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Eddie Africa: Free!

written by Mumia Abu-Jamal
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Eddie Africa (front row right) at MOVE news conference after his release.

SLL photos: Berta Joubert-Ceci

June 23 — The news came through like a beam in the night: “Eddie Africa has been released today.”

Eddie Africa, MOVE member and survivor of the Aug. 8, 1978, MOVE confrontation in Philadelphia, was free.

Eddie Africa, after over 40 years in Pennsylvania state and U.S. federal prisons, was home.

The news radiated like heat from a noonday summer sun and men smiled as if seeing their grandchildren for the first time.

Forty years is far more than 40 years if your name is Eddie Africa. That’s because MOVE people face the fury of county and state officials, and that meant a kind of cruelty that most prisoners have never seen nor imagined.

He has survived beatings while handcuffed and at least one attempt to castrate him.

He has been struck by weapons that have ruptured his abdominal wall.

And lest we forget, he has been held in prison for over 40 years, despite evidence of his and other MOVE members’ innocence of any crime in connection with the MOVE confrontation of Aug. 8, 1978.

That said, Eddie Africa is beloved among prisoners for his positive spirit and his eccentric sense of humor.

Now, Eddie Africa is with his loving family, at home.

From Imprisoned Nation, this is Mumia Abu-Jamal.

[*Listen to Mumia’s commentary here.*](#) Recorded by Noelle Hanrahan of Prison Radio.

Transcribed by Fatirah Aziz.

