

Urgent call to action: Mumia Abu-Jamal to have heart surgery

written by Struggle - La Lucha
April 15, 2021



Rally for Mumia Abu-Jamal in New York, April 10. SLL photo: Stephen Millies

April 14, 2021, 6:01 p.m. — We have learned that Mumia Abu-Jamal, the world

renowned veteran Black Panther, political prisoner and radio journalist, had heart pain over the weekend. He was rushed to the hospital, and is expected to undergo heart surgery tomorrow, April 15, 2021.

We demand that:

1. Before surgery, Mumia be allowed to call his wife, Wadiya Jamal; his longtime supporter Pam Africa; his chosen doctor, Dr. Ricardo Alvarez; and his spiritual advisor, Mark Taylor;
2. Mumia not be shackled to his hospital bed, as is the rule in Pennsylvania and across the United States;
3. Immediate release of this innocent man from prison.

We need not look far to see the mortal danger that the shackling of a patient represents: our dear ancestor, political prisoner Romaine “Chip” Fitzgerald, was chained and shackled to his hospital bed in his last days —while he was hardly conscious— and before making his final transition, just over two weeks ago on March 28, after 52 years in prison.

According to Dr. Ricardo Alvarez, Mumia’s chosen doctor, “Any evidence of shackling will be seen as a deliberate harm to Mumia and a perpetuation of the court-documented trauma he has already suffered.” Loud and clear are the echoes of slavery, which —as Eric Williams shows in “Capitalism and Slavery” — for the first time in human history produced the global distribution and mass use of handcuffs, shackles and fetters to bring enslaved Africans to heel.

Dr. Alvarez continues: “There is significant evidence, both legal and medical, that Mumia has suffered severe harm because medical, legal, law enforcement and judicial professionals have not met proper standards. Mumia has been recently hospitalized for COVID and congestive heart failure and he already suffers from hypertension as well as liver cirrhosis and diabetes, both induced by court-

documented medical neglect. Freedom is the only treatment."

Please call the following offices to make these demands: that Mumia be immediately allowed to call his wife, Pam Africa, his doctor and spiritual advisor; that he not be shackled to his hospital bed; and that he be immediately released.

John Wetzel, head of Pennsylvania Department of Corrections
717-728-2573

Christopher Oppman, deputy secretary for administration who oversees healthcare for Pennsylvania DOC
717-728-4122 or 717-728-2573 ext. 5

SCI Mahanoy Superintendent
570-773-2058

Tom Wolf, governor of Pennsylvania
717-787-2500 ext. 3



In cities across the U.S.: All out April 24 for Mumia Abu-Jamal

written by Struggle - La Lucha

April 15, 2021

The Socialist Unity Party, Struggle-La Lucha newspaper and the San Diego Coalition to Free Mumia join in the “Bring Mumia Home” campaign initiated by International Concerned Family & Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal (ICFFMAJ).

Saturday, April 24, 2021, is political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal’s 67th birthday. He has spent 39 of those years unjustly behind bars and faces life-threatening health problems.

ICFFMAJ is calling on people in all cities and towns throughout the United States to gather in public spaces to demand that Mumia be released immediately! In the Northeast, people are encouraged to travel to Mumia’s hometown of Philadelphia to join protests, if they are able.

Gather at federal buildings, community centers, libraries, train and trolley stations, or anywhere to send the message to Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Wolf and Philadelphia District Attorney Larry Krasner that Mumia must be released NOW!

No gathering is too small. Hold up a poster, a handmade flyer or message, wear a T-shirt or a button expressing support for Mumia’s release and full, proper medical care. Post photos on social media.

There are many ways to show our love, support and solidarity with the movement to free Mumia and all political prisoners. Put up stickers or flyers in your neighborhood. Write a letter or email to local media. Share information with friends, family and co-workers. Join the social media blast leading up to April 24, Mumia’s

67th birthday; visit [Jamal Journal](#) for details.

You can also show support by sending revolutionary birthday greetings to Mumia. Write to Mumia individually or have everyone in your group sign a card collectively and mail it to:

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

(Mumia is imprisoned in Pennsylvania, but the prison's mail is processed in Florida.)

