

Criticism of Philadelphia Grows Over Bombing of Radicals' Home

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PHILADELPHIA, June 26 — As the city comes under increasing criticism for the bombing of a radical group's home, it is proceeding with plans to rebuild 61 houses that were destroyed by fire as a result of the May 13 confrontation.

The Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority, a nonprofit public agency, today chose Edwards & Harper, one of the city's largest minority builders, to replace the houses. The City Council is expected to confirm the selection Friday.

The city is pressing plans to rebuild the West Philadelphia community by its self-imposed Christmas deadline despite complaints by former residents of the burned out neighborhood that it has failed seek their advice on design and that the new construction will not match the old in quality.

Ernest A. Edwards, the codeveloper of the new homes, said the city had already modified the design of the three-story houses to meet some of the criticisms, adding porches and, in some cases, garages. And he said he would meet with residents next week to ensure that the plans suit them.

Some residents have also complained that although relief agencies have collected \$1.9 million in their name, they have received only small stipends.

'It Was War'

"I'm tired of promises," said Clifford Bond, a spokesman for the residents. "It was war and anytime you have a war you have psychological problems. People are going to work and finding they can't concentrate."

The residents are among a growing number of people here who have started criticizing the city for its handling of the confrontation with the militant group Move in which 11 people, four of them children, were killed. The criticism contrasts sharply with the support the city received immediately after the confrontation.

In a recent letter, Representative William H. Gray 3d charged "the best available data" showed that the decision to drop the bomb "may represent a case of gross negligence."

The letter, dated June 4 and made public June 17, was sent to William H. Brown, chairman of the city commission appointed by Mayor W. Wilson Goode to investigate the episode. It marked the first time that the Democratic Congressman, whose district includes the destroyed community, has questioned the city's handling of events.

On the same day that Mr. Gray's letter was made public, a senior Republican state senator questioned the objec-

tivity of the city commission and announced that he would conduct his own inquiry.

"The city investigation is not a fair investigation," said Senator Frank A. Salvatore, chairman of the Urban Affairs and Housing Committee. "It was picked by the Mayor. He is part of the investigation."

Another inquiry is being conducted by a self-appointed community organization, the Philadelphia Investigation Committee. It challenged the impartiality of the city investigation and began its own inquiry with public hearings June 16.

"We're saying that in the black community, you have two sectors — the middle class and the lower class, working poor," said the Rev. C. Hamilton Robinson, the pastor of a North Philadelphia church and the committee's chairman. "Those people in the grass roots community are looking to us for answers."

Much of the criticism reflects the growing number of questions about official accounts of what happened before, during and after the confrontation.

In the latest such question, a Move survivor has challenged contentions by the police that they did not shoot at the members of the radical group trying to flee the burning house, The Philadelphia Inquirer reported today.

The survivor, 13-year-old Birdie Africa, has told investigators for the Fire Department that Move members tried to flee from a back entrance but were forced to retreat by police gunfire, the paper said.

Police Commissioner Gregore J. Sambor has said the police never fired any shots at the back entrance.