

# Venezuelan soldiers pay tribute to Commander Hugo Chavez

written by Struggle - La Lucha  
March 6, 2021



Bolivarian National Armed Forces (FANB) members marching through the streets, Caracas, Venezuela, March. 5, 2021. Photo: Twitter/teleSUR

Venezuela's National Armed Forces (FANB) Friday started the 2021 "Bolivarian Shield" Exercise in honor of the eighth anniversary of the death of former President Hugo Chavez.

The soldiers' deployment throughout the country began at 6:00 am local time and it will last until Sunday, March 7.

"The military maneuvers will show to the world that the FANB is ready to confront

any threats against our sovereignty and territorial integrity,” President Nicolas Maduro said and informed that the national police will also take part in the operation.

Over the weekend, the FANB Strategic Operational Command (Ceofanb) “will be deployed in every territory to combat any attempt of violent activity,” the Command leader Remigio Ceballos tweeted.

The Bolivarian Shield Exercise “will evidence the unity of the FANB and the Venezuelan people,” he added.

On February 25, the president informed the military activities would begin on the day Venezuela remembers Commander Chavez’s death, which occurred in Caracas on March 5, 2013.

“Amid the pain, I could hold his hand in his last seconds of life. I asked him to always enlighten us to complete his work of hope and equality. Today, he is guiding our steps,” Foreign Affairs Minister Jorge Arreaza tweeted.

Source: [teleSUR](#)



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# **Rally to Save Kingsbrook Jewish Medical Center - March 11**

written by Struggle - La Lucha  
March 6, 2021

# SAVE KINGSBROOK RALLY

MARCH 11, 2021 - 11AM

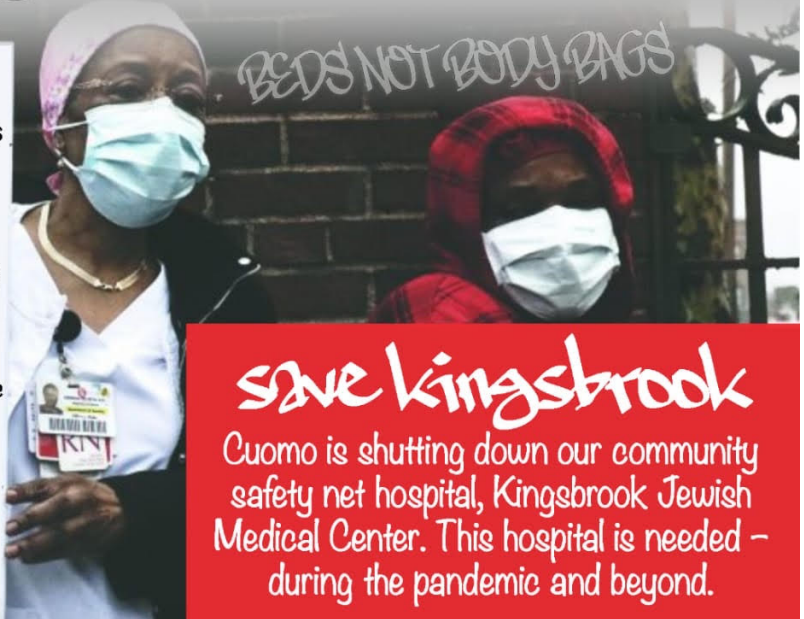
Meet at the Kingsbrook main entrance

## OUR DEMANDS

1. All Kingsbrook Jewish Medical Center services and beds must remain functioning with full staff for all beds indefinitely.
2. Stop draining Kingsbrook of resources. Safety net hospitals should be fully funded.
3. The undemocratic and outdated 2016 restructuring plan to close Kingsbrook as a hospital must be scrapped completely.
4. Any organizations or individuals with financial conflicts of interest should be excluded from planning and decision-making about hospital closures and service cuts.
5. The pandemic has shown the need to maintain and expand hospital capacity. We additionally support a moratorium on all hospital closures and no cuts to safety net hospital funding.

## SIGN THE PETITION

**WWW.SAVEKINGSBROOK.ORG**



On **Thursday, March 11, 2021 at 11:00 AM**, a coalition of community members, healthcare workers, health activists, and clergy will rally at the entrance of **Kingsbrook Jewish Medical Center** to protest the unjust planned closure of inpatient services at this much-needed safety-net hospital. Here's [more information](#) about the background of the closure, and includes info for the Thursday rally. The demands at this rally are:

- All Kingsbrook Jewish Medical Center services and beds must remain functioning with full staff for all 200 beds indefinitely.
- Stop draining Kingsbrook of resources. Safety net hospitals throughout New York State should be fully funded.
- The undemocratic and outdated 2016 restructuring plan to close Kingsbrook's inpatient services must be scrapped completely.
- Any organizations or individuals with financial conflicts of interest should be excluded

from planning and decision-making about hospital closures and service cuts.

- The pandemic has shown the need to maintain and expand hospital capacity. We support a moratorium on all hospital closures and oppose any cuts to safety net hospital funding.

Here's the [facebook event](#) and [website](#) with some more information. Even if you can't make it, please [sign on to the petition](#) demanding a stop to the closure. You can also call Cuomo and your state legislators with the demands, [using this dialer tool](#)! If you have any questions, please reach out directly to Alice Murphy at [alicepmurphy94@gmail.com](mailto:alicepmurphy94@gmail.com) or by phone at 413-841-4718.