The overall goal of the movement is for the permanent release of Mumia Abu-Jamal and all prisoners, especially those over 50 years old, who have tested positive for COVID-19 or have been exposed to COVID-19, with pre-existing medical conditions that place them at high risk of dying if infected.

Free them all!



Urgent call to free Turkish political prisoner Ali Osman Köse

written by Struggle - La Lucha

April 15, 2021

Freedom for Ali Osman Köse, who resisted for 37 years against violence and torture of fascism in Turkey

Ali Osman Köse is a political prisoner who fights for the freedom of the people of Turkey and the land. He was imprisoned in the struggle for an independent, democratic and socialist country and has spent 37 years of his 65 years of life in captivity. His first period of imprisonment began on Sept. 12, 1980, during the junta backed by the USA.

He lived through many repressive operations in the Turkish prisons, the most significant one being the “Return to Life Operation” which took place on Dec. 19-22, 2000, conducted against the political prisoners and the great resistance isolation regime that resulted in the massacre of 28 political prisoners.

Ali Osman Köse has been in F-Type isolation cells since 2000. This imprisonment regime has ruined his health further and he got to the point where he could not be left alone. The independent medical opinion confirms that he cannot stand up without holding onto something or being helped by someone. He cannot even walk alone, nor can he wash his clothes, nor can he shower, nor can he eat.

Although his health has deteriorated under conditions of isolation and he was unable to walk, the Forensic Medicine Institute reported that he could remain in prison. Even though there is a 9-cm cancerous mass in his kidney and immediate treatment is being deliberately prevented.

In addition to all these very serious problems, he has problems with memory which results in not remembering when to take his medications. He has hearing, vision and blood pressure problems. That's why he needs constant help. The prison environment further aggravates his condition. That is why we demand his immediate release due to his deteriorated health conditions.

Freedom for Ali Osman Köse!

Ali Osman Köse must be released due to his health conditions!

International solidarity is the power of the people!

Protest and calls for his immediate release can be sent to the following:

Ministry of Justice

Fax +90 312 419 33 70

Tel +90 312 417 77 70

Email info@adalet.gov.tr

Tekirdag Prison

Tel +90 850 222 07 24

Email abbtekirdag.2fcik@adalet.gov.tr

Tekirdag Namik Kemal University Hospital
Tel +90 282 250 50 00

Forensic Medicine Institute
Tel +90 212 454 1500
Email atk@adalet.gov.tr



After 31 years, Gerald Reed is free!

written by Struggle - La Lucha
April 15, 2021



Statement from the Chicago Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression.

The Chicago Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression (CAARPR) greets the

commutation of Gerald Reed's life sentence today by Governor J. B. Pritzker as a courageous act to set right a terrible crime against a Black man committed 31 years ago. Now we need to finish the job of freeing all survivors of police torture who were convicted by confessions coerced by police and dismantling the prison industrial complex as a whole.

Reed was convicted of a double murder in 1990 after he was tortured by detectives working under the notorious Jon Burge and falsely confessed. He won a new trial after his case was referred to the court for review by the Torture Inquiry and Relief Commission (TIRC), only to have another judge in the same court resentence him to life in prison without a trial.

Led by Gerald's mother, Armanda Schackelford, the Alliance and many organizations have been campaigning for clemency for Reed for years. The campaign took off when Jennifer Soble of the Illinois Prison Project and Sheila Bedi of the Community Justice clinic at the Northwestern Pritzker School of Law filed an emergency petition last year in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic that is raging through Illinois prisons. Reed is confined to a wheelchair, has suffered a heart attack, and has other serious medical issues resulting from the torture he endured, which broke his thigh and a steel rod that had been put in his leg.

The Campaign to Free Incarcerated Survivors of Police Torture (CFIST), initiated by the Alliance, is urging Governor Pritzker to grant mass pardons to all those that have been found to have credible cases of police torture by the TIRC as the first step toward freeing all police torture survivors and wrongfully convicted. CFIST will continue fighting until we see all our loved ones home.

Finally, Gerald Reed's case and the terrible injustice he has had to endure at the hands of the Chicago Police Department show only too clearly why the Alliance has helped form the broadest and most representative coalition in the city pushing for a People's Ordinance - the Empowering Communities for Public Safety ordinance - to

give communities in Chicago the voice they deserve in police accountability and make sure cases like Gerald's never happen again.

