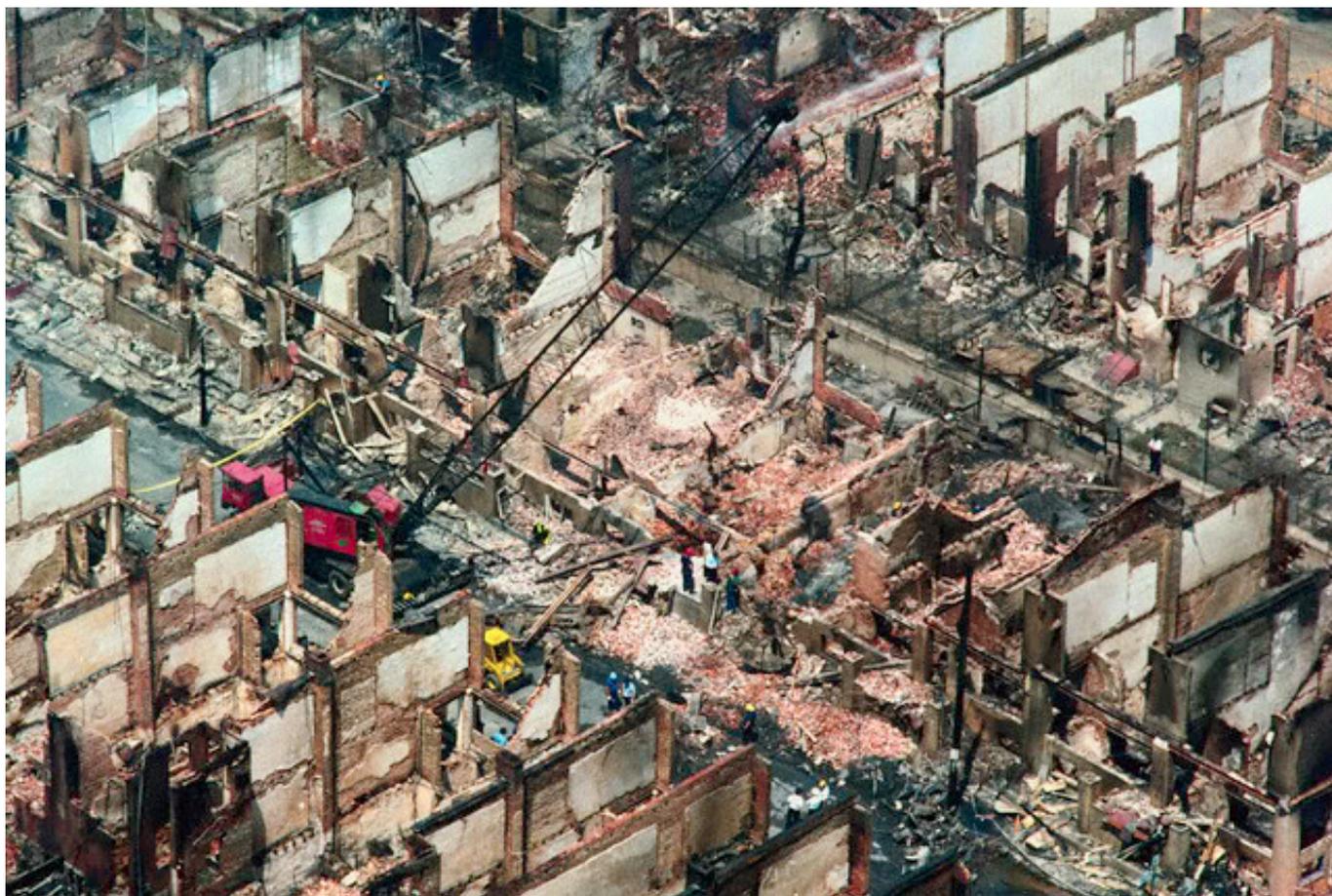


Siege On Move 1978

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Tagged as : [black power movement](#), [Frank Rizzo](#), [MOVE DOCUMENTary 1978](#), [move organization](#), [move siege at Powelton village](#), [Rizzo](#)

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A Brief History of MOVE - Powelton Village

The [MOVE organization](#) ain't cop killers, that's not the purpose of MOVE. The MOVE organization is about righteousness, LIFE! The purpose of MOVE, the example we're setting is about family, health, love. Those of you on the streets around MOVE people know what we're saying. You see the commitment and love within the MOVE family. Y'all see how our children are healthy and balanced, they ain't running the streets, getting into drugs, alcohol, or any other trouble. They are very responsible and respectful.