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# Mumia has congestive heart failure and is COVID-19 positive

written by Struggle - La Lucha

March 6, 2021

From the [New York City Jericho Movement](#):

*"We could not save Malcolm X, but we can save Mumia. We can save him, and we must save him, because we love our Brother, and we need our Brother to help us fight for our freedom." Assata Shakur*

Dear Friend

On Feb. 27 Mumia Abu-Jamal was hospitalized. When he put in a sick call slip and was seen by the SCI Mahanoy medical staff he was taken immediately to the hospital suffering chest pain and shortness of breath. Diagnosed with congestive heart failure he was given a battery of tests. It is unclear how long Mumia was hospitalized, but by Wednesday he was in isolation in the prison's infirmary. This diagnosis of a weakened heart requires careful monitoring and treatment.

At the hospital his serology blood test was positive for COVID-19. This followed three negative, or false negative, COVID-19 tests and a negative antigen test administered recently by the medical staff at SCI Mahanoy.

After initial treatment for fluid buildup in his body, he was discharged from the local private hospital and put in isolation in the prison infirmary. On Wednesday he was able to reach his supporters who were gathering in Philadelphia at 3 Penn Sq. outside the DA's office, demanding that he receive appropriate medical attention. He expressed his gratitude for the worldwide support and attention to his and other elders with life threatening conditions in prison.

We must remember that the prison infirmary at SCI Mahanoy is the very same place that in 2014 diagnosed Mumia as having critically low blood sugar, i.e. a diabetic episode or reaction to a topical steroid he was taking for a raging skin condition. The infirmary then ignored the notation in his chart to monitor his blood sugar levels for three weeks. It was not until he fainted and went into renal failure that he was rushed to the hospital. His lawsuit in that case, *Abu-Jamal v. Wetzel*, is still pending. It took a federal civil rights lawsuit, the order of a preliminary injunction, and worldwide protests for Mumia to receive the fast acting anti-viral cure to his belatedly diagnosed Hepatitis C.

The Pennsylvania Department of Corrections has repeatedly failed to provide

adequate care for our family members.

**We. the people, must toss aside our fears. It is not the time to hesitate and we cannot give into despair.** Decarceration is not a dream; it is a necessity.

We need to take action now!

Please reach out to the following:

Gov Tom Wolf: 717-787-2500

PA DA Larry Krasner: 267-456-1000; @DA\_LarryKrasner

Prison SCI Mahanoy: 570-773-2158

PA DOC Secretary John Wetzel: 717-728-2573

Script:

My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I demand:

1. The immediate and unconditional release of Mumia Abu-Jamal, who has congestive heart failure & has been diagnosed with COVID-19 and is vulnerable.
2. The immediate release of all political prisoners.
3. The immediate release of all elders, aging prisoners over the age of 50, people who have contracted COVID, and all others who are especially vulnerable to death through COVID-19.

Write Mumia a personal note:

Smart Communications/PADOC

Mumia Abu-Jamal AM 8335

SCI Mahanoy

PO Box 33028

St Petersburg, FL 33733

When We Fight, We Win.



Jennifer Black  
Noelle Hanrahan  
Jennifer Beach  
for Prison Radio



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# **Commentary on ‘Judas and the Black Messiah’**

written by Struggle - La Lucha  
March 6, 2021





I remember the feeling of being in the theater to see the movie “Malcolm X.” I was 15. My political interests had already been piqued by the L.A. rebellion which began on April 29 of the same year. I had been forced to leave the city of my birth, a city in the middle of the industrial belt, picked up and dropped down in Dallas, Texas. Everyone spoke in a different accent, used different slang. I was lost and confused, missing home, and so sat down in the theater alone.

The beginning credits are overlaid with a U.S. flag which is interspersed with the grainy black and white footage of Rodney King being repeatedly battered with batons by LAPD. Denzel Washington recites parts of speeches given by Malcolm X.

The audience in the film retorts and it begins a call and response. In the theater there was silence. This was before YouTube, so I’d never heard Malcolm’s voice but had only read his autobiography. Denzel’s voice might as well had been Malcolm’s.

Rodney King lies on his side and the baton swings from the hands of the faceless cops continue. Malcolm's words punctuate each blow. The flames begin to engulf a flag I had already learned as a symbol of something not meant for people like me. A chorus rises over the accompaniment and a car drives by in the black and white footage as Malcolm talks of the hypocrisy of so-called democracy and gets to the barbarity that gave rise to the U.S. and to the initial capital from which capitalism grew.

**"We don't see any American dream. We've experienced only the American nightmare."**

**— Malcolm X**

"Malcolm X" is certainly not a perfect biographical film. It omits Malcolm's further development as an internationalist and anti-capitalist. Nevertheless, it still was groundbreaking to have a movie about one of the preeminent political minds produced in the U.S. I had never seen anything like it. I imagine most my age hadn't either. It was rare to see a movie with a majority Black cast even, let alone something focused on the life of a Black radical.