Source: [FightBack! News](#)



We want justice: Free all political prisoners!

written by Struggle - La Lucha
April 15, 2021



Presentation by the Socialist Unity Party and the Prisoners Solidarity Committee to the Anti-Imperialist Symposium in Paris April 2-4, an annual event sponsored by the Anti-Imperialist Front. For a complete description of the

event go to Anti-ImperialistFront.org.



'We want justice'



Freeing all political prisoners, prisoners of conscience and prisoners of war is on the top of the list in the struggle for social justice, because the capitalist state continues to use the criminal justice system to lock up those who sacrifice their livelihood for freedom and justice for the masses.



We join the National Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression, the Campaign to Release Aging People in Prison, Mobilization 4 Mumia, International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal and many others calling for the U.S. government 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.



It is an honor to speak to you so close to the 67th birthday of Mumia Abu-Jamal on April 24, 2021.



Internationally-known U.S. political prisoner Abu-Jamal is an award-winning journalist and author of ten books and over 2,500 written essays and audio commentaries from prison. His writings are uncompromising, factual and searing indictments of racism and political bias in the U.S. judicial system. His call for justice and defiance has not dimmed, despite decades of being shackled and caged. He is one of our most courageous revolutionary intellectuals, who says what is on his mind without fear of consequences. His book "Live from Death Row" has been translated into seven languages.



It is clear to the movement that he remains in prison for telling the truth about capitalism, imperialism, the prison-industrial complex, and the entire U.S. criminal justice system.



Mumia Abu-Jamal was on Pennsylvania's death row for 30 years. His death warrant was signed twice by the state. He came dangerously close to execution on August 17, 1995, and again on December 2, 1999. It was the mobilization of a mass international movement that saved his life.



In 2011, his sentence was commuted to life imprisonment without the possibility of parole.



After Abu-Jamal was taken off death row, prison officials tried to kill him through medical neglect — by denying him treatment for hepatitis C. Eventually he received treatment, because of a lawsuit; but since treatment was delayed, he developed cirrhosis of the liver.



The U.S. government claims there are no political prisoners in the United States. When, in fact, political prisoners make up the majority of the over 2.3 million people locked up in prisons, jails and ICE detention centers throughout the United States, because prisons are concentration camps for the poor.



Abu-Jamal is over 50 years old, has recently tested positive for COVID-19, has congestive heart failure and other pre-existing medical conditions that place him at a high risk of dying from this deadly disease.



Over 20% of U.S. prison inmates are over 50 years old and a large percentage of those have pre-existing medical conditions. It was reported in December 2020 that one in five prisoners (20%) in the U.S. have had COVID-19, and 1,700 have died.



This is a vast undercount, because there are many prisons where, when people get sick, they do not get tested or receive the needed care, so they get much sicker than need be. Today, there is no sign that the spread of the virus is slowing.



This is a crisis for all prisoners, but especially for our elders who are behind bars because of their involvement in political activity. They are not going to be considered for prison releases recommended by public health experts to scale back prison populations.

Prisoners such as 66-year-old Mumia Abu-Jamal.

84-year-old Sundiata Acoli, 50 years incarcerated, has tested positive for COVID-19.

82-year-old Ruchell Magee, 57 years incarcerated.

77-year-old Native American Leonard Peltier, 43 years incarcerated.

77-year-old Russell Maroon Shoatz, 48 years incarcerated, has tested positive for COVID-19 and has pre-existing medical conditions.

77-year-old Ed Poindexter, 48 years incarcerated.

77-year-old Jamil Abdullah Al-Amin (H. Rap Brown), 19 years incarcerated.

71-year-old Mutulu Shakur, 33 years incarcerated.

These are just a few. There are hundreds more.



The collective call is to release all prisoners, especially those over 50 years old, who have tested positive for COVID-19 or have been exposed to COVID-19, and with pre-existing medical conditions that place them at high risk of dying if infected.



This message was echoed by Abu-Jamal's medical consultant, Dr. Ricardo Alvarez.



'The only treatment is freedom!'



