

New civil rights movement bears fruit in Cincinnati

Boycotts, protests continue as Cincinnati prepares for a summer of struggle

By Andria Y. Carter

Special to Sentinel-Voice

CINCINNATI — In scenes reminiscent of the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 60s, people continue to protest and stress the need for better race relations and economic inclusion in the socially torn city of Cincinnati.

Although 30 team leaders for six committees have recently been named to Cincinnati Community Action Now (Cincinnati CAN), several city officials seem perplexed

as people continue to voice criticism of the lack of movement in addressing race relation problems in the city.

Cincinnati CAN was created by Mayor Charlie Luken and co-chaired by businessmen Ross Love and Tom Cody and Rev. Damon Lynch III. Additionally, a youth employment fair was held last week for 3,000 available jobs in the Greater Cincinnati area. The job fair was a response to the African American community's outcry at the

lack of jobs for youths.

But the protests continue, with many calling for protests and boycotts all summer.

Since the end of the initial three-day civil disturbance in April in response to the fatal shooting of Timothy Thomas, 19, an unarmed African American man by Stephen Roach, a White Cincinnati police officer, people (nationally and internationally) have continued to call for change in this city.

Roach was indicted by a grand jury May 7 on two misdemeanors, negligent homicide, which carries a six-month sentence. Roach was also charged with obstructing official business, which carries a 90-day sentence. He pleaded not guilty.

The trial is not expected to begin until after Labor Day.

NAACP President and CEO Mfume, in a statement, went on to say flagrant violations of authority by police must be taken more seriously

by the nation.

"When a police officer is only found guilty of a misdemeanor after shooting an unarmed young man who is running away from the officer, it speaks volumes about where we are and where we are not as a nation with respect to the way we treat the civil rights of an individual," he said.

City officials and protesters have waged verbal stand-offs over issues concerning the treatment of Blacks, such as economic, race relations,

jobs, health care, and city leadership.

Twenty protesters, including the Cincinnati chapter of the New Black Panther Party, protested the Police Memorial ceremonies honoring those officers killed in the line of duty.

Protestors heckled Cincinnati Police Chief Tom Streicher as he reminded his men of the right to free speech. Police arrested four people in that incident.

(See Cincinnati, Page 13)

Demolition clears symbols of hate

HAYDEN LAKE, Idaho (AP) — With the crunch of splintering timbers, a watchtower that for years stood guard over the Aryan Nations headquarters came tumbling down, to the delight of human-rights activists who now own the compound.

An excavator was brought in Wednesday to destroy symbols of racism and hate on the former neo-Nazi site, forfeited after a lawsuit bankrupted Aryan Nations founder Richard Butler.

The machine's steel jaws punched a hole through a huge swastika painted on the roof of the compound's commissary. In less than nine minutes, a building that once served up "Naziburgers" for \$1.25 apiece was reduced to a pile of rubble.

As the excavator rumbled toward the 40-foot-high watchtower, lawyer Norm Gissel reflected on the years he'd spent trying to thwart Butler's effort to create a white homeland in the Northwest.

"Today is the physical sign of the ending of that effort," said Gissel, who helped bankrupt Butler.

Where skinheads and uniformed Nazi wannabes once goose-stepped around Butler's property in the woods of northern Idaho, the new owners are planning a human-rights retreat or a children's camp devoted to diversity.

Butler, now 83 and in poor health, still lives in the area, in a home donated by a wealthy supporter. His following, which over the years included some of the nation's most violent racists and anti-Semites, has dwindled to a dozen or so people. The Aryan Nations still maintains a phone number, though nobody returned three messages left this week.

Butler moved to northern Idaho from southern California in 1973. By 1980, when anti-Semitic graffiti appeared on a Jewish-owned local restaurant, community members had taken notice of Butler's menacing, racist rhetoric.

The Kootenai County Task Force on Human Relations was formed in 1980 and has battled the Aryan Nations ever since, staging counterdemonstrations whenever Butler held rallies or parades.

The duel effectively came to an end in 1998, when Aryan Nations security guards chased a car they thought had fired a gun at them. (It turned out to be a backfire or firecracker.)

The guards fired repeatedly at the car, shooting out a tire and forcing it into a ditch. One of them grabbed the driver, local resident Victoria Keenan, jabbed her ribs with a rifle butt and put a gun to her head.

Keenan and her son, Jason, sued Butler and last year won a \$6.3 million judgment. They gained possession of the 20-acre compound and its nine buildings after Butler filed for bankruptcy protection, and in March they sold it for \$250,000 to the Carr Foundation, a human-rights group based in Cambridge, Mass.

The foundation is headed by Greg Carr, an Idaho native and former chairman of the Internet company Prodigy Inc. In addition to his plans for the Aryan Nations site, he wants to build a human-rights center 10 miles down the road in Coeur d'Alene - all in the name of erasing Idaho's image as a haven for racists.

Carr tried to play down the demolition.

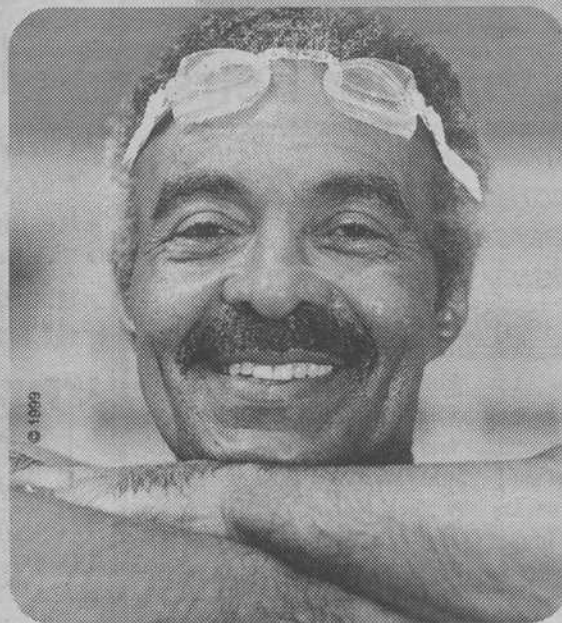
"I'm much more interested in what we create than what we tear down," he said.

Imagine this: You're proud of the children you raised. Your grandkids are talented and beautiful, too. The reality of retirement has finally arrived and it's even better than the fantasy.

You have family behind you.

You couldn't have done it without family behind you. American Family Mutual Insurance. When it comes to your future, over 70 years in the insurance business is experience you can trust. With over six million policies in an operating area of 14 states and a consistent rating of A+ (Superior) from insurance rating authority A.M.

Best, we've got the kind of stability that invites you to relax. And isn't that precisely what you had in mind? So, call today and talk to a helpful, friendly agent. Then dive right in. We'll be close behind you.



All Your Protection Under One Roof.

American Family Mutual Insurance Company and its Subsidiaries, Madison, WI 53783-0001 www.amfam.com