After the film most of the moviegoers sat in the audience. Perhaps some remained to listen to Aretha Franklin's cover of Donny Hathaway's "Someday We'll All Be Free." For me it was that I could not get up. Simple as that. It was a mixture of ardor and hurt that stirred my mind and I couldn't move an inch, and didn't for maybe 5 minutes.

For years after the L.A. Rebellion I felt that it was the event that affected me most and was responsible for my political trajectory. It was a spark. But it is significantly much more complex.

The L.A. Rebellion itself was due to a confluence of factors that mark a long winter. The internal liberation movements, especially the Black liberation movement, having

been smashed by the political powers in the U.S. via their police forces and courts, along with the politicization of the drug trade, deindustrialization, the growth of neoliberalism, the waning of global leftist movements and the later collapse of the Soviet Union are all contributing factors. Rebellions are a semi-regular feature of life under capitalism. In the instance of the L.A. Rebellion, as in many other cases, it was against the state apparatus, of which police are a part. It was a cry, however, that seemed to echo in a political vacuum. It is not entirely true of course, but because of the context listed it seemed that way.

Now comes “Judas and the Black Messiah.” As a movie it is well made. The acting is tremendous. Daniel Kaluuya is very convincing as Chairman Fred Hampton. His performance is on par with Denzel’s Malcolm.

There is less footage of Chairman Fred, because he was only 21 when he was assassinated and his political life, the point from which he was thrust into leadership and the national spotlight, was too brief. Kaluuya is 11 years older than Chairman Fred was at his death. Some have complained of the disparity in age. However, it would be difficult to find someone closer to the right age who could truly display the emotional and intellectual maturity Chairman Fred exuded. Plus, it is a rare feat for an actor to play the same age as their character, especially in early adulthood. Hampton belied that which is normally attributed to someone only 21 years of age. This is not meant to be a knock against young adults of course. In reality, while full maturity is not reached at 21, the expectations then versus now were different.

Dominique Fishback as Deborah Johnson, now Akua Njeri, is understated yet very effective. The scene where the cops execute an already shot and drugged with a lethal amount of barbiturates Chairman Fred is so effective that her rage radiates through the screen. Fishback explained that Akua told her not to cry and that she refused to look back because she wanted to remain defiant. Fishback is able to convey that desire to want to see her beloved and at the same time not wanting to

give his murderers the satisfaction of seeing her affected.

If this were a straight review on the artistic merits, the performances of the actors of the film and the aesthetics of the cinematography, then I'd commend all the other actors. That isn't my primary duty, but a cursory one. I'd be remiss to not write about Lakeith Stanfield.

The main point of contention for political appraisals of "Judas and the Black Messiah" is the dual focus, which gives equal screen time to William O'Neal, played by Stanfield. The movie opens with a dramatization of the interview O'Neal did for the second part of "Eyes on the Prize." It then shows actual footage of rebellions during the period of the mid to late 1960s, with speeches given by various political leaders, from Angela Davis, to Huey P. Newton, Bobby Seale and others, until it shows Martin Sheen as J. Edgar Hoover speaking to F.B.I. agents and labeling the Black Panthers as the single greatest threat to national security.

Stanfield is 12 years older than O'Neal was when he was arrested for driving a stolen vehicle across state lines. Stanfield looks considerably older than pictures of O'Neal. The only recorded footage is from the "Eyes on the Prize 2" documentary, which was released the same night O'Neal committed suicide by running out into traffic. O'Neal was 40 at that time, but looks slightly older than Stanfield does in the movie. That aside, Stanfield is convincing as a person drowning in his circumstance. This is not surprising as Stanfield has range as an actor and his lithe frame lends itself to the role. His eyes convey a charming lost slitheriness, an amalgam of a fox, doe and snake. A good actor has to embody a character down to the fingertips and the most minute of gestures. He has what we have come to imagine O'Neal to be down to the molecule.

**"I don't know what I'd tell him other than I was part of the struggle."  
— William O'Neal, 1989, "Eyes on the Prize 2"**

On the criticism of focus:

One can only imagine what O'Neal meant by the quote above. He most likely meant it differently than what his actual part in the struggle was. He was an informant. A snitch. A rat. He participated in the assassination of Chairman Fred Hampton and Defense Captain Mark Clark and the maiming and terrorizing of an oppressed community. He was one of many, unfortunately. He is perhaps the most well known.

Is it a missed opportunity or a mistake to have him as a focus of the film? It is clear from the interviews with the director. It is no accident that the film plays as a thriller, because that was the intent. There are a great many similarities to "The Departed." It doesn't have the same amount of tension, mostly because it exists in the real world history and so doesn't have the same level of trickery and twists.

It works mostly as a piece of art, but also in displaying the complexities of people and history. It would be easy to consign O'Neal to a minor role, despite the outsized effect. But to do so would mean missing an opportunity to show the reach of the state — the police, courts, all the means by which power and control over society is exercised and help those in power remain so.

Additionally, O'Neal was a person, with his own backstory, connections and motivations, in this instance it was self preservation. Such people are fairly commonly seen now, for example, Lil Wayne supporting Donald Trump for a pardon is O'Nealesque. In fact, the qualities of many wealthy neocolonial types are those that O'Neal expressed. The FBI is very much as the film portrays it, as political police who know few boundaries when it comes to the means to suppress dissent. Using a 17-year-old who delved in the underground economy for survival presented no ethical dilemma.