Before preparing this talk, I read about the mother of political prisoner Helin Bölek in Turkey, who stood by her daughter, held her up and supported her in her fight for justice and freedom. Helin Bölek and three others (Ebru Timtik, Mustafa Koçak and Ibrahim Gökçek) sacrificed their lives in the worldwide struggle for justice, demanding a fair trial, to be judged justly, and to stop the state terror against the musical band Grup Yorum.



Bolek was on a hunger strike for 288 days under the care of her mother and supporters, who loved her, nurtured her and provided her the strength to sustain. She was kidnaped by the state and forced into a stressful situation where she did not have the care and nurturing that she needed.



It does not surprise any of us that our struggles are connected. We are fighting the same enemy.



Grup Yorum was targeted because they played revolutionary, uplifting music, provided free music lessons and free concerts, and were embraced by the community.



The Black Panther Party was targeted because they were revolutionary, provided free breakfast for children, free medical clinics, free schooling and many programs that the community embraced.



The families and friends of incarcerated freedom fighters do not want any of them to die locked down in prisons, jails and detention centers.



They want them to be home where they can be properly taken care of, loved, touched and nurtured with human kindness.



We want them to be energized and ready to continue the song, the dance, the struggle, the fight for justice and freedom. We want them out here fighting with us.



This is why the only treatment is freedom.



So, please, everyone who hears these words: do something, but quickly.



Release all prisoners now! Because it is the right thing to do.



In closing, we must acknowledge that prisons are concentration camps for the poor.



The only way we are going to end mass incarceration and abolish the prison-industrial complex is through revolution — a worldwide socialist revolution.



On YouTube:



<https://youtu.be/SRiZW8M2GwM>



Mumia update: The new Krasner brief

written by Struggle - La Lucha

April 15, 2021

As you can see from our [petition](#), we have been seeking to approach Larry Krasner diplomatically. In our effort to attract the widest possible range of supporters, we have written the petition with polite language. We are trying to give DA Krasner the benefit of the doubt by considering the possibility that he is sincere in his stated desire to confront Philadelphia's ugly history of racial injustice.

For Mumia's sake, we truly hope that DA Krasner's defense of Mumia's conviction is

because he has not actually researched the case himself, that his position on Mumia's case is simply a product of the Philadelphia corporate media's well-documented bias against Mumia. We are sincerely presenting him with an opportunity to rethink his position and to do the right thing. We hope that he listens.



This photo of Mumia's leg shows the sores and bloody wounds that now cover his entire body.

Unfortunately, on Feb. 3, Krasner filed a new brief in Mumia's case, where he continued to defend the legitimacy of Mumia's 1982 conviction. DA Krasner's several years of opposing Mumia's appeals has already been vile and disgusting.

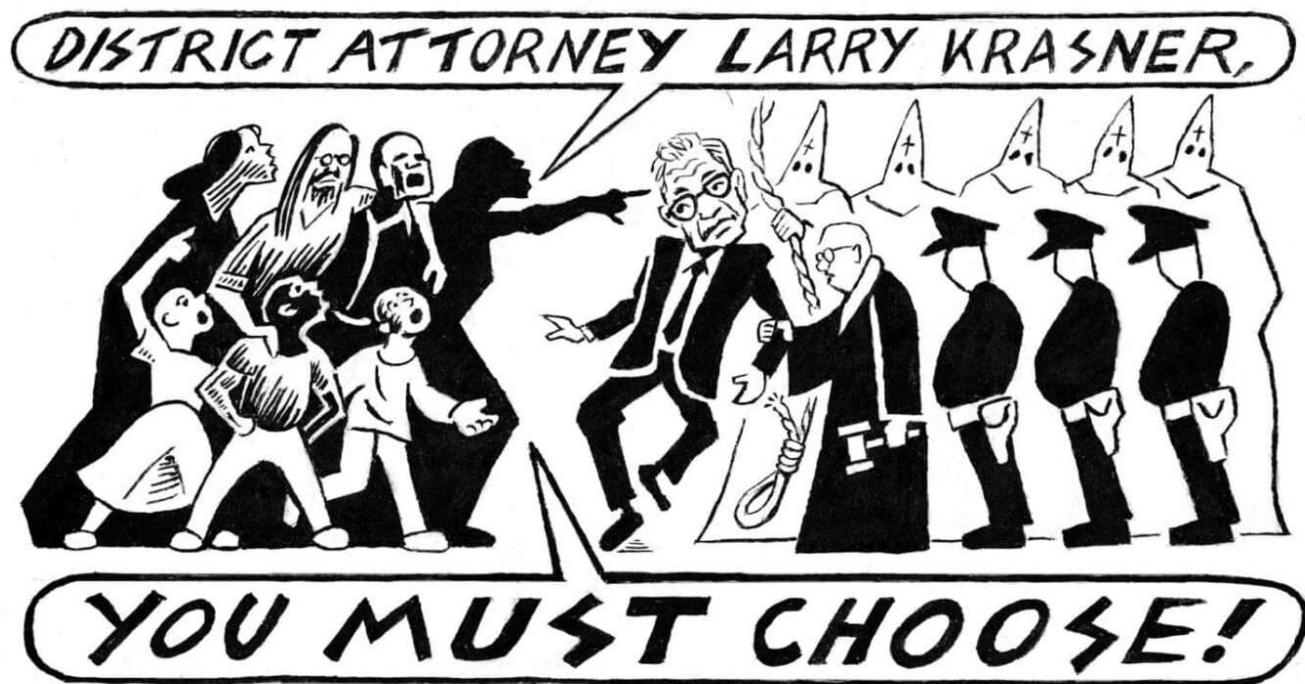
However, with this new brief, he somehow manages to stoop even lower.