What I found were idealistic, committed, strong, unshakeable men and women who had a deep spirit-level aversion to everything this system represents. To them, this system was a death system involved in a deathly war. To them, everything this system radiated was poison - from its technological waste to its destruction of the earth, to its destruction of the air and water, to its destruction of the very genetic pool of human life and animal life and all life. MOVE opposed all this bitterly and unrelentingly, without compromise. -- Mumia Abu-Jamal



Untrained, untaught, and untamed, John Africa attracted a wide range of people to a small room

in West Philadelphia, men and women who had one thing in common: need In a sense, all of them sought that most illusive of quarries - Truth



During the early 1970s MOVE was based in the Powelton Village area of West Philadelphia (309 N. 33rd St.). Members enjoyed hard physical work and were often seen chopping firewood, running dogs, shoveling snow or sweeping the street. MOVE ran a popular car wash at this location, helped homeless people find places to live, assisted the elderly with home repairs, intervened in violence between local gangs and college fraternities, and helped incarcerated offenders meet parole requirements through a rehabilitation program.

After adopting MOVE's way of natural living, many individuals overcame past problems of drug addiction, physical disabilities, infertility and alcoholism. MOVE welcomed dissenting views as an opportunity to showcase their belief and sharpen their oratory skills which they knew would be tested in their revolutionary struggle.

It was during this period that MOVE widened their activities across the City. Other groups and neighborhoods sought their help, and MOVE put their expertise to work in helping to organize demos, initiate law suits etc. MOVE's activities came to the attention of and brought themselves into conflict with the City's three main centers of power - the media, the city authorities and the police. The media distorted and misreported what they were doing, the police launched brutal attacks aided and abetted by the corrupt city authorities.

Janine Africa's baby, Life Africa, was born 8 March 1976 but murdered by the police less than a

month later, when his mother was grabbed by a cop, thrown to the ground with 3 week old Life Africa in her arms and stomped on until she was nearly unconscious. The baby's skull was crushed. Police denied that the baby existed because there was no birth certificate.

20 May 1977, MOVE staged a major demonstration demanding the release of their political prisoners and an end to the violent harassment by the City. To keep an increasingly brutal police force at bay, MOVE appeared outside their own house with firearms - semi-automatic weapons, shotguns. Blacks arming themselves, Niggas with guns! The City went ballistic. It was as though New Age Travelers in Cornwall were arming themselves with Uzis, or Newbury Road Protesters with Kalashnikovs.

