

Free Mumia Abu-Jamal! Free Leornard Peltier! Free Them ALL!

written by Struggle - La Lucha
May 3, 2023



May Day in San Diego. SLL photo

Talk given by Gloria Verdieu of the Socialist Unity Party at the May Day rally in San Diego.

Freeing Political Prisoners is a Working-Class Struggle. Why? It is our class, our families. Our youth, brothers, sisters, aunts, and uncles, are being locked up.

Employed and Unemployed; Organized and Unorganized; Unionized or not! We are the Working Class! It is up to us to Free All Political Prisoners! Our Elders are facing death by incarceration, and our brothers, sisters, and youth are spending decades in prison.

The Power is in the hands of the Working Class.

Freeing All Political Prisoners is our Struggle.

Let me give you an example; in 1999, when Mumia's death sentence was signed for the second time, the International Longshore Workers Union Local 10 in San Francisco, the most radical union in the United States, shut down all 29 ports on the West Coast to stop the execution of Mumia Abu-Jamal and just recently on Feb. 16 Local 10 shut down 16 bay area ports demanding Judge Clemons to grant Mumia a new trail to prove his innocence. Imagine if all the unions across the nation had taken the same action.

We need a movement of millions of the poor, of workers, women, youth, students, prisoners, and all people dedicated to change, to build independent organizations that can't be bought or sold and will do the work necessary to be free.

We need a movement of millions that is anti-imperialist, anti-racist, and that unites us, not divides us.

We need a movement of millions in the United States, and we must begin right here.'

Bring Mumia Abu-Jamal and Leonard Peltier home!

Free all Political Prisoners! End Mass Incarceration!

Shut down the Prison Industrial Complex!

What's the Call? Free Them All!



San Diego mobilizes to bring Mumia Abu-Jamal home

written by Struggle - La Lucha
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On the weekend of his 69th birthday celebration, the San Diego Coalition to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal and All Political Prisoners held a meeting to honor the world-famous political prisoner, revolutionary journalist, and author. The San Diego Black Panther Party co-hosted the gathering of community organizations at the Malcolm X Library on April 22.

We joined in solidarity with activists in many cities nationally and internationally under the theme of “Mobilizing to Bring Mumia Home.” We demand that the United States government free Abu-Jamal and all political prisoners, prisoners of conscience and prisoners of war. We acknowledge that all prisoners are political prisoners of the corrupt, racist, for-profit prison-industrial complex.

The meeting began with a slide presentation of a partial list of current incarcerated political prisoners, released and exonerated prisoners, and prisoners who have joined the ancestors. Most on the list were compiled by the Jericho Movement.

We encouraged everyone to do some research and learn the names of political prisoners who were organizers in the Black Panther Party, other Black Liberation organizations, the American Indian Movement, and other movements for freedom and justice.

Learn the names of those elders who have spent decades in prison, like Mumia Abu-Jamal, Jamil al-Amin (formerly H. Rap Brown), Ed Poindexter, Kenny “Zulu” Whitmore, Veronza Bowers Jr., Leonard Peltier, Alvaro Luna Hernandez, Byron Chubbuck (Oso Blanco), Kamau Sadiki, Rev. Joy Powell, longest-held U.S. political prisoner Ruchell Magee, and exiled liberation fighter Assata Shakur.

Justice in the hands of the people

Wolf, organizer with the San Diego BPP and chair of this gathering, welcomed everyone and spoke of the importance of supporting all political prisoners with emphasis today on Mumia Abu-Jamal. “They sacrificed their lives for us – now is the time for us to stand up and fight for their lives. We must not let our freedom fighters die in prison.”

Judge Lucretia Clemons’ recent denial of a new trial for Abu-Jamal to prove his innocence left organizers angry and full of all kinds of emotions aimed at the entire U.S. criminal judicial system.

Some of us were confident that after 41 years, Mumia would finally get his day in court. But over and over we are reminded that justice has to be in the hands of the people. It is up to us to free Mumia. We need to go to the streets in the hundreds of thousands, in the millions.

Millions are needed in the U.S. to stand with Mumia and demand that he be released NOW!

Community solidarity

For now, we honor Mumia for his journalism, his commentaries, his support for humanity, his voice. We listened to a recorded update on his case from Johanna Fernandez and heard solidarity statements from representatives from local community organizations.

Sylvia Telefaró of African American Writers & Artists shared some inspiring words and a poem by Alice Walker. Curtis Howard, community organizer and author, spoke of his lived experience in the California prison system.

Roberto Papeda of the Chicano Prison Project read a letter he sent to Judge Clemons encouraging her to do the right thing. He also commented on how important it is to recognize and honor Mumia on his birthday by sending revolutionary love and birthday wishes.

Matsemela Odom, organizer with the African People's Socialist Party, spoke on how important it is to support Mumia and all political prisoners. Odom alerted everyone to the attack on the Uhuru Movement. Following FBI raids last year, three members of the APSP, including Chair Omali Yeshitela, [have been indicted](#). The attacks on the movement to liberate African people continue to this day.

We ended our celebration with everyone picking up one of Mumia's books for a group photo in front of the beautiful banner designed by local artist/activist Mario Torero. Participants signed a birthday card to be sent to Abu-Jamal on his birthday, April 24. The card and photo will add to the many birthday greetings Mumia will receive from his supporters nationally and internationally.

[Roberto Papeda's comment about recognizing and honoring prisoners on their

birthdays reminded me of a commentary by Mumia that I heard long ago. I



downloaded it and

shared the message on Youtube.]

Happy birthday Mumia! We love you!



How to free Mumia? Shut it down!

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On April 23, a day before Mumia Abu-Jamal's 69th birthday, protesters marched down 52nd Street in West Philadelphia to a rally at the OneArt Community Center. A glorious mural demanding Mumia's freedom marks the entrance.

