Underground group follows teachings of mysterious 'John Africa'

Controversial MOVE members in Baltimore to tell their story

By Fred Hines
AFRO Staff Writer

Sometimes it seems almost impossible to get your side of the story out to the general public. For that reason, three members of MOVE, a Philadelphia-based group came to Baltimore this week to dramatize their cause through black media.

They came to tell the AFRO and Morgan State radio WEAA about a police blockade that ended May 9 and kept the 20 members who resided in the house from coming out to get food and other necessities.

They also came to tell that it was the MOVE members who were given what they wanted — the release of five prisoners who belong to their organization.

The three MOVE members who came here reported their attempt to rally support from Philadelphia black politicians proved to be unfruitful.

Finally, they set out to prove that their intentions were non-violent in nature and that they would only use firearms to protect themselves.

In the studios of WEAA-FM on Morgan State University's campus, the three members freely answered questions put to them.

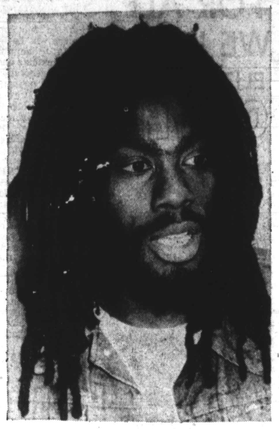
Their names are Jerry Africa, Eddie Africa and Susan Africa. Susan Africa is white as are some of the other MOVE members. Most of them have Africa as a last name and they follow the teachings of John Africa.

Why did the blockade take place in the first place?

The MOVE members say that they were confronted because they were blacks who stood up to Philadelphia Mayor Frank Rizzo and the system."

A leaflet handed out by supporters of MOVE says "The issue is MOVE's attacks on the School Board, the city and Rizzo's stormtroopers and their refusal to back down in the face of 600 arrests."

Contrary to published reports, the MOVE members say they still occupy their headquarters house in Philadelphia and about 25 persons along with about 50 dogs live there.



(AFRO photo by Robin McGinty)
IN DREADLOCKS — Eddie Africa talks about MOVE.

"We own the house," Eddie said. "It's ours, which is why they have so much trouble taking it from us. They claim there is a health code violation, when we are healthier than they are."

Little information is known about John Africa outside of the membership.

"We don't put out information about John Africa (including his location, his age) because the system has this thing about killing off leaders," explained Eddie after more interest was shown in the leader.

In fact, it appears that John Africa is such a force within the group and his guidelines have had such influence that he is credited with the MOVE victory against the blockade.

"Because of the teachings of John Africa, we knew that we would win this. They attempted to put pressure on us by turning search lights on at night to make the house bright as day at night," Eddie explained.

According to the three members, MOVE is an international organization with members located all over the world.

Five other places besides Philadelphia have MOVE chapters. They include Jamaica, Florida, Chicago, Los Angeles, and Atlanta.

But the difference, according to these spokesmen, is that those five chapters have not "surfaced" like the one in Philadelphia.

"They are not telling people they are members of MOVE," Jerry said, explaining that they are underground workers.

Jerry, who is the most vocal member of the three MOVE members — although they all took turns in answering questions — went on to say that MOVE workers are even located in the prisons.

"We had a commitment from the prisoners in Philadelphia that had any MOVE member died as a result of the confrontation, or had Rizzo taken over, they would have forcefully taken over the prisons only as expression of sympathy," said Jerry.

"Had anybody been picked up," Jerry continued, "prisoners would have said 'now we got them.' It was a collective effort not only in the streets but also in the prisons."

On Saturday, May 20, there will be a demonstration in Philadelphia in support of MOVE with speakers from the Zimbabwe African National Union and the Pan African Congress of Azania.

Spelling bee planned

The Mount Royal Elementary School at 121 McMechen St. will be the site of this year's city-wide Spelling Bee, to be held May 25, at 9:30 a.m.

Competing will be students from grades two through six, who are winners and runners-up from each of the school system's eight regions.