The greatest effect of the dual focus is the juxtaposition. Chairman Fred Hampton embodies the idea of revolutionary suicide. Huey P. Newton explains it as such:

“Revolutionary Suicide does not mean that I and my comrades have a death wish; it means just the opposite. We have such a strong desire to live with hope and human dignity that existence without them is impossible.”

It is not simply a life desired as an individual but a desire for all to live in such a way. This is evident throughout the film, whether it be Chairman Fred meeting with a gathering of white people assembled by the Young Patriot Organization or in the solidarity with the Young Lords. It is also displayed in the final scene where Chairman Fred refuses to go on the run and uses the money given to him for the opening of the medical clinic.

**“Why don’t you live for the people. Why Don’t you struggle for the people. Why don’t you die for the people.”**

**— Chairman Fred Hampton**

O’Neal’s life is in contradiction to Chairman Fred’s quotes above. He is driven by self-preservation and commits a reactionary suicide, his spirit crushed by the conditions of the system, his soul murdered. And so it would seem that it was of little consequence to him to commit to the acts to undermine the Black Panther Party and to take part in the assassination of two of its brightest leaders, and in Chairman Fred Hampton one of the brightest strategists, organizers and theorists. He showed value in only his life. In the end, surely haunted by his own actions, his own physical life meant very little and so he ended it by running into traffic.

In the current context: a world where there is no longer a socialist camp, but independent economic spheres that threaten the primacy of U.S. imperialism, and one where there exists a profound political and ideological crisis, it is important that any tool be recognized that presents an opportunity to present ideas many are not familiar with.

While not many people are seeing this film in a theater, but at home, I am imagining

them sitting there and interacting with the film as the current social and political context as their backdrop. How might the ideas expressed impact them? How might we use the film as a tool to drive discussion and develop their understanding of the world about them? That is the task and it is the great value of the film that not only is it well made and engaging but useful in its presentation of the politics of the most impactful communist-inspired organization of the last 50 years.



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## **How India's farmers' protests could upend the political landscape**

written by Struggle - La Lucha  
March 6, 2021

For the past three months, Indian farmers and agricultural workers have been in the middle of a difficult struggle against the government of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Tens of thousands of them have gathered around the capital city of New Delhi;

they say that they will not disband unless the government repeals three laws that negatively impact their ability to remain economically viable. The government has shown no sign that it will withdraw these laws, which provide immense advantages to the large corporate houses that are close to Prime Minister Modi. The government's attempt to crack down on the farmers and agricultural workers has altered the mood in the country: those who grow the food for the country are hard to depict as "terrorists" and as "anti-national."

Modi's party — the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) — currently holds power in several of the states that border Delhi. It is from these states — Haryana and Uttar Pradesh — that many of the farmers have gathered, although they have also come from far afield, from Bihar and Maharashtra (they have also come from Punjab, which is governed by the Congress Party). Even if there are some shifts in the political calculations in these states, particularly Uttar Pradesh (population 200 million), these will not be tested at the ballot box for some years to come: Punjab and Uttar Pradesh do not go to the polls until 2022, and Haryana will elect its legislative assembly in 2024 when the Indian parliament will face a general election. Modi is safe for the next three years, an eternity in contemporary political life.

Little wonder that he has not felt the need to make any concession to the farmers and that he has turned to the full arsenal of intimidation and violence to fragment the unity of the farmers. This intimidation includes a general attack on those branches of the media that have favorably reported the protest ([Newsclick](#), a news portal, faces a bewildering investigation because—as is widely acknowledged—it had amplified the views of the protesting farmers).

## **State Elections**

Over the next few months, assembly elections will take place in one union territory (Puducherry) and four states in India: Assam, Kerala, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal. To put this into perspective, the populations in these four states total 225 million, by



itself the fifth-largest country in the world behind Indonesia. That the democratic fate of so many people will be decided by May 2 and that these elections get so little attention outside India tells one a great deal about the Eurocentrism of our global media (certainly the result of the national election in Germany—with a population of 83 million—will be far more consequential than these five regional elections in India, but nonetheless the lack of any interest should not be shrugged at).

The prime minister's extreme right party, the BJP, is in power in only one of these states, Assam (population 31 million). It is likely that the BJP will retain hold of that state, although there is tension around the highly [unpopular](#) Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) pushed by the BJP in 2019. In a triangular contest, the BJP and its allies will face on the one side a grand alliance of the center-right Congress Party and its Left and regional allies; and on the other side, newly formed anti-CAA parties (the Assam Jatiya Parishad and the Rajgor Dal). Fragmentation of the anti-BJP vote could very well be decisive for its re-election, a point made by the Congress Party, which has sought unsuccessfully to bring in the new parties.

West Bengal (population 91 million), like Assam, will face a triangular contest between the ruling Trinamool Congress (TMC), the BJP, and a bloc of the Communists and the Congress. On February 28, 2021, more than a million people gathered at Kolkata's Brigade Ground for a massive show of strength led by the Left and its allies against both the BJP and the TMC. The Left Front had been in power in West Bengal from 1977 to 2011, when it was ousted by the TMC. Since then, the TMC has gone in and out of alliance with the BJP in Delhi, and it has promoted corruption, cronyism and social despair. The power of BJP money and the projection of Prime Minister Modi as a charismatic figure have drawn key TMC leaders into the BJP. This is the first time that the Left and the Congress are going to the polls together. A recent ABP/C-Voter poll [found](#) that the TMC looks to be on track to hold the state government.

