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Pam Africa: As Mumia awaits heart surgery, I am issuing a challenge to CNN's Michael Smerconish and DA Larry Krasner

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Pam Africa presents the first issue of The Jamal Journal outside of Philadelphia District Attorney Larry Krasner's office on March 12, 2021. Pam has repeatedly attempted to meet with DA Krasner but he has always refused to meet with her. Photo by Jamal Journal staff photographer Joe Piette

Ona Move!

On Saturday April 17, Mumia called his wife Wadiya and told her that he is scheduled to have heart surgery on Monday April 19. Your support with [calling and emailing prison authorities today and in the coming weeks](#) is absolutely critical to ensure that Mumia gets the best possible medical care before, during, and after the surgery on Monday. Please go to www.jamaljournal.com to get the latest updates, which we will be posting as soon as we get new information.

Mumia and I are both deeply grateful for all the support during this week's health emergency, and also in the weeks since he called me on February 27 [to say that he had COVID](#). There was the flood of phone calls and emails to prison authorities, as well as the folks who took to the streets, including our many demonstrations outside of DA Krasner's office. Labor unions from around the world, including [the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa \(NUMSA\)](#), released powerful statements and sent urgent letters to PA Governor Tom Wolf and DA Larry Krasner.

People power forced the prison to provide hospitalization for Mumia last month when he was diagnosed with both COVID and congestive heart failure. Our forcing the prison authorities to provide Mumia with the emergency hospitalization that he needed was a powerful victory for the movement!

Today we are demanding that Mumia be able to speak with his chosen physician Dr. Ricardo Alvarez., who has written [a powerful new article](#) and co-written [a new petition by Medical Professionals for Mumia](#), that I urge everyone to read.

We are also demanding that Mumia not be painfully shackled at the hospital. Before his hospitalization last month, Mumia was already suffering from a horrible skin condition that causes extreme itching and burning. When shackled for four straight days at the hospital, the shackles created open wounds, as shown in the photo we displayed outside DA Krasner's office in March.

The barbaric act of shackling prisoners onto the hospital bed must stop immediately!

Mumia's 67th Birthday Celebration

Before this week's medical emergency, we were already organizing an April 24 weekend event in Philadelphia to celebrate Mumia's 67th birthday. As Mumia recovers from Monday's heart surgery, we need to increase our organizing efforts for Mumia's release from prison. We need your help to bring him home to his family, where he can receive medical treatments that are not available in prison.

I have always worked with anyone supporting a new trial and I will continue to do that. But now with all of Mumia's serious health problems, it is evident that Mumia could die in prison before actually having a new trial. That is why [our Color of Change petition to DA Krasner](#) is demanding Mumia's outright release.

Even if the Court makes future rulings in favor of Mumia's appeals, it will likely take several years or more before Mumia actually has the opportunity to prove his innocence at a new trial. The Fraternal Order of Police (FOP) and Maureen Faulkner are doing everything they can to delay the process even further. This is what happened with [last year's King's Bench Appeal](#) and then [last month's new legal motion](#)  from Faulkner and the FOP to have DA Krasner removed from the case.

Faulkner and the FOP are purposefully making frivolous legal motions meant to delay the inevitable overturning of Mumia's conviction. Even though the Court

rejected the King's Bench Appeal, Faulkner and the FOP's strategy was very successful because they put Mumia's case on hold for almost one year.

Maureen Faulkner and the FOP want Mumia to die in prison. We will not let this happen. We will not allow Mumia to die in prison!

Our Challenge to Michael Smerconish and DA Larry Krasner

The long history of corporate media bias against Mumia has been very well-documented by the group [Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting \(FAIR\)](#). With Mumia's life now on the line we must directly confront this bias.

On behalf of the uncompromising International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal, I am now issuing a formal challenge to both Philadelphia District Attorney Larry Krasner and CNN's Michael Smerconish.

As the two most prominent and passionate advocates for the legitimacy of Mumia's 1982 conviction, I challenge them to make a public response to [the 2010 ballistics test conducted by investigative journalists Linn Washington Jr. and Dave Lindorff](#), who concluded from their results that "the whole prosecution story of an execution-style slaying of the officer by Abu-Jamal would appear to be a prosecution fabrication, complete with coached, perjured witnesses, undermining the integrity and fairness of the entire trial."