The Spelling Bee is sponsored by the Office of English and the Early Childhood - Elementary Education English Cluster Group.

Parents, teachers, principals and community residents are invited to attend.

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Flight #299 Leave 4:30 p.m. Arrive 5:30 p.m.
Flight #277 Leave 11:15 a.m. Arrive 12:07 p.m.
Flight #667 Leave 7:30 p.m. Arrive 8:24 p.m.
Flight #247 Leave 2:10 p.m. Arrive 3:02 p.m.
Flight #207 Leave 9:00 p.m. Arrive 9:48 p.m.

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CITY STATISTICS

Court docket

Narcotics Violation — Robert F. Latex, verdict stayed section 292.

Traffic Violation — John W. Lauchz, guilty, 60 days imprisonment suspended, 1 year probation; Mayo Reynolds; J. C. Feaster, guilty, 30 days imprisonment, suspended, 1 year probation and fine $200, as to each; Mark Frazier, guilty, 10 days imprisonment, suspended, 1 year probation; Edward C. Bailey, guilty, 60 days imprisonment, suspended, 1 year probation and fine $100.

Assault — Barry Valentine; Mildred Williams, guilty, 6 months imprisonment, suspended 1 year probation, as to each.

Deadly Weapon — Mildred Williams, guilty, 1 year imprisonment, suspended, 1 year probation.

Deadly Weapon — Earl Edison, guilty, fine $250.

Larceny — Joseph Singer, guilty, 18 months imprisonment, suspended, 3 years probation and fine $200.

Larceny — Joseph Singer, guilty, 18 months imprisonment, suspended, 3 years probation and fine $200.

Hand Gun Violation — Tyrone A. Hill, guilty, 3 years imprisonment, suspended.

Traffic Violation — Tyrone A. Hill, guilty, 1 year imprisonment; Same, guilty, fine $100; Same, guilty, fine $500; Charles R. Carrick, verdict stayed, Section 641; Same guilty, fine $100.

Disorderly Conduct — John Grimes, guilty, 1 year imprisonment, suspended, 3 years probation and fine $250.

Assault — John Grimes, guilty, 60 days imprisonment, suspended 3 years probation.

Resisting Arrest — John Grimes, guilty, 90 days imprisonment, suspended, 3 years probation.

Shoplifting — Dorothy Pender, guilty, fine $100.

Hand Gun Violation — Abraham Goode; David J. Walker; Lawrence J. Monroe, pending, as to each.

Robbery — Mark Williams, guilty 3rd and 4th counts, 10 years imprisonment as to 3rd, 18 months imprisonment, consecutive as to 4th.

Burglary — Bernard Lawson, guilty, 10 years imprisonment, concurrent.

Unauthorized Use — Avon S. Foote, Jr., guilty, 4 years imprisonment, concurrent.

Attempted Robbery With A Deadly Weapon — Same, guilty, 8 years imprisonment.

Divorces filed

Emma Bell Dillard vs. Cofer Lee Dillard.

Shirley Mae Steele vs. Ralph Raymon Steele, Sr.

Lillian Tomacena Davis vs. Rufus Levi Davis.

Wanda Elaine Fishea vs. Abraham Fishea.

Deborah Denise Williams vs. Bruce Williams.

Brenda Christine Williams vs. Norris L. Williams.

Mary Lee Henderson vs. Lonnie Henderson.

Darlene Sue Jackson vs. Roger Joe Jackson.

John Blackstone, Jr. vs. Harriett Blackstone.

Lorene A. Bell vs. David W. Bell.

William Leslie Stevens vs. Nancy H. Stevens.

Peggy Sue Wilkens vs. Charles Dean Wilkens.

Diane Beatrice Chadwick vs. David Eugene Chadwick.

Divorces granted

Anna M. Munoz from Abraham V. Munoz.

Patricia A. Embardino from Frank J. Embardino, Jr.

Andrea B. Grier from Lafayette S. Grier, Jr.

