

MOVE Price Was Too High

One cool judgment is worth a thousand hasty counsels. The thing to supply is light and not heat. — Woodrow Wilson.

MOVE headquarters has been wrecked. Not a single plank of lumber remains intact. However, the bloody mess, resulting in the senseless killing of one, the wounding of others and the brutal attack of a MOVE member who had surrendered by members of the police force, was far too costly.

We fear that the full price for the storming of the Powelton Village compound and the resulting arrest of MOVE members is yet to be paid.

Today, we have brother disagreeing with brother concerning the tragedy, community groups are disagreeing with political leaders and the city at large is on the verge of exploding.

This is a time for Black leaders to step forward and provide the cool judgment needed to avoid more senseless killings. We cannot afford to let those who want a confrontation with Mayor Rizzo and the police department to take charge. We must be directed by those with the ability to shed light on a dark, dark situation that is being made even darker by Mayor Rizzo's attempt to place the blame for what took place at MOVE's headquarters on the news media. The *Tribune* took the lead in efforts to keep things cool, even when things were on the verge of exploding during the massive blockade of the group's N. 33rd St. headquarters. We urged MOVE to be responsive to the courts and for the city officials to be aware of the individual rights of MOVE members, even though their lifestyles were different.

The *Tribune*, while concerned about the useless killing and wounding of policemen, firemen, MOVErs and citizens, is more concerned about the manner in which events unfolded. We cannot accept the manner in which policemen beat and kicked a MOVE member after he had surrendered. This type of action by those sworn to keep the peace is upsetting. It also brings to light some of the charges leveled at policemen concerning brutality.

We are also concerned about the destruction of the MOVE house. What right does the city have to destroy property of others? If this goes unchecked, it could open the door for similar

actions to follow. While you approve or disapprove of the swift action by the demolition crew, surely you are fearful of city officials having such powers.

This is not an attempt to condone the actions of MOVE. The group rejected the help of Blacks, whites, the poor and the rich. It was the order of the day for MOVE to chop off a hand extended in peace — Oscar N. Gaskins and Walter Palmer are prime examples. But we must be alarmed about the abuses of civil liberties even when the rights of those we disagree with are being abused.

Another thing brought to light by the MOVE-city confrontation is the lack of strength and leadership in the Black community. While we have made vocal complaints about the way the police manhandled spectators, we have yet to look beyond the violence. There is more to our needs than MOVE. We must use the MOVE tragedy as a focal point to gather forces to attack other demanding problems facing the Black community. Can we afford to push other issues into the background? The *Tribune* says 'No.' All things are interconnected and cannot be placed in separate slots.

The disregard for the law by those who oppose the construction of the Whitman Park housing project must be attended to; our almost total disregard for the power of the ballot must be corrected; the manner in which police abuse Blacks must be stopped; the lack of positive response from our elected officials — from the mayor to the committeeman — should be attended to today, not tomorrow; the high rate of unemployment in the Black community must be sliced down; Black-on-Black crime has to be eliminated; drug suppliers and pushers have to be run out of the community and mass transportation is in dire need of improvement.

Yes, we agree that the manner in which the MOVE situation was handled was justified for the most part. But we must continue to remind you that we have many, many problems that need attending to today, not tomorrow. Hopefully, MOVE members will receive a fair trial and while they await their day in court they must be considered innocent until proven guilty. Unprovoked attacks, as occurred Tuesday as a MOVE member surrendered, cannot and will not be tolerated.