Speakers at the rally, representing a coalition of different organizations, spoke with outrage and untiring optimism about the struggle to free Abu-Jamal. He has now been imprisoned for 41 years. Speaking in Mumia's name, they called for the freedom of all political prisoners and an end to mass incarceration.

The movement to "Bring Mumia Home" was dealt a grim setback on March 31 by the corrupt Pennsylvania judicial system. In 2019, boxes of evidence were found to have been hidden in the Philadelphia District Attorney's office. These boxes contained proof of Mumia's frame-up that had been withheld from him and his attorneys since the dirty trial in 1982 when he was initially given a death sentence.

The new evidence, finally released after 37 years, should have provided the basis for a new trial. It included documentation that the police bribed key witnesses and that there was deliberate racist manipulation of the jury selection.

After months of hearings and delays, Philadelphia Court of Common Pleas Judge Lucretia Clemons ruled that she would not allow this evidence to be heard, thus depriving Mumia of his right to a fair trial.

The power of organized labor

At the rally, Clarence Thomas — a retired leader of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union from Oakland, California, and co-founder of the Million Worker March Movement — told those gathered at the rally: "We need the working class, organized and unorganized, to shut it down. We will be heard. Such an action at the point of production will free Mumia, and it won't stop there."

Omali Yeshitela, chair of the Uhuru Movement and African People's Socialist Party, was one of those [indicted on April 18 by the U.S. Justice Department](#) for opposing the U.S./NATO proxy war in Ukraine. He received a universal response of support when he condemned the entire U.S. system of injustice.

Rasakhan Wali from Nation Time talked about the infamous racist atrocities carried out by the Philadelphia administration at the time when Mumia became a brilliant young journalist, reporting for the Black Panther newspaper and other media. He was just 16 when Mayor Frank Rizzo ordered the brutal strip searches of Black Panther leaders on the eve of their massive Plenary Convention in 1970.

Fearlessly reported attacks on MOVE

In 1978, a police siege of the MOVE headquarters led to the imprisonment of nine African American men and women. Some were held behind bars for 40 years, while two died in prison.

Then, in May 1985, the city of Philadelphia bombed the MOVE house, wiping out 61 neighboring homes in the conflagration. Janine Africa and Janet Africa only learned that their children had been killed in the fire bomb through prison yard conversations overheard from their solitary confinement cells.

Another outrage occurred the following year when a Philadelphia grand jury cleared all city officials of criminal liability for the MOVE bombing that killed 11 people, including five children.

At Mumia's birthday rally, Michael Africa Jr. spoke as people wrote messages to Mumia. He was born in Debbie Africa's prison cell a month after her incarceration. In his presentation at the rally, Mike Africa evoked the name of a child killed in the MOVE bombing, Tree Africa.

He was talking about a grotesque crime revealed in a 2021 video for a Princeton University course, "REAL BONES: Adventures in Forensic Anthropology." The video was a case study of the remains of MOVE victims.

The children had not been buried, as reported in 1986. The bones of Tree Africa and Delisha Africa had been secretly held at Penn Museum and later Princeton

University without the knowledge of their families.

Mumia will be freed

Much of the discussion at Mumia's birthday rally centered on the drive to win his freedom.

ILWU's Thomas drew rapt attention when he talked about the potential of the labor movement. He reported on the 1999 West Coast shutdown by dock workers demanding Abu-Jamal's freedom when he was threatened with execution. In 2001, under the pressure of a growing International movement, a judge re-sentenced Mumia, a labor union journalist, to life in prison.

On Feb. 16, ILWU locals in San Francisco and Oakland shut down their ports to demand that Judge Clemons allow a retrial. Their action resonated in support for Mumia internationally. South Africa's National Union of Metalworkers, the Japanese Doro-Chiba railroad workers' labor union, the German IG Metal Workers, and various English unions applied to the Pennsylvania court to grant a new trial.

Other speakers at the rally included Theresa Shoatz, daughter of political prisoner Russell Maroon Shoatz; Candace McKinley with the Philadelphia Community Bail Fund; and Keyssh from Decolonize Philly. Performers included Cleo, Antonella, New World Warrior, and hip-hop artists Spiritchild.



Court denies a fair trial: The fight for Mumia's freedom continues

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On March 31, news of Judge Lucretia Clemons' decision to deny Mumia Abu-Jamal his right to a fair trial spread instantly around the world, even though in the U.S., the major media remained silent. Those who were expecting this outcome and those who had remained hopeful — all suffered grim disappointment.

The media headlines focused solely on the indictment of Donald Trump. Does the media coverage and headlines mean that democracy prevails because of the indictment of an actual criminal whose major crime, they say, is the loathsomeness in which the former president likes to wallow?

In real-time, did the Pennsylvania judge, with corrupt brutality underscoring her decision, say it was too late for justice and democracy to prevail in Mumia's case? Did the court decision from the USA, a country with a history of racist bondage,

resonate worldwide? Yes!

Despite the timing of the court decision in Mumia's case, this was suspiciously released when the media was flooded with news of Trump's indictment, interviews with his supporters, and many florid photos. Moreover, it was released on a Friday, just before the court closed for the weekend.

Did those who petitioned the judge, including major international unions and civil rights organizations, call for anything more than a new trial? Their letters were based on newly disclosed evidence that clearly delineated the machinations behind the police frameup and his racist mistrial. Wasn't it within the most conservative bounds of democracy to allow the court to hear the long-buried evidence of Mumia's innocence for the first time?

Prisoner Mumia, with unyielding integrity and courage, never ceases to demand the freedom of all political prisoners. His writings and books analyzing racist conditions of mass incarceration present undeniable truth. He speaks for a myriad of political prisoners like Leonard Peltier and Jamil Abdullah Al-Amin.

