

Police Attack MOVE

anon.

1978

As the 1,000 Philadelphia cops assembled outside the home of the anti-government, anti-technology group called MOVE on Aug. 8, they must have thought it was going to be like shooting fish in a barrel. The forces of state terror were in full battle gear and were assisted by a large contingent of city firemen preparing to evict the group for what really amounted to housekeeping standards that offended the city's vicious mayor, Frank Rizzo.

The MOVE group had been having it out with city officials for several months over alleged housing violations and had vowed to defend their home with force if necessary, which resulted in additional weapons charges. Taking the group's rejection of official authority as a personal affront, the quasi-psychotic Rizzo involved the city in a costly (\$1.2 million) blockade of the house that lasted over a year. Finally, hizzoner could stand no more and the state repressive mechanism was prepared to take on this band of "weirdos" with all of its official might.

The assault began before dawn with battering rams being used to smash holes in the walls of the MOVE house occupied by 12 adults and 11 children. This was followed by firemen blasting thousands of gallons of water from high pressure hoses into the inhabited dwelling even though the screams of children and cries of "Baby killers," could be heard from inside.

At 8:14 a.m. the police claim MOVE fired shots at them and in the one minute gun battle that ensued one cop was shot to death and 12 other police and firemen injured; one MOVE member was shot in the arm, several others were overcome by tear-gas, and a group spokesman, Delbert Africa (all members take the same last name), was brutally beaten by police after he surrendered. After the group was taken into custody, city bulldozers quickly moved in and after several minutes, the Victorian mansion that had been the project of a group of people trying to live beyond the rules of capital, was reduced to a 14-foot pile of rubble.

All 12 adults (the fate of the children is unknown at this writing, but probably have been interned by the state) have been charged with murder in the defense of their home and police are searching for seven other MOVE members not in the house at the time of the raid.

Mayor Rizzo put his finger on the root of the confrontation at a news conference following the shoot-out when he stated that MOVE was an "uncivilized foe we were forced to deal with civilized rules." Rizzo is a perfect spokesman for the civilization of this epoch, presiding over an urban cesspool and a police force so corrupt and brutal that even the federal government has been forced to investigate its tactics.

At this point, we know little about MOVE other than the slanders and inanities printed in the capitalist press about the group being "back-to-nature" and having a garbage-strewn backyard which may have been nothing more than compost heaps or maybe they did commit the sin of being sloppy). In a Philadelphia feminist publication, Hera, two members of MOVE were interviewed recently about their views and they expressed a need for the liberation of humans from the strictures of government and centralized technology. This indeed must sound peculiar to the antiseptic, suburban, 21st century minds of Philadelphia politicians, but to people like many of us who have been grappling with the same questions (admittedly only intellectually), they sound like brothers and sisters.

Still, there's much about MOVE that bothers us (we've heard reports about Christian origins of the group and the Africa bit bothers us), but not enough to sway us from demanding the immediate release of all of the accused

members of the group. Their heroic defense of their home from state vampire attack deserves our full support. We hope next issue to be able to give a complete report on MOVE and what efforts are being made to defend them.

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