Regional parties such as the TMC are a familiar feature in India's larger states. Here linguistic sub-nationalism provides the foundation for the local elites to drive their own agenda through such entities. In Tamil Nadu (population 68 million), the history of anti-Brahmin agitation led to the creation of a non-Brahmin party, which then fissured into several parties, two of which (AIADMK and DMK) remain the dominant forces in the state's politics. The AIADMK, currently in power, is gripped most tightly by the regional elites and has an intimate relationship with the BJP even if there are some social divergences. The DMK, on the other hand, has been [smart](#) with its alliances, although it is dogged with accusations of nepotism. As in earlier elections, the DMK has made an alliance with the [Left](#), which has deep pockets of support among the working class and the peasantry; anti-privatization fights, led by the Left, will help the alliance gain the support of workers in densely populated urban areas. Opinion polls suggest that the DMK-Left alliance will prevail in Tamil Nadu.

### **Kerala Flies the Red Flag**

Since 1980, the electorate of Kerala (population 35 million) has not re-elected its state government, with power oscillating between the Left Democratic Front and the United Democratic Front. This year, the Left Democratic Front (LDF), which has been in office since 2016, looks set to break the pattern and return to power. There is widespread agreement that the LDF government — led by Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan — has fulfilled the promises of the communists' 2016 manifesto; there is overwhelming clarity that the LDF administration has been efficient and rational. The LDF government confronted a series of cascading crises with calm competence: the aftereffects of Cyclone Ockhi in 2017, the [Nipah](#) virus outbreak of 2018, the [floods](#) of 2018 and 2019, and then the COVID-19 pandemic (Health Minister K.K. Shailaja was called the "Coronavirus Slayer" by the [Guardian](#)). Despite what seemed like a never-ending cycle of crises, the government pushed hard to strengthen public education and public health care, and to provide housing and food to the public.

No anti-incumbency was visible in the local body elections in 2020, when the young—largely female—[candidates](#) of the LDF triumphed. The LDF opened its 2021 campaign with a march to deepen development (Vikasana Munnetta Yatra) that began at the north and south ends of Kerala’s length. Development is the key theme—the promises that the LDF government has met include a major push to build basic infrastructure through the pro-people [budgets](#) of Finance Minister T.M. Thomas Isaac. The LDF record is strong, which is why it has entered the election campaign with the slogan “Urappaanu LDF” or “LDF for Sure.”

The return of the Left to government in Kerala would be significant, but it is not a bellwether of the Left’s overall strength in India. Nonetheless, the cycle of farmer agitations and the linkage with the main trade union federations suggests the [possibility](#) of the future growth of the progressive forces.

*This article was produced by [Globetrotter](#). Vijay Prashad is an Indian historian, editor and journalist. He is a writing fellow and chief correspondent at Globetrotter. He is the chief editor of [LeftWord Books](#) and the director of [Tricontinental: Institute for Social Research](#). He is a senior non-resident fellow at [Chongyang Institute for Financial Studies](#), Renmin University of China. He has written more than 20 books, including [The Darker Nations](#) and [The Poorer Nations](#). His latest book is [Washington Bullets](#), with an introduction by Evo Morales Ayma.*



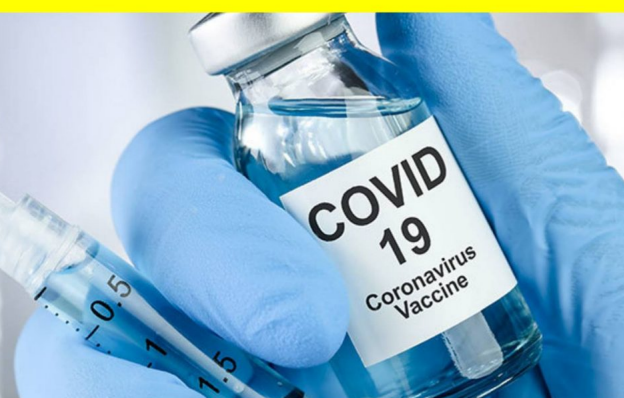
# End Vaccine Apartheid - Baltimore Saving Lives Campaign

written by Struggle - La Lucha  
March 6, 2021

## END VACCINE APARTHEID

**BALTIMORE  
SAVING  
LIVES CAMPAIGN**

[www.PeoplesPowerAssembly.org](http://www.PeoplesPowerAssembly.org)



Event by Peoples Power Assembly

247 N. Dallas Court, Baltimore, MD 21231 - Douglas Homes

Saturday at 2 PM EST - 3 PM EST

### PRESS CONFERENCE & RALLY

Join us this Saturday, Feb. 6, 2 pm @ 247 N. Dallas Ct., Baltimore, MD 21231 at Douglas Homes for a Press Conference & Speak Out.