If Mumia Abu-Jamal was not innocent — if he had not been wrongfully imprisoned for 41 years, spending the first 28.5 years on Pennsylvania's death row until his death sentence was confirmed unconstitutional by the U.S. Supreme Court in 2011 — if this innocent man was not now serving a sentence of life in prison without parole would there be any reason for Judge Clemons to attempt to crush his chance for a new trial?

Help build and plan protests for Mumia's freedom on Sunday, April 23. Monday, April 24, is his birthday. The struggle continues. We will fight to free Mumia.

Write to Mumia Abu-Jamal at:

Smart Communications/PADOC

Mumia Abu-Jamal, AM 8335
SCI Mahanoy
c/o PO Box 33028
St Petersburg, FL 33733



International Transport Workers Union calls for Mumia's release

written by Struggle - La Lucha
May 3, 2023

International Transport Workers Union General Secretary Stephen Cotton wrote a letter of support for “the release of Mumia Abu-Jamal” to Judge Lucretia Clemons of the Court of Common Pleas of Philadelphia County on March 27 in London.

Cotton's letter read: “I am writing in support of Mumia Abu-Jamal's petition for a new trial based on the discovery of previously undisclosed material relating to his trial in 1982. Alongside our affiliates National Mine Workers Union of South Africa (NUMSA) and the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU), the ITWU

wishes to add its voice to the call for Abu-Jamal's case to receive the fair hearing and true justice that has so far eluded him.

"The evidence found in 2018 indicates, at the very least, misconduct by the prosecution, and this discovery is on top of a damning assessment of the original trial by Amnesty International in 2000, whose report determined that "numerous aspects of this case clearly failed to meet minimum international standards safeguarding the fairness of legal proceedings. Amnesty International, therefore, believes that the interests of justice would best be served by the granting of a new trial to Mumia Abu-Jamal."

"It is our collective and strongly held belief that the 2018 discovery shows the prosecution withheld significant material evidence and suggests it allowed racial bias to influence the jury selection. It is, therefore, crucial for the integrity of the Philadelphia County Court System that Mumia Abu-Jamal be granted a new trial, and we trust in your Honour's own integrity and sense of justice that this historic wrong will be rectified."

Widespread vigilance on Mumia's case is being observed around the globe, while Judge Clemons's decision stalls in indecision. Mumia was on death row until international outrage brought about a change in the sentence.

U.S. political prisoner Abu-Jamal has suffered 42 years of racist imprisonment. In all that time, the courageous journalist known as "the voice of the voiceless" has never been silent. New letters of support from around the world flood the Philadelphia court - voices calling for Mumia's freedom.



Mobilizing to free Mumia Abu-Jamal - San Diego

written by Struggle - La Lucha
May 3, 2023

The San Diego Coalition to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal hosted a meeting on March 11 at the Malcolm X Library to follow up on the case of Mumia Abu-Jamal.

We are answering the call to show full support for Mumia Abu-Jamal, including educating people about Mumia. Many do not know what is happening with Mumia or practically any cases of political prisoners.

We understand that the United States continues to claim there are no Political Prisoners, and their job is to push this lie. However, the truth is U.S. jails and prisons are full of political prisoners because private prisons are money-making industries, and to make money, they must keep prisons full.

Look at the number of exonerations in the past 30 years and the overflow of people waiting to have their cases heard by the Innocence Project. The [National Registry of](#)

[Exonerations reported](#) 3,290 known exonerations since 1989, prisoners who spent collectively 29,100 years locked up for crimes they did not commit.

The U.S. government has paid over \$2.9 billion in compensation, but over half of those exonerated received nothing. Black people make up 50% of those exonerated and have the highest number of years lost per exoneration. Mumia will be one of those exonerated, and he deserves to be compensated for being unjustly imprisoned for over 40 years.

Mumia needs our help more than ever. We need to show the world that millions in the United States are fighting for justice for Mumia. We understand that the outcome of this campaign to free Mumia will reflect on what happens to many of our loved ones who find themselves detained or imprisoned in this corrupt criminal justice system. We must understand that an injustice to one of us is an injustice to all.

‘Bearing Witness in the Case of Mumia Abu-Jamal’

While watching the webinar “Bearing Witness in the Case of Mumia Abu-Jamal,” those in the room were shaken by the blatant miscarriage of the law that the speakers laid out in words we all understood. When Johanna Fernandez came to the mic with Mumia’s voice on her cell phone, everyone was in awe listening to Mumia’s voice, LIVE. Mumia thanked everyone who came, and he spoke with a voice vibrant and full of life.

The webinar ended with recently retired Arkansas state Judge Rev. Wendell Griffin’s answer to a simple question, “Can the judge just outright release Mumia?” His response was, “Yes! The judge has the power to declare that his conviction and sentence must be overturned.” View the full webinar on [YouTube](#).

After the video, San Diego Black Panther Party members joined us as we gathered to

take a picture in front of the beautiful FREE MUMIA portrait painted by local activist Mario Torero. Everyone was reminded that it was still time to write a letter to Judge Lucretia Clemons encouraging her to do the right thing – grant Mumia a new trial or release him NOW.

A student from San Diego State University, Roberto Zepeda, who had recently read Mumia's book "All Things Censored" said he was going to write a letter. We exchanged cell phone numbers, and later that evening, I received a text message with his letter. I emailed his letter to [Love Not Phear](#) and received an email response, "Roberto's letter will be in a package of letters going overnight to Judge Clemons on Monday March 13, 2023."

Roberto Zepeda's letter

3/11/23

Dear Judge Clemons,

I have followed the case of Mumia Abu-Jamal for some time now and it didn't take me long to understand his fight.

