lodge was built on former Indian land purchased by whites from the government for less than \$1 an acre.

In addition, Castle continued, several early Oregon lumber companies made their first profits cutting timber on land that the government had once promised to the Indians.

The Siletz Valley land grab could occur, according to Castle, because the Coast Reservation had been set by executive order and a treaty was never signed.

In another of those tragic episodes that befell many tribes lured by

"Duke Report" versus Rogers

by Robert Lothian

In seeking to expand her three-month-old cable television news program, "The Duke Report," Lanita Duke said she is running into "Jim Crow in the television industry."

"The Duke Report" is aired Sundays at 9 p.m. on Rogers Cable Systems channel 23. Duke said she needs to expand to the all-city channel 35 to widen her advertising base and keep paying her employees.

According to Duke, the Rogers programming director told her that the show is too controversial, and so air time on channel 35 was denied.

Duke and a Rogers representative aired their views during a panel discussion on cable TV and first amendments rights at the Northwest conference of the National Federation of Local Cable Programmers at Lewis and Clark College Saturday.

"I will talk about a boycott if they allow my show to go off the air by denying access," said Duke.

The show's survival depends on being able to expand its advertising base, she said.

"They are restricting my ability to market the show and denying my freedom of speech," said Duke. "The only reason they are doing that is that I'm black and it's a progressive show."

She cited hard-hitting segments on the Stevenson death and on South Africa as reasons for her suspicions that Rogers wants to restrict the show to channel 23.

"We take the camera into the community and talk with people who don't normally get a chance to talk. . . Rogers thinks that just by putting it there, it's controversial."

cash and carelessness against government bureaucrats, the Siletz tribal council voted to end the reservation in 1956.

"The Siletz were told they weren't Indians anymore, and many grew up not knowing what they were." Only two native families retain traditional land in the area, she said.

The Butler brothers became part of Siletz history when they joined a movement of the Siletz people to regain their land and rights, a movement which led to the dispute over grave robbing and their eventual arrest.

Rogers regional programming director Adam Haas answered by arguing that Rogers has "bent over backwards" to help "The Duke Report."

He denied the free speech issue, saying that Rogers has the right to control what goes over channel 35. While affirming the need for locally produced programs like "The Duke report," he said the station was strapped financially and couldn't afford to offer equal time to others who might want to answer the issues raised on Duke's show.

"We're having a heck of a time being financially viable and that's the bottom line to me," said Haas.

He said that only a few politicians have demanded equal access, however, and that few minority programs are broadcast over the all-city channel.

If she has to leave Rogers, Duke said she would take 100 subscribers with her. "If I have to stand out on Sandy Blvd. with a sign, I will," she said.

Planning workshop

Saturday, June 15, from 9 a.m. to noon, the Central City Plan will hold the second set of community workshops. All Portland area residents are invited to participate in the free workshops, and to share their ideas about Portland's future.

The workshops will be held at Pine Street Theater, 221 SE 9th Avenue, and Terwilliger School, 6318 SW Corbett.

For further information, call the Central City office at 796-7270. A third set of workshops is scheduled for Saturday, June 22.