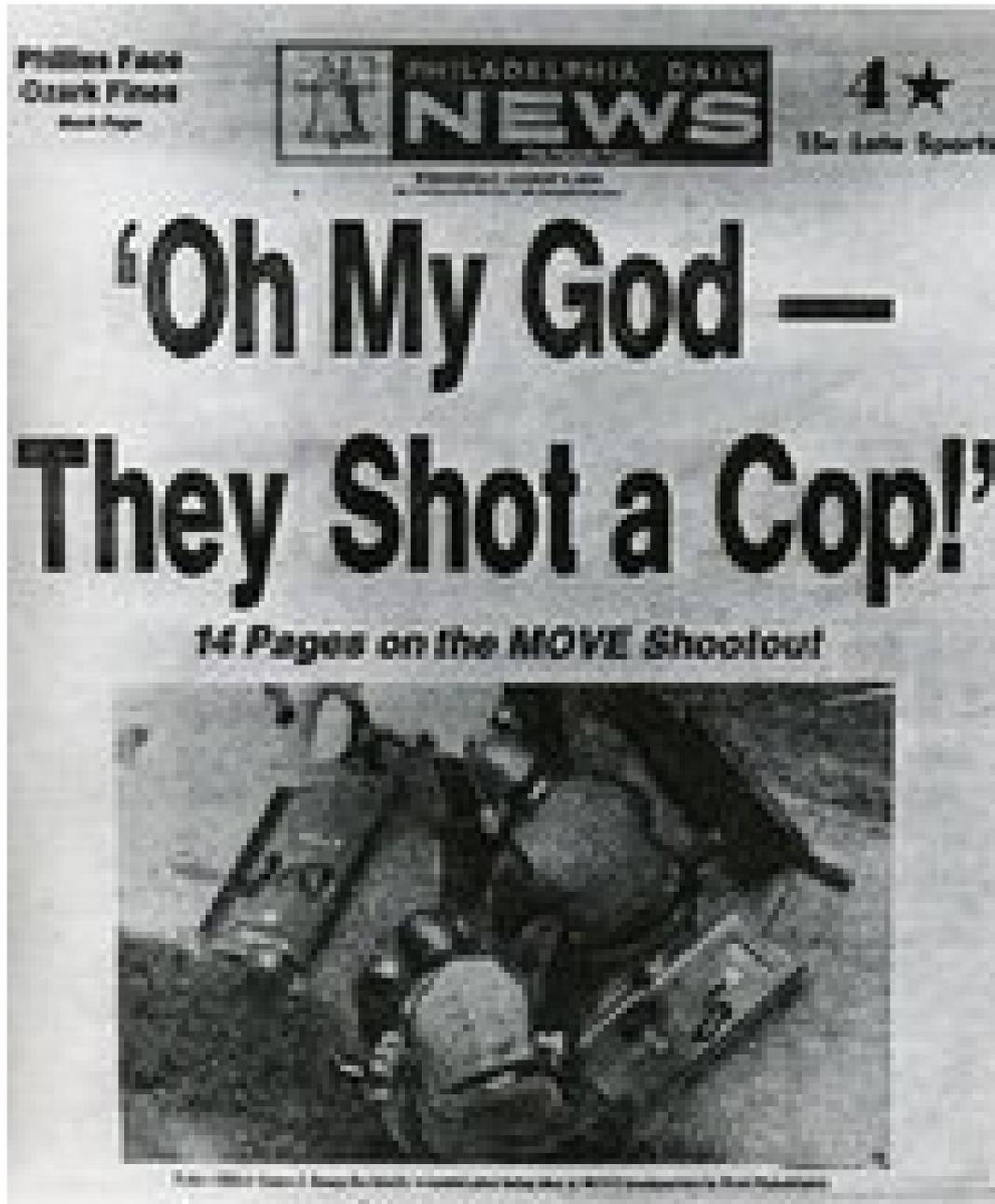


Mayor Rizzo responded with the order 'starve em out'. The area surrounding the MOVE house was sealed off. Sniper posts were established. The stand-off lasted for months. At one point MOVE agreed to allow their house to be swept with a metal detector. It came back with the result clean. The only weapons found were inoperative ones. This gave Rizzo the courage he needed to launch a full scale attack on the house.



8 August 1978, a full scale assault took place on the house. MOVE members took refuge in the basement. When this was realized, the basement was flooded. Young children and animals had to be held aloft to stop them drowning. Live TV showed Delbert Africa being beaten into near unconsciousness. No weapons were found in the hands of MOVE members. 10 MOVE members were charged with murder.

A single shot hit Officer James Ramp in the back and killed him. According to reporter Paul Bennet, the shot came from across the street. All hell then broke lose as the Police fired into the house.



At an angry press conference later in the afternoon reporter Bill Baldini, who asked about the beatings, was killed a liar. In response to a question from a reporter, Rizzo lashed out: 'They believe what you write, and what you say, and it's got to stop. And one day, and I hope it's in my career, that you're going to have to be held responsible and accountable for what you do.' The reporter who questioned the police actions was [Mumia Abu-Jamal](#), now on death row on trumped up charges of killing a police officer.

Police Commissioner Joseph O'Neill said Officer Ramp was killed by a shot in the back. Moments later a typed police press release was distributed stating that Ramp was shot in the chest. Rizzo displayed a table of firearms and claimed they were taken from the MOVE house. Some reporters noted the seemingly new condition of the weapons; others wondered what

these guns were doing in the mayor's office rather than impounded in the police crime lab as evidence. No MOVE fingerprints were found on any of these weapons.

The MOVE house was destroyed, even though destroying evidence from the scene of a crime is in itself a criminal offense.

Defendants who renounced MOVE were released without charge. The MOVE 9 were found guilty of the murder of James Ramp, even though James Ramp was out in the street facing the house, was killed by a bullet shot from the back, and all 9 defendants were holed up in the cellar when the fatal shot was fired. After Judge Malmed pronounced the nine defendants guilty of the murder and sentenced each one to 30-100 years he appeared on a radio chat show a few days later. A caller, Mumia Abu-Jamal, asked Judge Malmed, 'Who shot James Ramp?', he replied, 'I haven't the faintest idea.' Judge Malmed went on to say 'they were tried as a family, so I convicted them as a family', or in other words, MOVE were found guilty for being MOVE.

MOVE concentrated their efforts on freeing the MOVE 9, who were being brutalized in prison.



[RBG-WHO ARE THE MOVE 9? MOVE Organization Documentary 1978-2 of 8.](#)

[DOWNLOAD 20 YEARS ON THE MOVE, JOHN AFRIKA'S Organization](#)

Part 5 of 8 segments from MOVE: Confrontation in Philadelphia original MOVE video documentary. In this segment, there is a shoot out resulting in the death o...

Part 7 of 8 of MOVE Confrontation in Philadelphia video. Press Conference at Philadelphia City Hall features news media, Ed Rendell Frank Rizzo and others.

Pennsylvania Prison Parole Board 1-717-772-4343 The MOVE 9 are innocent men and women who have been in prison since August 8, 1978.

I have seen every substantive so-called Constitutional right twisted, shredded and torn when it comes to MOVE. Since the early 1970's I've seen male and female MOVE members beaten 'till bloody and bones broken, locked beneath the jails, caged while pregnant, beaten into miscarriage, starved by municipal decree, sentenced to a century in prisons, homes demolished by bomb, by crane, by cannon, by fire. But I've never seen them broken.

[Source](#)

[Black Power Movement](#)

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