From a single book I have read of his and an experience of being on the other side. Mumia has been able to articulate a lived reality for many of those that have been impacted by the carceral system.

It took me a while to get acquainted with his case and I can see how he got railroaded. I have lost all faith in the criminal legal system as it exists in the United States, and it is no wonder that the entire world is keeping a close eye on the case because the country that champions itself as being democratic has truly lost its way.

I have been adamant to follow too many cases in which D.A.s all across the nation

disregard the law and violate the same laws they swore to uphold. It is not surprising then that this country incarcerates more people than any other place in the world. At best, justice in the U.S. is performative. It exists in name only.

But it is never too late to do what is right. Precisely because I still believe that Mumia Abu-Jamal can be released. I implore you by way of this letter to grant Mumia Abu-Jamal his release and take a bold stance on what is right.

Presently, I am a university student, advocate, activist, and organizer. I cannot remain silent in the face of injustice and because of so much injustice all around I do not think it's in me to remain silent any longer.

Stand on the right side of history, uphold the law, and do not waver. Because the law has completely been disregarded when it comes to Mumia Abu-Jamal's case, you can restore some semblance of respect to the Constitution.

The entire world is watching, and our voices will not be silenced. We support you, Judge Clemons, only because we have faith that you will do what is right.

Mumia Abu-Jamal is a human being that deserves to be treated fairly. Even though for four decades he has been denied justice, we know that it is never too late to do justice. You have the opportunity to do that. Seek Justice Judge Clemons, for humanity's sake.

Release Mumia Abu-Jamal!!!!!!

Sincerely,

Roberto Zepeda San Diego State University (SDSU) Student

Your voice could be the voice of many that makes a difference.

We are all waiting Judge Clemons's final decision.

We want Justice! Release Mumia, now! Bring him Home!



We firmly believe that the time has come. Mumia Abu-Jamal must be set free: Irvin Jim writes to U.S. judge

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(From February 16 to March 16, trade unions and people's movements across the world are organizing a campaign to demand the release of U.S. political prisoner, militant, and journalist Mumia Abu-Jamal, who has been in prison for over 41 years. The global action comes at a time when his defense is mounting a fresh attempt to ensure his release, as the evidence against him has been time and again exposed as flawed. As part of this action, Irvin Jim, General Secretary of the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa, has written a letter to Judge Lucretia Clemons of the Court of Common Pleas of Philadelphia County. NUMSA has been a key pillar of the international campaign to free Mumia for years.)

TO: Court of Common Pleas of Philadelphia County
1220 Criminal Justice Center
1301 Filbert Street
Philadelphia, PA 19107

Dear Honorable Judge Lucretia Clemons
RE: The Release of Mumia Abu-Jamal

The National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (NUMSA) has a history of struggle in our country, where we had to face and fight historical injustice, which was committed by the Apartheid regime for decades where Black people, Africans in particular, were discriminated against, and where the system of racism which we

regard as a crime against humanity, was put in the statute books in order to oppress and exploit on the basis of color. This oppression affected all aspects of life for Blacks and Africans. They were victims of the Colour Bar Act, and they were victims of inferior education (Bantu education). As Black people, we were condemned for the rest of our lives to super oppression and exploitation as a result of the Union of South Africa of 1910, between the English and Afrikaner capital, where black people were not allowed to be part of the ownership and control of the South African economy. It is this brutal oppression that kept Nelson Mandela in prison for 27 years, and it is this brutal oppression that killed Steve Biko for fighting for equality between Black and white people, for fighting for genuine democracy, and for the liberation of the Black child. It took decades to fight against this unjust, racist system, and many sung and unsung heroes, old and young, died in the trenches fighting for freedom. They were very resolute that freedom is love, freedom is peace, and they were committed that whilst many were to die, they were determined to fight for the freedom of future generations to come.

We are writing to you out of our honest and humble reflection and the firm belief we hold that without international solidarity, without the people of the world separated by rivers and forests standing in solidarity with the people of South Africa and our struggle for freedom, we would not have been liberated. Without the anti-Apartheid movement in the U.S., which was triggered by the racist laws of the Nationalist Party regime, which took power in 1948, our country and our people would not have been liberated. Without the solidarity, which we received from many formations and the solidarity we received across the world and within our own African continent in the frontline states, the South African people would not have realized democracy and freedom. Our activism in the labor movement, which is to advance the struggle for liberation, taught us revolutionary quality values, that we have a duty and responsibility to defend democracy and freedom in our land, and anywhere else above all for humanity and peace and freedom in the world. We must *“always be capable of feeling deeply any injustice committed against anyone, anywhere in the*

world. This is the most beautiful quality in a revolutionary.”

We want to sincerely be upfront that whilst we are believers of separation of powers in any democratic dispensation, the sustained injustice that has consistently visited Mumia Abu-Jamal who has been kept in jail in what we believe and regard as unjustifiable reasons, compelled us as the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa for years now, to be part of the international justice campaign in support of freedom of political prisoners in the world who have been victims of various political systems at whose center stands injustice. We firmly believe that the time has come that justice must prevail and Mumia Abu-Jamal must be set free. We humbly submit to you that you happen to be in a historical moment and our clarion call to the U.S. and its institution of justice, and the judiciary which must further the aims of justice and humanity, is that we are of the view that as an honorable judge, you must be on the right side of history, as this very history has afforded you the opportunity to correct this injustice [faced by] Mumia Abu-Jamal. We firmly believe it is about time to **set him free** and he has served his sentence and justice must prevail.

We are making this point out of our long-term belief that when it comes to any imprisonment of any human being, the following principles must apply, namely:

“No-one shall be imprisoned, deported or restricted without a fair trial; No-one shall be condemned by the order of any Government official; the courts shall be representative of all the people; Imprisonment shall be only for serious crimes against the people, and shall aim at re-education, not vengeance”.