There is much to criticize about DA Krasner's Feb. 3 brief, but one particular aspect really stood out for me. On Page 5, in the section titled "Statement of Facts," the brief states:

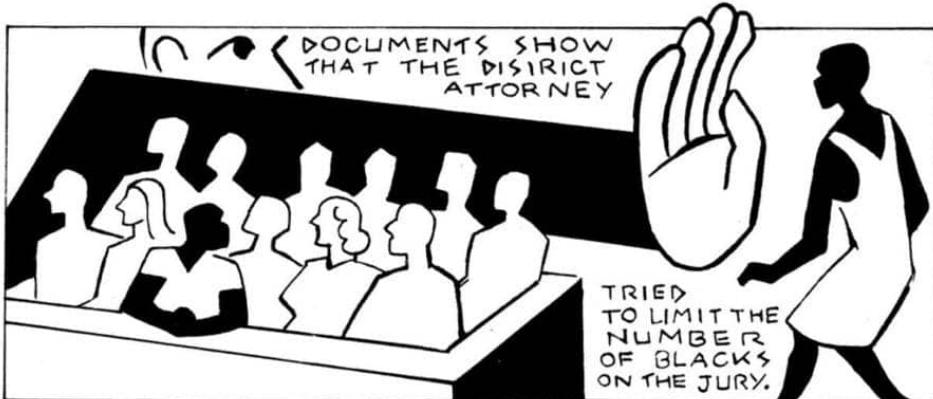
"Officer Faulkner was put in a police van and rushed to Jefferson University Hospital. When the police attempted to handcuff defendant and place him in a police wagon to transport him to the hospital, he violently resisted. He continued to struggle against the officers when they subsequently brought him inside the hospital, the same one in which doctors were attempting to save Officer Faulkner's life. The officers carrying defendant - he refused to walk - temporarily placed him on the floor of the lobby next to the entrance to the emergency room."

Does DA Krasner oppose lynchings?

Has DA Krasner actually read the trial transcripts? If so, does he realize the implications of him describing Mumia's arrest in such a despicable way? What actually happened that morning when police arrived on the scene was an attempted lynching of Mumia, with the police acting as the white supremacist lynch mob.







Story & Art by Seth Tobocman, Inking by Tamara Tornado

This anti-lynching cartoon by anti-racist activist Seth Tobocman depicts Philadelphia District Attorney Larry Krasner with a choice to make. The white supremacist FOP-led lynch mob wants DA Krasner to help them kill Mumia, while Mumia's family and friends call on DA Krasner to stand up to the FOP-led lynch mob.

Before even speaking with a single eyewitness, the mob of cops brutalized Mumia so viciously that when his sister Lydia arrived at the hospital she could not even recognize him. Make no mistake: The cops wanted him to die from the gunshot wound before receiving medical treatment, ultimately taking over 30 minutes to begin treatment at the hospital. This was an obvious attempt to execute him before even conducting an investigation, let alone a fair trial.

