

Rev. Sharpton Fights To Claim Rebuilt House

PHILADELPHIA, Pa. (AP)—The Rev. Al Sharpton and Louise James vowed last Thursday to continue her fight, to claim the rebuilt house located at her former residence—the site of the fiery 1985 MOVE confrontation.

Standing before the Osage Avenue rowhouse, she and Sharpton condemned Mayor W. Wilson Goode and other city officials for refusing to sell her the rebuilt house while taking steps to sell it to others.

"The decision of the city to outright rob this house, sell this house to itself and then offer it for sale, is illegal, it is immoral, and it is stupid," said Sharpton, who is known for his role as an adviser to Tawana Brawley, a black New York teenager who claimed she was raped and abused by a group of whites.

Ms. James filed a motion last week in federal court seeking a temporary injunction to prevent the city from selling the house.

Sharpton said he came to Philadelphia to assist Ms. James, whose brother, MOVE founder John Africa, and son, Frank James Africa, died in the radical group's confrontation with police on May 13, 1985. The other nine people in the MOVE house also died, and 61 houses were destroyed in a fire that swept the west Philadelphia neighborhood after police bombed the house in an eviction attempt.

Ms. James owned the house before it was condemned by the city to rebuild the neighborhood.

The city Redevelopment Authority owns the rebuilt house and is taking steps to sell it, but City Councilman Lucien Blackwell has indicated he may block the sale until a settlement is reached with Ms. James.

"I think it's still her house, and as far as I know we don't have the right to take her home," Blackwell said.

During a half-hour news conference at 6221 Osage Avenue, Ms. James said she was the rightful owner of the house. She refused to answer reporters' questions asking if she would accept a monetary settlement for the property. "I want my house," she said repeatedly.

Sharpton called city officials' actions in the case "an absolute disgrace" and said he would lead a protest march Dec. 17 to draw attention to the cause. He did not specify where the march would be.

He also vowed to hold a sit-in at Goode's home before Christmas. Sharpton had threatened once before to demonstrate before Goode's private residence, but did not follow through on the plan.

Ms. James said she took little notice of others in the Osage Avenue neighborhood, many of whom said they do not want her to move into the house.

"I was not neighborly with them when I lived here," Ms. James said. "I wasn't in and out of those people's homes because I don't give a damn about them and don't give a damn about them now."

The news conference dissolved when Ms. James and Sharpton got into a shouting match with Gerald Wayne Renfrow, the block captain for the neighborhood.

Afterward, Renfrow said he and other neighbors think the city should pay Ms. James for the house, but they do not want her back in the neighborhood.

"We want Louise James to be treated fairly. By the same token, we want to be treated fairly," Renfrow said. "The only way that I think that that can be accomplished is that the city make a financial settlement with Louise James over her former house and let us live without threat of a crossfire between Louise and the police."

Abdul-Jabbar To Face Charges In Shoving Incident

PHOENIX, Ariz. (AP)—Los Angeles Lakers' center Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, the leading scorer in NBA history, will be tried next year on two misdemeanor counts stemming from a shoving incident at a shopping mall here, a city prosecutor said last Thursday.

The charges stem from a run-in last April 21 between an Italian tourist and the 41-year-old Abdul-Jabbar, who has been charged with one count of misdemeanor assault and misdemeanor criminal damage.

Abdul-Jabbar allegedly stiff-armed a video camera held by Fernando Nicolis, of Rome.

Nicolis, 40, claims he suffered a bruised eye and a scratched ear from the force of the camera striking his head. He also has filed a civil suit over the incident.

Abdul-Jabbar said he brushed the camera out of his way in annoyance at the tourist's persistence in taping him at the Metrocenter Mall.

Tyler Rich, an assistant city prosecutor, said the case has been set for non-jury trial in Phoenix Municipal Court on Feb. 28, 1989.

He said he would not be handling the prosecution and did not know which judge put the case on the calendar.