We are making this solidarity appeal to you Honorable Judge because what sustains us and what sustains humanity in these painful historical moments is to have hope, faith and belief that another world is possible. And given the many years that Mumia has served, he has been punished and served his sentence, and we are of the view that you would be considering this case under conditions where today, things surrounding his case should have a less dramatic tone as time heals. Your role,

honorable Judge as a member of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia's Commission of Racial Healing has been widely reported on, and this is why we believe that your conscience can be swayed to respond with compassion.

It is against such a backdrop that we are of the view that continuing to keep Mumia Abu-Jamal imprisoned shall serve absolutely no purpose, except to advance inhuman retribution and on behalf of 350 000 Metalworkers who believe in freedom, democracy and justice, we join other people of the world who are making the clarion call in appealing and demanding justice for Mumia Abu-Jamal. We call on you as an honorable judge, to intervene by advancing humanity and justice and set Mumia Abu-Jamal free.

It is our take that Mumia Abu-Jamal is a political prisoner whose basic human right to justice has been violated by the American judicial system. Mumia is an African-American journalist and former member of the Black Panther Party. He has been languishing in prison for the last 42 years for the crime of allegedly killing a white police officer, Daniel Faulkner in 1981. He was initially sentenced to death, but that was later commuted to life. He has spent the bulk of his sentence in solitary confinement, locked in a cell for 23 hours a day.

His trial has been rife with police, prosecutorial and judicial misconduct. The worst example of this for us which constitutes an injustice in the hands of the judiciary, which, in our view should consistently further the aims of justice regardless of any person's color or creed, was when a former court stenographer, Terri-Maurer Carter said in a sworn affidavit that she witnessed Judge Albert Sabo, the Judge who was presiding over Mumia's case, say that he "would help them fry the nigger." At the same time, newly discovered evidence documented that key witnesses received promises of money for their testimony, and evidence emerged that these witnesses would receive favorable treatment in pending criminal cases. It is a disgrace that the U.S. judicial system has not corrected this appalling miscarriage of justice!

Mumia Abu-Jamal's situation has long struck a chord in light of the history of our own freedom struggles in South Africa. We have been defending him for many years and now the possibility of a way forward finally appears to be at hand. We understand the continued dehumanization of Mumia Abu-Jamal and other political prisoners within the context of the long struggle for Black liberation in America, a struggle that goes back to the days of slavery. It is a damning indictment of U.S. freedom and all people of the world who are fighting for justice that today members of the Black Panther Party are still in jail for life, for fighting for the rights of Black people. We must never forget that the U.S. became a global superpower through the genocide of Indigenous people and the labor of enslaved African people.

The struggle of the civil rights movement in the 1960s captured the imagination of the world. Figures like Nelson Mandela, Martin Luther King Jr and Malcolm X became global icons. They fought and died for human justice. One would have thought that today, the brutal system of oppression would have withered away, and that the struggle for justice and humanity would prevail and win the day.

To our disappointment as peace-loving people of the global South and the rest of the world, we continue to witness the fact that in the U.S., a Black man is always already guilty in the eyes of the police. So many innocent people have been murdered by the police - people like George Floyd and Breonna Taylor. And more recently, the murder of Tyre Nichols by Memphis police. Despite the huge mobilizations against racism and racist police violence, since 2014, these attacks have worsened and the killings continue, day after day.

In 2016, as part of this international solidarity campaign to free Mumia Abu-Jamal, I penned, on behalf of NUMSA, a letter of our sincere solidarity to him, and addressed it to the former Pennsylvania Governor, Tom Wolf, requesting that the state make the expensive life-saving medication Harvoni available to Mumia to treat his deadly hepatitis C disease. I explained that here in South Africa, during the apartheid years

when our freedom fighters became seriously ill, the government did not give them the necessary medical attention.

Britain, and Doro-Chiba, the Japanese Rail Union, also pleaded with the governor to provide that medication. Had the state of Pennsylvania continued to disregard his fatal disease, it surely would have been following the pattern of inhumane treatment by the racist Apartheid regime. Thank goodness Governor Wolf changed course and Mr. Abu-Jamal was given proper medical treatment. We believe that it was international solidarity, notably from the labor movement that saved his life.

Again, to go back further, to April 1999, when Mr. Abu-Jamal was still on death row, the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU), whose jurisdiction covers all U.S. West Coast ports, protested to demand his release. It shut down the ports and led a march of 20,000 protesters in San Francisco calling for his freedom, coordinating this with teachers in Brazil who went on strike for this same cause. While that massive protest didn't free him, we have no doubt that it played a role in the court's 2001 decision to overturn his death sentence.

In 1984, two years after Mr. Abu-Jamal's incarceration began, the ILWU organized a strike against a ship from Apartheid South Africa to protest against that racially repressive regime. Upon his release from Robben Island Prison, Nelson Mandela did a world tour to thank all those who actively opposed apartheid. At the Oakland Coliseum, he began his speech by acknowledging that it was the ILWU's action which spurred forward the anti-Apartheid movement in California.

On behalf of hundreds of thousands of Metalworkers in South Africa, who know both the bitter taste of injustice and the undying hope for freedom, we call on you Judge Lucretia Clemons to do the right thing and free comrade Mumia Abu-Jamal. The whole world is waiting with a mixture of joy and sorrow firmly believing for a just ruling that will do justice and free Mumia Abu-Jamal. Mumia's freedom has been defended and pursued by both Archbishop Tutu and President Nelson Mandela. It is

in your hands today to open the way for truth and freedom for America's most well-known political prisoner. We eagerly await your response in the hope that you will be persuaded and do what is just in the interest of humanity, and undo this grave injustice that has visited Abu-Jamal for more than four decades.

