



THE CRAZY CANADIAN

It sounds too good to be true, but it's not a delusion. Canadian LTD

Blacks dissatisfied with death probe

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Several leaders in Portland's black community said Thursday they never expected the federal investigation of police shooting deaths of four young black men to reveal new evidence.

They were referring to an announcement Thursday by Sidney I. Lezak, U.S. attorney for Oregon, that there is not enough evidence to present the cases to a federal grand jury.

Lezak launched an investigation last April at the request of black leaders, agreeing to determine whether police had violated federal civil rights laws.

The four men killed by police were Rickie Johnson, 17; Joseph Hopkins, 28; Kenneth Allen, 27, and Charles Menefee, 26. All deaths were between October 1974 and March this year.

"I still have some grave concerns about the whole network of the investigation," said

Charles Carter, director of Albina Action Center, 707 NE Knott St.

Police inquest into the death of Rickie Johnson "had only one person from a minority group on the six-man jury," he said.

"I still believe there are adequate grounds (violations of civil rights laws) to pursue the matter at a higher level," he added. "Justice must prevail for all. There should have been more blacks on that original jury, as only blacks can have inside knowledge about the psychology and attitudes of blacks toward police."

"What he (Lezak) is saying is that they (the police) are guilty, but they are not guilty," said the Rev. John Jackson, pastor of Mt. Olivet Baptist Church, 116 NE Schuyler St.

"Well, either they are or they aren't," he said.

As to lessening of tensions between police and the Albina community, "maybe it is because the

whole community was waiting for the results of this investigation," he said. "I'm not so sure what this is going to mean now."

The Rev. Mr. Jackson said he will suggest that the Albina Ministerial Alliance have a representative talk with Lezak, "and get filled in on the details of the investigation."

Although he said he didn't expect the federal

probe to unearth anything new, Jim Brooks, executive director of the Urban League of Portland, 718 W. Burnside St., said he feels Lezak was honest.

"He (Lezak) is a man of high integrity," Brooks said. "He would call a spade a spade. The evidence probably just wasn't there (to merit presentation to a federal grand jury)."

"But challenging this process with diligence

and integrity is most important for the black community," he said. "We must demonstrate we are alert, and learn that the system can work for us just as for anybody."

Brooks, however, said he would disagree with Lezak that incidents between police and community residents have calmed. "Some things have happened lately that just make me burn. But I don't want to talk about that now."

Ellis H. Casson, president of the Portland chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, who requested the investigation by letter to U.S. Atty. Gen. Edward H. Levi, was out of town Thursday.

Several members of the Black Justice Committee, which was formed to secure an inquest and federal probe into the police killing of Johnson, were unavailable for comment.

Trio escapes fire at Tualatin home

TUALATIN — A Tualatin couple and a house guest narrowly escaped injury Thursday when a fire destroyed their home.

Jerome Laselle and his wife were awakened by Mark Stevenson of White Salmon, Wash., who found the fire, according to Bill Gilham, battalion chief with the Tualatin fire department.

Damage was estimated at \$20,000 to the home and contents by Gilham, who said the cause has been listed as placing a davenport too close to an electric baseboard heater.