

Big Terrorism Drill Coming

Staging at raceway, other locations

(AP) — Portland will be at the center of the biggest terrorism exercise ever staged nationally when TOPOFF 4 begins with a fictional "bang" from an imaginary "dirty bomb" to test the emergency response of local, state and federal agencies.

But Gov. Ted Kulongoski says next week's drill will also prepare the state for inevitable natural disasters, such as a major earthquake.

Short for "top officials," the

fourth TOPOFF exercise since the drill was established by the Clinton administration and Congress will involve more than 50 local, state and federal agencies in a five-day test of their preparations and response to a staged terrorist attack.

Much of the event will be staged at Portland International Raceway north of the Kenton community in north Portland, but it will also spread out to other areas of the Portland metro area.

"This is a big deal for Portland, this is a big deal for Oregon," said Portland Mayor Tom Potter, who joined Kulongoski and a host of government, law enforcement and

military leaders in Salem to announce the exercise.

Security experts said one of the main problems during a crisis is maintaining effective communications, which the latest drill is designed to test extensively.

One of the other difficult questions in disaster planning is how the public will react to a real emergency, and that involves mostly guesswork the drill is not designed to answer, said Gary Pearlstein, a Portland State University expert on terrorism.

"One of the things we're lacking is, nobody is really educating the public on how to do the things they need to do," Pearlstein said.



PHOTO BY RAYMOND RENDLEMAN/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Rally Confronts Skinhead Visit

Twin sisters Sylvia (left) and Olivia Arinze brave the cold with about 200 others in Lents Park in southeast Portland Saturday for an anti-hate rally sponsored by the Portland NAACP and several other civil-rights organizations. The event was in response to a gathering of 100 Hammerskin Nation racists converging to the Portland area for a convention. The skinheads were later kicked out of the Sherwood Elks Lodge when club officials learned of their purpose.

Looking Back at Little Rock

The Mt. Hood Community College Historians' Roundtable kicks off the fall season with a commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the Civil Rights clash at Little Rock Central High School.

The year was 1957 and nine African-American students tried to enroll at the all-white Central High School. Even though the Supreme Court had ordered public schools to integrate, the nine students were

stopped by an angry mob and the Arkansas governor. President Eisenhower ordered the 101st Airborne Division to Little Rock to guarantee the students' safety.

Two MHCC instructors, Jim Barnes, history instructor, and Larry Dawkins, speech instructor, were both there at Little Rock Central during the 1957-58 school year when the 101st Airborne spent the entire year escorting nine African-American

students to class.

Barnes, an alumnus of Little Rock Central, will share his personal recollection and insights; Dawkins, who knows several members of the Little Rock Nine, is another Arkansas native recounting his memories of this turbulent time.

The discussion will be held on Thursday, Oct. 25 in Room 1308, from noon to 1 p.m. This event is free and open to the public.

Support Grows for Minority Owned Media, FCC Confronted

Three leading members of Congress have endorsed FCC Commissioner Jonathan Adelstein's call for an independent, nonpartisan task force to address the disgracefully low levels of media ownership by people of color.

Sen. Robert Menendez, D-N.J.,

Rep. John Conyers, D-Mich. and Rep. Hilda Solis, D-N.Y., endorsed the creation of a task force in public statements and letters to FCC Chairman Kevin Martin. The national, nonpartisan media reform group Free Press is urging the public to contact the FCC in support of the

new task force.

"Dozens of diversity enhancement recommendations have been collecting dust at the FCC since as far back as 1992," Adelstein said. "I believe 15 years is long enough -- justice deferred is justice denied."

At the national level, according

to research by Free Press, people of color make up 33 percent of the entire U.S. population yet own 7.2 percent of all full-power radio and TV stations. While women comprise 51 percent of the entire U.S. population, they own less than 6 percent of full-power commercial radio and TV stations.

"It is clearly in the best interest of our democracy that media ownership reflects the wealth of this nation's diversity," Sen. Menendez wrote in a letter to Martin. "As a public trustee of the broadcast and wireless spectrum, it is the respon-

sibility of the FCC to advocate on behalf of minorities and women in the radio and television broadcast industry by working to remove the increasingly onerous obstacles to ownership these groups currently face."

"It is unacceptable for the FCC to move ahead with plans to allow for more media consolidation without first addressing how to increase minority ownership," Congressman Conyers, the chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, said in a statement.

"We need to deal with the dis-

graceful state of ownership by women and people of color first," said Joseph Torres of Free Press, which coordinates the StopBigMedia.com Coalition. "The FCC has ignored these issues for far too long. Unchecked media consolidation makes it nearly impossible for anybody but the largest conglomerates get on the public airwaves. We need an independent, honest and thorough accounting of how FCC policies have impacted women and minority owners before even considering any changes that could make things worse."

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