Our commitment to humanity and justice compels us to call on you to consider that in the recent past Abu-Jamal, whose prison conditions have taken a toll on his overall well-being, also taking consideration the fact that he has lost his life partner and wife Wadiya Jamal passed on in December of 2022 while furthering the aims of his release. In the course of history, our international solidarity campaign to release Abu-Jamal which makes a humble clarion call to you Honorable Judge to ensure that justice prevails, is that we have resolved to continue to be strengthened by our belief that it is humanity that believes in justice that has always changed the course of history. That humanity that advances the struggle for justice changes the world not in conditions of its own choosing. But it is the forces of justice and humanity that make the world a better place against the forces that are fueled by greed.

We hope our campaign and our genuine appeal to you Honorable Judge will not only stimulate debate and discussion in the halls of justice in order to ensure that justice is served in this case, we also think that it will position Abu-Jamal under these difficult conditions to continue to live in the purest of hope and to never lose faith in humanity. To continue to believe that victory is certain and that in life there is always tomorrow and that with every sunset there is certainty of a sunrise.

Yours faithfully,

Irvin Jim

NUMSA General Secretary



We have the best chance in a very long time to actually achieve Mumia's freedom: Angela Davis writes to Irvin Jim

written by Struggle - La Lucha
May 3, 2023



(From February 16 to March 16, trade unions and people's movements across the world are organizing a campaign to demand the release of US political prisoner, militant and journalist Mumia Abu-Jamal, who has been in prison for over 41 years. The global action comes at a time when his defense is mounting a fresh attempt to ensure his release as the evidence against him has been time and again exposed as flawed. Ahead of this action, noted political activist and academic Angela Davis, who was a political prisoner herself, wrote a letter to Irvin Jim, General Secretary of National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa, about the bonds of solidarity that hold together this global campaign. We bring you excerpts from the letter)

Dear Comrade Jim,

As I write you today on behalf of Mumia Abu-Jamal, I remember the powerful letter you wrote in 2016 to Governor Wolf of Pennsylvania, when you emphasized similarities between the South African apartheid government's treatment of its

political prisoners and the conditions of prisoners in Pennsylvania. You wrote, “The refusal of healthcare reminds us of the conditions we were put in under Apartheid prisons where sick detainees were allowed to die in very deplorable lonely conditions in solitary as part of the punishment for their role in the struggle.”

Your compelling statement was instrumental in the prison authority’s decision to finally give Mumia life-saving medication. This action quite literally saved his life. Today we need to take advantage of the fact that we have the best chance in a very long time to actually achieve his freedom. On December 16th of last year, a new judge ruled that the prosecution must turn over its entire file – up to 200 boxes of materials – to the defense. Previously, new exculpatory evidence was discovered among materials in six boxes of files, never seen by the defense and mysteriously “found” on premises occupied by the District Attorney. This discovery of exculpatory evidence decades after the initial arrest provides further confirmation of our contention that Mumia is innocent of the charges for which he is being held. One piece of evidence is a hand-written note by the star witness for the prosecution demanding money in exchange for his (obviously perjured) testimony.

As was the case under apartheid, there is no justice for those willing to call for an end to racism and capitalism-what we now refer to as racial capitalism. There is no justice for those who militantly defend the working class. The judge in Mumia’s case is expected to issue her ruling sometime between February 16 and March 16. That is why we are asking trade unions around the world to organize protests in front of U.S. Embassies demanding Mumia’s freedom. ILWU Local 10 will be shutting down the Ports of Oakland and San Francisco that day to demand Mumia’s immediate release. Teachers in the San Francisco Bay Area are organizing teaching days on his case during that time. This will occur half-way through our observation of Black History Month in the US,

As I write this letter, we are celebrating the life of Dr. Martin Luther King on the

national holiday marking his birthday and I am remembering that a few months before he was assassinated, Dr. King addressed the membership of ILWU Local 10 and was given an honorary membership in the union.

I am proud to say that over a half-century later, in the aftermath of the George Floyd police murder and the massive protest by longshore workers, I too, was made an honorary member by the union.

In accepting that great honor, I also thanked the ILWU Local 10 for organizing one of the first rallies in 1972, to “Free Angela Davis.” As a consequence of the many protests organized around the world we were able to prevail over the forces of racial capitalism. Huey Newton, the leader of the Black Panther Party was also eventually freed thanks to similar mobilizations.

Both the ILWU Local 10 and NUMSA have stood together many times in defense of justice—whether in South Africa, the US, or elsewhere in the world.