PREPARING FOR EMPLOYMENT—Programming class instructor Kevin Leaders makes a point with Anika Curry, left, and Jeusell Williams. They are among the students at an IBM-sponsored job training center in Los Angeles. IBM's 74 training centers are located in urban areas with high unemployment and operated in cooperation with nonprofit, community-based organizations. Training offered includes courses in programming, computer operations, data entry and word processing. This Los Angeles center, the first one established by the company in 1968, is celebrating its 20th anniversary.

Book Club Celebrates With Christmas Party

On Friday, Dec. 9, just after the season's first snow flurries fell, the members and their guests of the Friday Afternoon Book Club braved the weather for a Christmas party at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Norman Sanders of South State Street.

The celebration began with the singing of Christmas carols and prayer by Ms. Elizabeth Jordan, the president. Ms. Mildred James read a poem, "What is Christmas?" by Helen Steiner Rice. Games were directed by Ms. Dorothy Sanders, Ms. Jistine Davis and Ms. Louise H. Shaw. Some received gag gifts.

Ms. Elizabeth Burton and Ms. Naomi Debnam were hostesses and were in charge of the table of decorated assorted salads, cakes, and other Christmas goodies that were enjoyed by the guests and members. As they dined and chatted, the guests were introduced and Christmas cards were exchanged.

Guests present were Ms. Alice H. Collins, Ms. Lillie Ballentine, Ms. Mae Rene Sanders, Ms. Elizabeth Pugh, Ms. Mae R. DeLaney, Ms. J. Ross Mebane, Ms. Elnora Kee, Ms. Louise Shaw, Ms. Mable H. Mitchell, and Ms. Helen L. Hinton.

Members present were Ms. Elizabeth Burton, Ms. Jistine Davis, Ms. Naomi Debnam, Ms. Mildred James, Ms. Beulah Jones, Ms. Elizabeth Jordan, Ms. Mary P. Lane, Ms. Sallie Larle, Ms. Nora Lockhart, Ms. LaSenia Murchison, Ms. Dorothy P. Sanders, Ms. Lucy Stancil and Ms. Pauline Young.

Ms. Jistine Davis is club reporter.

Legal Action Filed To Protect Poor, Elderly

WASHINGTON, D.C.—A potential landmark legal action to protect the civil rights of poor, elderly minorities was filed last week by the National Caucus and Center on Black Aged, Inc., and the National Association for Hispanic Elderly.

The unprecedented amicus curiae brief was filed in the year-old pending federal case, Meek vs. Martinez, in the Southern District of Florida where U.S. District Court Judge James W. Kehoe has ruled that the Older Americans Act of 1965 requires that state formulates for the allocation of millions of dollars in OAA Title III funds "pay particular attention to low-income minority individuals." He ordered Florida to develop a funding formula that targets "older minorities with the greatest economic and social needs."

The federal court action could set a national precedent in the intrastate distribution of millions of dollars in OAA funds through states to local units designated to provide services for the low-income elderly (60 years old and over). Florida received \$40 million in Title III OAA grants in fiscal 1987.

The NCBA brief was submitted in federal court in Miami Dec. 9 in the 1987 case originally filed by attorney Jean Camper Cahn, lead counsel for

Florida state Sen. Carrie Meek, et al., versus Gov. Bob Martinez. The latest action by the NCBA to intervene in the case was taken after the local Dade County (Miami) United Way agency asked the state to be relieved of its designation as an area agency on aging before carrying out Judge Kehoe's orders.

Samuel Simmons, NCBA president, announced the petition to support the suit "because the plaintiff which originally was the advocate of minorities has abandoned its role... and there is danger that the case may be lost without an appropriate plaintiff."

The NCBA is the only organization in the nation that focuses on the interests of aging blacks by monitoring and developing programs and policies and seeking legislation for the benefit of the minority elderly, he emphasized.

NCBA and the Hispanic association have devoted a major portion of their resources and energy to increase minority participation in Older Americans Act programs, particularly Title III supportive and nutrition services, the executives explained. In fact, the organizations consider equitable treatment for minorities to be the single most important issue for the Older Americans Act.

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