Lindorff and Washington's 2010 ballistics test is a centerpiece of [our Color of Change petition demanding that DA Larry Krasner stop defending Mumia's unjust conviction](#). In our petition, we cite the 2010 test as evidence of misconduct committed by police investigators and the DA's office. This is the same type of misconduct that led DA Krasner to exonerate the victims of over 18 wrongful convictions.

There is other evidence of police, prosecutorial, and judicial misconduct presented in our petition. However, for the sake of this specific challenge, we want Krasner and Smerconish to look solely at the 2010 test because I am confident that it physically disproves the trial testimony of the prosecution's two most important eyewitnesses. With the 2010 test, there is no longer be any doubt that Robert Chobert and Cynthia White both lied at the 1982 trial when they testified about seeing Mumia shoot Police Officer Daniel Faulkner.

I challenge both DA Krasner and CNN's Smerconish to personally watch the high-quality online video of the 2010 ballistics test, and to read Lindorff and Washington's written article. In 2010, before the release of their ballistics test article, Lindorff and Washington shared their findings with the Philadelphia District Attorney's Office and asked several specific questions. They wanted to get a formal response from the DA, to present them with an opportunity to tell their side of the story so that it could be included in their article.

The DA's office outright refused to answer Lindorff and Washington's questions. DA Krasner needs to respond to the 2010 ballistics test and explain exactly why he is defending Mumia's conviction. What better place to do that than on Michael Smerconish's CNN television show?

Confronting Krasner and Smerconish

In the Jamal Journal issue #1, I already confronted DA Krasner's Feb. 3 brief, specifically where he made a joke out of the attempted police lynching of Mumia by writing that Mumia "refused to walk" into the hospital after being savagely beaten by a mob of police officers. I directly asked Krasner: Do you oppose lynchings?

Krasner has still not responded to this question. In fact, since he took office, DA Krasner has consistently refused to meet with myself and other Mumia supporters,

even once when we brought a delegation that had traveled all the way from France to meet with him. DA Krasner must be accountable to the people, so we are presenting both DA Krasner and Smerconish with an opportunity to disprove Lindorff and Washington's findings.

I am challenging CNN's Michael Smerconish because [he recently criticized blacklisted football player Colin Kaepernick](#) for Kaepernick's November 16, 2020 [statement in support of Mumia](#). Smerconish boasted that he was an authority, an expert on Mumia's case because he is the author of the 2007 book "Murdered By Mumia." Smerconish issued a challenge to Kaepernick, inviting him onto his show to discuss Mumia's case.

Conclusion

The uncompromising International Concerned Family and Friends is not afraid of the truth. If Michael Smerconish and Larry Krasner are so confident about the integrity of Mumia's conviction, they should welcome the opportunity to publicly disprove evidence that we cite in our Color of Change petition.

I want both Michael Smerconish and Larry Krasner to carefully read through our petition to DA Krasner. I am presenting them with an opportunity to publicly challenge the arguments we make, and the evidence that we presented in the first issue of our newspaper in support of the petition. Along with the 2010 ballistics test, we present the Batson issue, Robert Chobert's credibility as a witness, Judge Albert Sabo's extreme bias, and the Pedro Polakoff crime scene photos that were concealed by the DA's office. The petition also cites J. Patrick O'Connor, author of "The Framing of Mumia Abu-Jamal" and Michael Schiffmann, author of the German book "Race Against Death."

It is fine for Smerconish to have future shows focusing on these other topics and

authors, but Smerconish and Krasner first need to deal with Dave Lindorff and Linn Washington's 2010 ballistics test. This test proves by the absence of any bullet impact marks in the concrete around the spot where Faulkner lay on the sidewalk, that the testimony of the two key eyewitnesses to the alleged murder — both of whom claimed to have seen Mumia firing down "execution style" at the prone Faulkner multiple time — couldn't have happened. These were prosecution manufactured lies.

I challenge Smerconish to present the 2010 ballistics video on his show to CNN's global audience, and to then invite DA Krasner to give his opinion about the legitimacy of Lindorff and Washington's conclusion. That is our challenge.

Pam Africa is coordinator of the uncompromising International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal

Source: [The Jamal Journal](https://www.struggle-la-lucha.org/2021/04/19/pam-africa-as-mumia-awaits-heart-surgery-i-am-issuing-a-challenge-to-cnns-michael-smerconish-and-da-larry-krasner/)