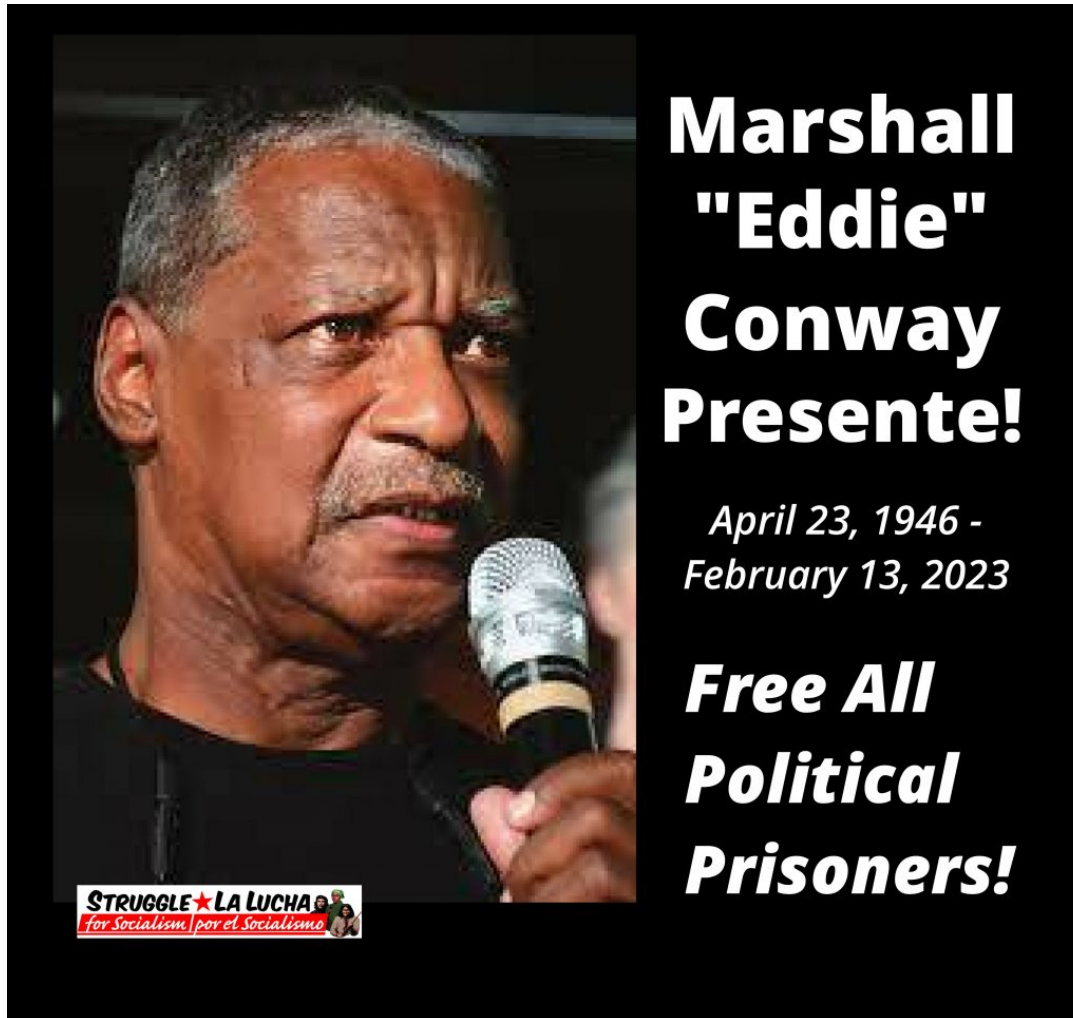
Yours in solidarity

Angela Davis



Marshall ‘Eddie’ Conway, ipresente!

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Former Black Panther Party leader and political prisoner Marshall “Eddie” Conway died Feb. 13 in Long Beach, California. He was a leading member of the Baltimore chapter of the Black Panther Party and was falsely convicted in 1971 of the killing of Baltimore police officer Donald Sager. He, along with community supporters, maintained his innocence and fought for his release. After serving 44 years, Eddie Conway was finally released in 2014, imprisoned for 43 years and 11 months.

Rev. Annie Chambers, who is a former member of the Black Panther Party and presently an organizer with the Peoples Power Assembly and Baltimore Socialist Unity Party, said, “We send our condolences to his family, loved ones, comrades and

to the people of Baltimore, who have lost a real fighter. Eddie continued the struggle while behind bars and after his release. His legacy will live on in our continuing fight against this rotten racist capitalist system. Marshall ‘Eddie’ Conway, ipresente! Free all political prisoners!”

Struggle-La Lucha shares the announcement released by Real News where Conway worked as an executive producer and host: <https://therealnews.com/eddie-conway-1946-2023>

“Do your little part. Do whatever you can to help change these conditions. Because we’re moving into a critical period of history, not just for poor and oppressed people, Black people, but for humanity itself. So you need to engage. Do whatever little bit you can, but you need to do something.”

—Eddie Conway in 2019, celebrating five years of freedom

It is with the heaviest of hearts that we announce the death of our friend, co-worker, and comrade Marshall “Eddie” Conway.

Eddie joined the ancestors on [February 13, 2023](#), surrounded by family and loved ones. [After falling ill nearly a year ago](#), while still dealing with the immeasurable toll nearly 44 years of incarceration as a political prisoner took on his body, Eddie had been hospitalized and fighting valiantly to recover. That is who he is, who he was, and who he always will be: a fighter. After a lifetime of fighting, though, the time has come at last for our dear Eddie to rest—and for all of us to carry on his fight.

Eddie was born on April 23, 1946, in a deeply segregated Baltimore—a city shaped by blockbusting, white flight, and the organized disinvestment from Black communities. At 18, he enlisted in the U.S. Army, an experience that would prove to be politically formative for Eddie, throwing into sharp relief the contradictions of a country founded on slavery, structural racism, and genocidal violence that

nevertheless professed to defend “democracy” with bombs, guns, and endless war.

Returning home to Baltimore, Eddie confronted the pervasive evils of racism head-on. He was working in the medical sector and at Bethlehem Steel when, in 1968, the city erupted like so many others following the murder of Martin Luther King, Jr. — an explosion of rage and pain and need for action that brought Eddie into the orbit of the nascent Black Panther Party, in which he became a core member of the newly-established Baltimore chapter.

The Baltimore BPP chapter, with Eddie’s support and leadership, built strong community ties through efforts like a free breakfast program, a system of robust internal political education, and an increasingly widespread local distribution network for the national BPP newspaper — despite near constant police harassment, and even high-level infiltration of the branch. This was the era of COINTELPRO, in which local police forces were enlisted by the national security state to crush the successful systemic challenge the Panthers and other associated revolutionary groups were posing to America’s racist, exploitative status quo. It was at the height of this era that Eddie was framed for the 1970 killing of a Baltimore police officer, convicted, and sentenced to life in prison in 1971, after a heavily politicized trial in which Eddie was denied proper legal representation.