Join community leaders:

- Rev. Annie Chambers, PPA;
- Leon Purnell, Director, Mens & Family Center, East Baltimore;
- Dr. 'Doc' Marvin Cheatham, President, Matthew A. Henson Neighborhood Association, West Baltimore

and many others as we bring attention to the racism and disparity in the vaccine roll out. This includes discussing the recent revelation of the detention of coronavirus in the Latrobe Homes sewage system. We will offer both solutions as we aim to bring attention to the problem. Social distancing and masks mandatory. (We will have PPE on hand).



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# Another side of Black History

written by Struggle - La Lucha  
March 6, 2021



*Prepared talk by Gloria Verdieu, Socialist Unity Party member and longtime organizer in the struggle to free Mumia Abu-Jamal, for “Another Side of Black History: a Black Socialist Perspective,” presented by the Black Caucus of the*



*Socialist Unity Party on Feb. 28. Watch in full on* YouTube

Historian Carter G. Woodson and the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History announced the second week of February 1926 to be “Negro History Week,” 95 years ago.

Negro History Week led to Black History Month or African-American history Month.

Certainly, Woodson did not expect us to take only a week out of the year to study Black History nor should we expect to take only a month to focus on African History.

Political Prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal explains in one of his many commentaries on history titled “How Black is our Black History Month?”

“Black History Month is a time to remember that which the corporate culture wishes is forgotten. A time to remember rebellion, resistance, and what it means to be Black in a white nation — today.”

This year — 2021 — our focus in the Socialist Unity Party Black Caucus will be to intensify the movement to release Mumia Abu-Jamal, Leonard Peltier, Russell Maroon Shoats, Mutulu Shakur, Sundiata Acoli, Imam Jamil, Ruchell Magee, all political prisoners. Immediately.

We join the National Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression and others calling to take immediate steps to depopulate jails, prisons, immigrant detention centers and juvenile facilities that are genocidal hotbeds for COVID-19 infections and death camps for millions.

## **Free Mumia**

Mumia Abu-Jamal has written many commentaries on Black History Month.

I've been involved in the movement to Free Mumia and all Political Prisoners for many years.

I went to a meeting in San Diego where Pam Africa of the International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal was the keynote speaker along with members of the Move organization, I brought Mumia's book, "Live From Death Row," and after reading it, I was sure that we would succeed in stopping his execution.

I also knew we would free him because it was clear to me that he was innocent. That was over 25 years ago.

I joined the San Diego Coalition to Stop the Execution of Mumia. a group that met weekly at San Diego City College. We would begin each meeting by reading an essay by Mumia.

My education about the prison-industrial complex, the disparities of mass incarceration, state sanctioned death sentences, and the U.S. criminal justice system deepened.

Mumia's essays are filled with Black people and Black people's movements that are left out of the Black History Month news stories, and sensational events covered in mainstream media outlets.



In 2003 Mumia wrote “Why kids flunk history.” Some 89% of U.S. students at junior and high school ages could not meet the requirements of U.S. history at their grade level!

Mumia writes from his own experience.

At an early age he witnessed and participated in student protests demanding Black Studies in school. These protests were somewhat effective because Black Studies made it into Ben Franklin, the high school Mumia attended.

One of his African culture teachers taught the students some Swahili and assigned them Swahili names. Wesley Cook took the name Mumia (Prince) and at 14, began using this name. He later changed his last name to Abu-Jamal (“father of Jamal”) when his son was born in 1971.

His Black Studies teachers hung pictures of Malcolm X, and W.E.B. Dubois so Black students would know what their leaders looked like. He learned about Africa and that Africans had a cultural heritage that predated slavery. Africa was not only the cradle of humanity but the cradle of civilization.

Knowing this opened the doors for him to want to know more, to read more. Mumia read “The Autobiography of Malcolm X,” “The Souls of Black Folks” and he took books home to read.

## **Born in the South**

In my own education, born in the South in the Florida panhandle, history was not one of my best subjects in high school.

I favored math because I like solving equations and English literature because we got to choose what we wanted to read and write about.

I didn't have an appreciation for history until I took U.S. history from an African perspective at San Diego City College.

The Black Studies department at SDCC was created in 1971 through Black student activism demanding that the administration create a Black Studies department.

Professor Nathan Katungi was my first introduction to African history. The required reading in the first course was "Before the Mayflower" by Lerone Bennett. At that time, I was thinking that this class was an easy 'A' until I realized the history of Africa is huge. The contributions of African people worldwide is vast.

I continue to learn and read about my African history in the Americas and around the world.

So back to Why kids flunk history — Mumia writes:

'History' must be more than the numbing line-up of 'great men,' and reciting of dates from antiquity. They must tell the stories of real people, who fought, and still fight, for freedom against great odds, for social justice, for the rights of women, for a broader view of a life which they can recognize and become a part of.

Huey P. Newton's name, and more importantly, his history of resistance and struggle, is little more than a mystery for many younger people in their 20s.

The name and works of a third rate rapper is more familiar to the average Black youth, and that's hardly surprising given the failure of the public school system.

For the public school system is invested in ignorance, and Huey P. Newton was a rebel — and more, a Black Revolutionary.

— from "Huey a Memory"

As Black History month is celebrated Who will remember Huey-no postage stamps will be printed to remember him- too few school kids will learn his name, but outside of schools in the streets, in barber shops in bars on playgrounds his name will be remembered. A Black revolutionary, Dr. Huey P. Newton.

