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Through smoke bombs and slander: Afro-Indigenous Kinney family's fight for their historic home continues to escalate as talks begin with Mayor's office

[Portland, Ore.] As international attention has been drawn to the Afro-Indigenous Kinney family and their fight for their historic home, they continue to be attacked from all angles while fighting to have their stories told. The trauma, violence, and destruction of Tuesday's police raid continues to reverberate across the Kinney family and supporting community. Protesters were arrested on false trespassing charges—protected by an agreement with the adjacent lot landowner where the occupation has been staged for the past three months—the Kinney family and community members were simply gathered on private property, peacefully holding the land.

There has been an ongoing misinformation campaign to whitewash this Afro-Indigenous led movement in an effort to obscure Portland Police Bureau's racist arresting practices. Given no prior notice, Portland police showed up to rip community members out of their tents and sleeping bags and put them in inhumane isolation cells, holding some for over 24 hours. While in custody, many folks were misgendered and not given the opportunity to culturally self identify. Returning to camp, arrested Red House supporters and the Kinney Family found their home and belongings had been destroyed, confiscated, or tampered with. Sheriffs, after extracting all the folks at Red House placed a surveillance device inside the Kinney home, destroyed existing security cameras, turned off the electricity, demolished the water heater, broke the sinks, and to put the cherry on top, defecated in the toilet and took a sledgehammer to it.

Setting this example of violence, destruction, and disrespect, Mayor Ted Wheeler and the Portland Police Bureau opened the floodgates for far-right harassment, violence, and intimidation of the Kinney family and supporters. In the 24 hours following the raid, supporters have been on constant high alert, experiencing physical intimidation as antagonizing vehicles circle the blockade, sporadically attacking land defenders with bear mace, smoke bombs, and fireworks. Simultaneously, the Kinney family has been receiving a swarm of hateful and racist emails, terrorizing the Kinneys with death threats in an attempt to discourage them from speaking out against colluding banks and corrupt courts who support fraudulent lending practices.

Recognizing the imminent danger for family and defenders, the community has come together to build a perimeter around the Red House to ensure protection for those holding the land. Rather than immediately reach out to the Kinneys and take responsibility for his police bureau's excessive use of force, Mayor Ted Wheeler's initial response was to focus in on the perimeter of the eviction blockade, falsely describing the peaceful assembly as an "autonomous zone" in order to try to criminalize the rights of Afro-Indigenous people to bear arms. While we get no support from law enforcement when faced with armed white supremacists, Black and Brown people are constantly considered to be dangerous, despite Oregon's open carry laws. Known white supremacists continue to illegally brandish arms without consequences.

This slander continued through Wednesday afternoon with the release of a video statement by Portland Police Chief Lovell, in which he condemned the eviction blockade without any mention of the Kinney family's fight to keep their home, concealing the ways in which his bureau, in collaboration with Multnomah County Sheriffs, have been the sole instigators of violence over the past three months since the beginning of the eviction blockade.

We refuse to be characterized as a violent movement when our leadership is rooted in an Afro-Indigenous ethic of land reclamation.

Faced with growing pressure and international attention, the Mayor's office contacted the Kinney family late afternoon Wednesday to request a meeting. The initial conversation resulted in promises to "keep it Kinney" by ensuring the property stays in the Kinney family. It remains to be seen whether they will call off the Portland Police Bureau and Multnomah County Sheriffs to ensure no more harm is done to community members. We look forward to continuing that conversation as we move more towards our goal of securing the Red House for the Kinney family and their generations to come.

The family is asking for community members to continue to show up to 4406 N Mississippi to defend the house. They're also raising \$250,000 to save the home. Donate at gf.me/u/yyjwna.

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