

All Out to Free Mumia Now!

America's racist rulers want to silence the powerful voice of Mumia Abu-Jamal. The March 27 Third Circuit Court of Appeals decision upholding Mumia's frame-up conviction for the 1981 killing of Police Officer Daniel Faulkner proves, again, that *there is no justice in the capitalist courts*. It is a slap in the face to all opponents of racist injustice. Mumia now faces the prospect of another sentencing hearing—not a new trial—where the death sentence could be reinstated or where he could be entombed in prison for life. *We must not let this happen! Mumia must be freed now! All out on April 26 in Los Angeles. Join the united-front mobilization initiated by the Partisan Defense Committee and the Labor Black League for Social Defense under the slogans: "Mumia Abu-Jamal Is Innocent! Free Mumia Now! Abolish the Racist Death Penalty!"*

The court's ruling is just a newer version of the December 2001 decision of federal district court judge William Yohn, which overturned Mumia's death sentence while upholding his conviction. As Mumia stated in 2002 after Yohn's decision: "I continue to be innocent. A court cannot make an innocent man guilty.... Another year of struggle, another year of fighting, not for life in a cage, but for freedom."

Mumia was framed up because of his lifelong struggle against racist oppression and police terror—first as a Black Panther Party spokesman, then as a MOVE supporter and an outspoken journalist renowned as the "voice of the voiceless." The cops, prosecutors and courts—with the support of capitalist politicians, Democrats and Republicans—see in Mumia the spectre of black revolt, a voice of defiant opposition to the oppression of black people that is a cornerstone of American capitalism. It is notable that the March 27 decision comes just before the Pennsylvania Democratic Party primary, in which both Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton support the death penalty. A key supporter of Clinton is Democratic governor Ed Rendell, who was the district attorney of Philadelphia during Mumia's 1982 trial and who has vowed to sign a death warrant if the death sentence is reinstated. It is hardly a coincidence that the court's decision comes just before the parole hearing scheduled for April for the eight surviving members of the MOVE 9, who have spent 30 years in prison. *Free the MOVE prisoners now!*

It is all the more urgent today to revitalize mass protest to free Mumia on the basis that he is innocent, the victim of a racist and political frame-up, and to link his fight to the struggle to abolish the racist death penalty. Mumia's struggle is the struggle against the injustices inherent in capitalism: poverty, racist oppression, war. The fight for Mumia is the fight for black rights, for workers' rights, for the rights of all the oppressed. The rulers' vendetta against him is a vendetta against all who challenge cop repression, trade unionists who defend their picket lines, those who protest U.S. imperialist depredations in Iraq, Afghanistan and elsewhere. After more than 25 years on death row, Mumia still stands defiant, writing commentaries in defense of the rights of black people, immigrants, unions. Workers, blacks, immigrants and all opponents of racist oppression must mobilize *now* for Mumia's freedom.

Mumia is the victim not of one rogue cop, "overzealous" prosecutor or racist judge, but of the entire capitalist injustice system. His freedom will not be won through reliance on the capitalist courts or politicians, but through the independent mobilization of the social power of the working class. It was international protest, involving the labor movement worldwide, that won Mumia a stay of execution when a death warrant was signed in 1995. But a movement of millions was demobilized by reformist left groups such as Workers World Party, Socialist

Action, the International Socialist Organization and the Revolutionary Communist Party—and all the various coalitions these outfits set up and support. These groups subordinated the fight for Mumia's freedom to the call for a "new trial," promoting the lie that Mumia could get a fair hearing from the courts that have kept him behind bars and rejected every appeal.

To the millions of activists who saw in Mumia's struggle their own struggles, the reformists' message was *not* to fight but instead to look to the "next court." According to the reformists, the same capitalist state that killed 38 Panthers, that massacred eleven black people in the 1985 firebombing of MOVE's Osage Avenue home in Philadelphia, that has incarcerated nearly a million black men and women, was going to give Mumia justice! Behind the call for a "new trial" is a political program directly counterposed to a mobilization of working-class power for Mumia's freedom. *The March 27 decision should be a wake-up call to any activists who bought into the reformists' lies about the "fairness" of the courts*. We emphasize that while every legal avenue must be pursued in the fight to free Mumia, the pressure that can make the courts yield is that of mass international protest, crucially based on the power of labor.

What is necessary is *class-struggle defense* based on the understanding that capitalist society is fundamentally divided between two hostile classes—the capitalist exploiters and the working class—and that the capitalist state and its courts are organs of repression against working people and the oppressed. We fight for genuine united-front defense: mobilizing in action organizations representing different political viewpoints based on agreed-upon slogans with full freedom of criticism, where the contending strategies in the fight for Mumia's freedom can be debated out in the open.

The rulers know Mumia is innocent. Starting over 15 years ago, PDC counsel Rachel Wolkenstein and Jonathan Piper, who served on Mumia's legal defense from 1995 to 1999, uncovered additional massive evidence of his innocence. This included witness William Singletary who said Mumia was not the shooter; witnesses Veronica Jones and Pamela Jenkins who testified that prosecution witnesses were coerced into lying; forensic evidence that proved that the prosecution's story of the shooting was fabricated; the sworn confession of Arnold Beverly that he, not Mumia, shot officer Faulkner. But time and again, the courts have rejected or refused to even hear this evidence.

The fight for Mumia's freedom cuts to the core of racist American capitalism and its state. We fight for Mumia's freedom as part of the broader struggle for black liberation based on the program of *revolutionary integrationism*. Combatting every manifestation of racist oppression, we underline that full equality for the black masses requires that the working class rip the economy out of the hands of the racist capitalist rulers and reorganize it on a socialist basis. Only then will it be possible to eliminate the material roots of black oppression through the full integration of black people into an egalitarian socialist society based on a collectivized economy with quality jobs, housing, health care and education for all. *For black liberation through socialist revolution!*

The multiracial working class has every interest in fighting for Mumia. Mass united-front mobilizations are urgently needed to free him and to send a message to the racist capitalist rulers and their courts: *We will not let Mumia die or rot another day in prison! Free Mumia now! All out on April 26!*

—Partisan Defense Committee
and Labor Black League for Social Defense
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