— from “For the Love of Huey”

Black History Month, the shortest month of the year, cannot hold the wealth of information guarded over the last 5 centuries of Black life in this New World — a “World” that is certainly not new to the Native people who dwelled here an estimated 50 thousand years before European invasion.

African History should be a part of every discipline in all educational curricula from kindergarten to high school, college and on.

Today we continue to fight for Black Studies, more broadly ethnic studies in all schools especially public schools where most of our children attend.

Black History Month should be a time to celebrate what we have learned and accomplished throughout years of reading, our experiences, current events that we must study, analyze, and reflect on to determine how we are to move forward.

I will read an edited version of “Another Side of Black History Month” by Mumia Abu-Jamal written in February 2003.

The idea of Black History Month has always filled me with ambivalence.

On the one hand, there is understandable pride in the accomplishments of one’s ancestors; people who fought long and hard for their place in the sun, against monstrous odds, and indeed, against American white supremacist terrorism. They used every means imaginable to sustain themselves against a system that

was predicated and dedicated to their spiritual, psychological, and material destruction. When one studies the life of Harriet Tubman, or other freedom fighters like her, it is almost impossible not to be moved.

On the other hand, the institutionalization of Black History Month, by corporate, and political America, has resulted in a kind of 'dead history,' by which the uses of advertising and even stamps, to promote historical figures, many from the distant past, who portray a 'safe' side to a history that was, and is, anything but safe.

There is also a deep, troubling bourgeois factor in popular Black History that seems to remember the well-to-do yet ignores those who struggle among the ranks of the poor, who did not wear clean suits every day.

I speak of the forgotten ones; those people who fought for freedom and Black Liberation, not at news conferences, or in editorial board meetings but in the fields, in the shops, in the streets, among the people.

In this new kind of bourgeois, safe, corporate Black History, people such as these make no real appearances. It is almost as if these agencies strive to create a kind of 'Black History lite', that will not disturb the sleep or the stomachs of white Americans.

This is a shame, and a disservice to both white, and Black Americans, and all who really want to know about the history of this country.

It is therefore fitting to recall those names of people who lived in the hearts and minds of their people, and who, in their own way, fought for freedom, but are rarely mentioned in most history books.

Here are a few:

**Ola Mae Quarterman**, a bright, sensitive 18-year-old girl boarded a bus in Albany, Georgia, and refused to move when the white driver ordered her to.

She responded, “I paid my damn ten cents, and I’ll sit where I please.” When the segregationist-trained driver began to wag his finger in her face, she quite rationally responded, “Get your damn finger out of my face.” What happened next was in some ways like what happened in Montgomery, and in other ways different. Ms. Quarterman was convicted of violating the segregationist laws and sentenced to 30 days in jail.

The president of the local college where Ms. Quarterman was enrolled expelled her, and the local support was so splintered that Ms. Quarterman, alone and without support, drifted into despair and depression.

Her life teaches us, not the hopelessness of resistance, but the necessity of united action in resistance to social wrongs. She was right; those who failed to support her, for any reason, were wrong.

There is **Margaret Morgan**, a fugitive captive who fled to Pennsylvania in the 1840s, and was seized by a slavecatcher, Edward Prigg, under the draconian Fugitive Slave Act of 1793.

She was at the center of the case, for her freedom hinged on the decision of the U.S. Supreme Court. ‘Justice’ Joseph Story (of Massachusetts) who was on the side of the slavecatchers and gave judicial blessing to the return of Margaret Morgan to a bitter bondage in the South — with her children, the youngest born into a ‘free’ state.

The lesson? Freedom proceeds from the struggle for freedom, not from the courts of the rich and influential.

Will there be any postage stamps to honor the historical contributions of **Dr.**

**Huey P. Newton**, founder of the Black Panther Party? or **Fred Hampton**?

To **Ramona Africa**, the courageous fighter and resister who survived an urban holocaust on May 13th, 1985? Or **Assata Shakur**, revolutionary and survivor of the Black Power Movement in exile for over 40 years.

To **George (or Jonathan?) Jackson**?

To **Ruchell Magee** — a brilliant jailhouse lawyer whose work has led to the freedom of over 40 young men, **but** who is perhaps the longest-held Black political prisoner in the Americas?

To the great Seminole warriors, **Coacoochee** (Co-ah-coo chee) (also called “Wild Cat”) and **John Horse** who fought for Red and Black freedom from the American slavers.

We think not.

Black History isn’t ‘safe,’ it’s challenging, and troubling, and speaks to the lives we live now, under the illusion of ‘freedom.’ It ain’t Martin Luther King alone, but the many who followed, and the many who did not.

Why not a Black Liberation Month? That would concentrate our minds, not only on history, but on the sometimes-painful lessons of history; but more importantly, it would point us to the undiscovered land that beckons us all — the future.

Imprisoned radio Journalist Mumia Abu-Jamal’s death warrant was signed twice by the state. He came dangerously close to execution on August 17, 1995, and December 2, 1999 (death of John Brown). It was the mobilization of a mass international movement that saved his life-

Today, Mumia is in poor health, suffering from cirrhosis of the liver, the result of a recent near-fatal bout with Hepatitis C.