Laura Leach from Phillip Leach.

Veronica Hardy from James B. Hardy.

Willard S. Jones from Nancy L. Jones.

Melvin E. Clayton from Doris E. Clayton.

Catherine V. Marshall from Gorman B. Marshall.

Lydia M. Smith from Robert L. Smith.

Baltimoreans in the armed forces

Away from home

U. S. ARMY
COMPLETED TRAINING

Pvt. Arthur L. Reed, son of Mrs. Shirley D. Johnson, 5261 Nelson Ave. recently completed training as a cannoneer under the One Station Unit Training (OSUT) Program at Fort Sill, Okla.

OSUT is a 13-week period which combines basic combat training with advanced individual training.

Pfc. Billy J. Romano, son of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph J. Romano, 6715 Oak Ave., recently completed a jungle training course in the Panama Canal Zone.

Romano, a rifleman and radio operator with the 502nd Infantry at Fort Campbell, Ky., entered the Army in March 1976.

Pfc. Claude E. Rivies Jr., son of Mrs. Lillie Mae Rivies, 1913 Harlem Ave., recently completed a jungle course in the Panama Canal Zone.

Rivies, a rifleman with the 502nd Infantry at Fort Campbell, entered the Army in January 1977.

He is a 1976 graduate of Carver Vocational Technical High School.

ASSIGNED

Pfc. Michael S. Fenwick, son of Mr. and Mrs. Clarence M. Fenwick, 2504 Salem St., recently was assigned as a missile mechanic with the 7th Air Defense Artillery at Fort Bliss, Texas.

He entered the Army in April 1977.

Staff Sgt. William R. Merson, whose wife, Diana, lives at 1208 W. 19th St., Junction City, Kan., recently was assigned as a tank commander with the 3rd Armored Division in Friedberg, Germany.

Merson is a 1961 graduate of Mergenthaler High School in Baltimore, Md.

His parents, Mr. and Mrs. William J. Merson, live at 3501 St. Paul St., Baltimore, Md.

U.S. MARINES
PROMOTED

Marine Private First Class Stanley H. Prince, son of Louise B. Prince of 1217 W. Lanvale St., has been promoted to his present rank while serving at New River Marine Corps (Helicopter) Air Station, Jacksonville, N.C.

A 1977 graduate of Carver Vocational Technical High School, he joined the Marine Corps in July 1977.

U.S. NAVY
COMPLETED TRAINING

Navy Electrician's Mate Fireman Apprentice Kevin Michael Wilkins, son of Mr. and Mrs. John E. Wilkins III, of 3011½ Texas Ave., has completed the Basic Electrician's Mate Course.

A 1977 graduate of Eastern Vocational Technical High School, he joined the Navy in 1977.

Navy Lieutenant (junior grade) Donald Montgomery, son of Willis R. Montgomery Sr. of 2628 Guilford Ave., recently returned from an extended deployment in the Mediterranean sea.

He is serving as weapons officer aboard the amphibious assault ship USS Guadalcanal, homeported in Norfolk, Va. While deployed, his ship operated as a unit of the U.S. Sixth Fleet.

Montgomery is a 1970 graduate of Polytechnic Institute, and a 1974 graduate of U. S. Naval Academy, Annapolis, Md., with a bachelor of Science degree.

Navy Seaman Recruit Antoinette L. C. Curley, daughter of Barbara D. Curley of 4425 Park Heights, has completed recruit training at the Naval Training Center, Orlando, Fla.

A 1977 graduate of Walbrook High School, she joined the Navy in January 1978.

Navy Seaman Recruit Paul M. Lee, son of Mrs. Phyllis G. Lee of 903 E. Belvedere Ave., has completed the Basic Enlisted Course at the Naval Submarine School, Groton, Conn.

During the six-week course, he was introduced to the basic theory, construction and operation of nuclear powered and diesel submarines. In preparation for his first assignment, he studied shipboard organization, damage control, and submarine safety and escape procedures.

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