Even in the darkest of times, in the most hopeless of places, Eddie’s commitment to organizing for liberation was unwavering. Within his first weeks inside the Maryland penitentiary, he had already emerged as a leader of the incarcerated chapter of the BPP. Despite constant, dehumanizing, and often violent pushback from prison authorities, he would go on to play a lead role in creating organizations like the United Prisoners Labor Union and the Maryland Penitentiary Intercommunal Survival Collective, organizing with fellow incarcerated people to build collective power for self-determination and self-defense. While incarcerated, Eddie worked relentlessly to protect and expand prisoners’ rights to communication and education;

for instance, he helped organize the [“To Say Their Own Word”](#) seminar program, developed as a way to cross-pollinate radical thought inside and outside the prison. He was also instrumental in the founding of Friend of a Friend, a mentorship program designed to help young incarcerated men prepare for reintegration into their communities upon release.

Year after year, decade after decade, Eddie carried on not only with the tremendous bravery needed to contest America’s brutal system of mass incarceration while he was himself confined within it, but also with an enduring and perhaps surprising commitment to modesty. As he wrote in his autobiography, published in 2011:

Organizing is my life’s work, and even though I initially balked at becoming a prison organizer, that is where most of my work has been done. Friends and family tell me that I have influenced hundreds of young people, but I don’t know. I simply see the error of this society’s ways up close and feel compelled to do something about it; I have tried my hardest to avoid getting caught up in the cult of the personality that often develops around political prisoners. I have walked the prison yard and seen admiration in the eyes of others, but had to remind myself, as I straightened my posture, that it is about something bigger than me. Prisons are the place where society dumps those who have become obsolete, and at present there are perhaps no other people who have become more dispensable in this country than African-descended people. The minute that we began to stand up and hold this country accountable for the many wrongs done to us, the prisons began to swell with black women and men. It is as if the entire justice system is a beast that consumes black bodies, and prisons are the belly.

Eddie’s loved ones and supporters never gave up on him, keeping a decades-long solidarity movement going and agitating persistently for his release, but it was only in 2014—after a 2012 decision by the Maryland Court of Appeals that invalidated many historical verdicts due to faulty jury instructions—that Eddie was finally able

to secure his freedom.

Despite the unimaginable toll that 44 years of incarceration had taken on him, Eddie's organizing did not stop when he walked out of prison. He became our beloved colleague at The Real News Network, where he continued his passion for education and media-making in the service of the fight against mass incarceration as Executive Producer and the host of [Rattling the Bars](#), his weekly video program. He also played a key role in the formation of Tubman House, which, in the wake of the Baltimore Uprising, seized vacant property and land for community needs in Sandtown-Winchester—the neighborhood where Baltimore police killed Freddie Gray.



Reflections on the passing of Wadiya Jamal

written by Struggle - La Lucha

May 3, 2023

When I read the email message from Black Alliance for Peace on Dec. 27 stating

Mumia Abu-Jamal's wife, Wadiya Jamal, had transitioned, I was deeply saddened.

I recovered from my state of shock, reading the many replies expressing love, light, and well-wishes to the family and friends of Wadiya and Mumia. I realized that I had to be strong, stay focused and continue the fight to bring Mumia home.

I grappled with how I was going to spread this news, and just talk to people about this tragedy without breaking the spirit of our fight to release Mumia and all political prisoners. It was a couple of days later when I checked Prison Radio, thinking that Mumia may have written something about Wadiya that I could share. I listened to the commentary below:

"Wadiya Jamal, my beloved.

"She was a spring baby, born in the first week of April 1953. A West Philly girl whose beauty made her shine in a crowd. She loved fiercely like a lion. This love blessed the lives of five beautiful children, and it blessed me.

"As mother and grandmother, she really shone like a sun over her planet, and when anyone was lost, her mighty love was cracked by such loss—her mother and father, her brother Jimmy, and perhaps deepest, the loss of the family's baby, Samiya, was the deepest crack, the deepest past.

"After that, every December was a trial through darkness. We were all waiting for the first light of spring, for this dark fog to break. But it was not to be. Just after the holidays, her heart, her mighty heart, gave up. She loved like no one else ever.

"I love you, I will always love you. All the children and grandchildren love you and will always love you. Your smile was the only sunshine we ever needed, and we need it now. We love you, Wa-Wa. We miss you.

"With love, not fear, this is Mumia Abu-Jamal."

How inspiring, how thoughtful. Hearing Mumia's words turned on a light inside of me. How fortunate it is for me to be a part of this fight to release Mumia. I truly believe this fight is for his release, because Mumia is free. He is the freest person I know, and I know him only through his writings.

I have learned so much from this brother and there is always more to learn. I remembered reading and listening to his commentaries in "Father Hunger" and "Mother Loss" from "All Things Censored." I recall the initial sadness, and as I continued reading, I felt some comfort when I thought of my own mother and father in a different way. His commentaries were filled with compassion and love.

Mumia's commentaries on his sister Lydia Barashango in 2011, and his daughter Samiya Abullah in 2015 ("Samiya makes her Transition" and "The Visit") had a similar effect on me. Now his wife of over 40 years has made her transition and Mumia is writing words of wisdom, teaching us in his words how we should live our lives and be remembered and loved.

We should live, love and be the best that we can be.

Mumia will be released. We the people will release him.

With love, not fear!

Send Mumia bereavement or condolence cards for the loss of his beloved wife, Wadiya Jamal, to:

Mumia Abu-Jamal
AM 8335
Smart Communications/PADOC
SCI Mahanoy
PO Box 33028
St Petersburg, FL 33733