On Friday, Feb 26, Pam Africa got a call from Mumia telling her he is suffering from Covid-19 symptoms, difficulty breathing and chest pain.

Mumia is 67 years old with preexisting conditions — a high risk for getting COVID-19 and he thinks he has COVID. This is an urgent moment because Mumia rarely talks about his own condition.

The International Concerned Family and Friends are demanding the immediate release, treatment, and hospitalization, not solitary confinement.

At a Saturday rally, organizers called for the release of Mumia and all inmates older than 50 and any who are medically vulnerable.

For an update and a clear picture of the case of Mumia and what you can do to gain his release, visit the Mobilization4Mumia Facebook page and Jamal Journal created by the International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal — [jamaljournal.blogspot.com](http://jamaljournal.blogspot.com).

Also Saturday, March 6, the Mobilization4Mumia, Campaign to Bring Mumia Home and International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal are having a Global Street Meeting — with a special appearance from Fred Hampton Jr.

“Freedom has never been so close.”

*Watch in full on [YouTube](#)*



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# **From Alabama to Harlem — Union rights are human rights!**

written by Struggle - La Lucha  
March 6, 2021





Winter rain didn't stop people from coming out on Feb. 28 in Harlem to show their support for the Amazon workers in Bessemer, Ala. More than a hundred people demonstrated in front of the Amazon-owned Whole Foods store at 125th Street and Malcolm X Blvd.

The demonstrators also marched around the busy intersection in the middle of Harlem, blocking traffic. Drivers honked their horns in support of the Amazon workers. Nobody likes Amazon owner Jeff Bezos, who has a \$190 billion fortune while his workers are timed during trips to the bathroom.

The action was called by the New York Coalition of Black Trade Unionists, the December 12th Movement and the Workers Assembly Against Racism. People came

to “end Black history month making Black history,” as the call for the action stated.

Charles Jenkins, president of the New York CBTU, pointed out that 6,000 workers at the Amazon warehouse in Bessemer are already voting by mail in order to get union rights, wages and benefits.

Jenkins, who’s an officer of Transport Workers Union Local 100 which represents New York City transit workers, said a victory in Bessemer will inspire hundreds of thousands of other Amazon workers to fight for a union, too.

Chris Silvera, Secretary-Treasurer of Teamsters Local 808, spoke of the millions of workers in stores and other workplaces who need union dignity and protection.

Roger Wareham of the December 12th Movement welcomed members of a caravan calling for an end to the U.S. blockade of Cuba. The members of the New York-New Jersey Cuba Sí Coalition had stopped to show their support for the Amazon workers.

*SLL photos: Stephen Millies*



# Puerto Rico es un estado fallido

written by Struggle - La Lucha

March 6, 2021



PR es un estado fallido donde los gobernantes ni siquiera intentan ejecutar políticas que beneficien al pueblo.

Un ejemplo es el sistema de educación.

Se han venido cerrando cientos de escuelas de manera atropellada con la excusa de que por la migración, quedan menos estudiantes.

El gobierno nombra oficiales de Educación incompetentes cuya misión es atrasar al estudiantado y perturbar el trabajo del magisterio, abonando al proceso de colonización que intenta erradicar los valores, historia, y cultura puertorriqueña

para hacer de la población una masa sumisa y sirviente de los extranjeros ricos que se van apoderando del archipiélago.

Luego de los terremotos que comenzaron en enero del 2020 en el sur de la isla, muchas escuelas fueron cerradas y hasta el día de hoy, no se han rehabilitado. Esto, junto a la pandemia que llegó al mes siguiente, forzaron al estudiantado a quedarse en sus casas y participar remotamente de sus clases dejando a miles de estudiantes fuera por la falta de acceso al internet.

Ahora, quieren abrir las escuelas el 1 de marzo sin que se haya dado un proceso ordenado de reparación de los edificios ni se pongan en práctica las medidas salubristas necesarias por la pandemia.

Esta es una de las muchas luchas que se están ahora dando en este país.

Desde Puerto Rico para [RADIO CLARIN de Colombia](http://radioclarin.com), les habló Berta Joubert-Ceci





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# **Youth Against War & Racism condemns Biden-ordered airstrike on Syria**

written by Struggle - La Lucha  
March 6, 2021

# YOUTH AGAINST WAR & RACISM

## ***condemns Biden's attack on Syria***

Youth Against War & Racism condemns without qualification the Biden-ordered airstrike that murdered 22 people in Syria. While millions of people in the United States are unemployed, sick, dying, short on food, and awaiting relief payments and vaccines, the Biden Administration, in the first month of its reign, decided it was more important to establish military dominance.

The Biden Administration claims the bombing was in self-defense, or a response to attacks on the US Embassy in Iraq which killed American mercenaries. Of course, US military forces remain in Iraq despite the Iraqi parliament voting to expel them in January 2020.

One of Biden's campaign promises was to make America the greatest country in the world again. He means to re-establish American military dominance by death and destruction, and he is starting here.

Youth Against War & Racism demands:

U.S. hands off Syria, Iran, and Iraq!

Shut down the US military bases!

Defund the Pentagon!

On [Facebook](#)