Has DA Krasner read the trial testimony of defense witness Dessie Hightower who reported seeing someone flee the crime scene immediately after the shooting? At trial, Hightower described Mumia's arrest as being "an attack" by the police. In his book "The Framing of Mumia Abu-Jamal," author J. Patrick O'Connor summarizes Hightower's trial testimony:

How could DA Krasner possibly write such an offensive description of Mumia's treatment by police, like claiming that Mumia "refused to walk" into the hospital after he had been shot in the chest and nearly beaten to death?

"He said that shortly after the first police officer showed up, about eight or nine other officers arrived. He then observed three or four of them striking Abu-Jamal with nightsticks while one or two others were kicking him and pulling him by his dreadlocks. He also saw the police, in carrying Abu-Jamal to the police van, ram his head into a no-parking pole and drop him to the ground."

Has DA Krasner read the trial testimony of Dr. Regina Cudemo, who was working at the hospital when Mumia arrived? If not, author J. Patrick O'Connor has also summarized her account:

"She testified that she saw Abu-Jamal at about 4:20 a.m. on the floor, 'on what I call the treadles of the emergency room' - the mats outside the emergency room doors. She said four to six police were around Abu-Jamal ... she saw one of the police officers around Abu-Jamal raise his leg and then heard Abu-Jamal 'moan.' After observing this incident, she said she was directed by another police officer to leave the area."

O'Connor also writes that after Mumia was dropped on the floor of the entryway to the emergency room, "instead of taking Abu-Jamal to an operating room, hospital security guard Priscilla Durham had the police drag him to the family room." Only after this, "Abu-Jamal was brought handcuffed to the emergency room for surgery."

Does DA Krasner think that an attempted police lynching of a prominent Black journalist, loving father and respected community activist is some kind of joke? If he has read the trial testimony of Dessie Hightower and Dr. Regina Cudemo, why is he not concerned about Mumia's treatment by police that morning?

Lastly, how could he possibly write such an offensive description of Mumia's treatment by police, like claiming that Mumia "refused to walk" into the hospital after he had been shot in the chest and nearly beaten to death? We need answers from DA Krasner.

Please sign our petition! <https://campaigns.organizefor.org/petitions/to-da-krasner-stop-defending-mumia-abu-jamal-s-conviction>.

Pam Africa is an activist deeply embedded in social justice work in Philadelphia and considered "one of the most significant rights leaders in the past 40 years." She is the coordinator of the uncompromising International Concerned Family & Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal (ICFFMAJ).

Source: [SF Bay View](#)



Mumia Abu-Jamal's health emergency: The only treatment is freedom

written by Struggle - La Lucha
April 15, 2021

An interview with physician consultant Dr. Ricardo Alvarez

March 18 Health Update from Noelle Hanrahan, Prison Radio:

Mumia Abu-Jamal's health still remains a deep concern. He was hospitalized with congestive heart failure and Covid 19 for four days recently. He was returned to the infirmary at SCI Mahanoy, and he has spoken to his family reaching them by phone,

for limited 15min calls. He noted yesterday, Wed, 3-17-21 that he was having additional tests done in the SCI Mahanoy Infirmary and expected to be sent to general population in the next few days.

He has not had access to consult directly with his personal physician Dr. Ricardo Alvarez or his medical legal team, Bret Grote (ALC) and Robert Boyle, or his criminal legal team (Sam Spital NAACP LDF, and Judith Ritter). A meeting is expected to occur soon, between Mumia and his legal team.

He has also while in the infirmary not had access to his email account. As limited as that was, it was a lifeline. The worldwide movement is embracing this struggle to secure adequate health care for Mumia Abu-Jamal, at the same time it demands that justice be done in his criminal case before the Philadelphia PA courts...

Mumia Abu-Jamal's Health Emergency: An interview with physician consultant Dr. Ricardo Alvarez

By The Jamal Journal

Mumia Abu-Jamal, the internationally renowned journalist, Pennsylvania inmate, and former Black Panther widely considered to be a political prisoner, is now experiencing a health emergency.

In this interview, Abu-Jamal's physician consultant, Dr. Ricardo Alvarez explains each of the four primary ailments that Abu-Jamal is currently suffering from: COVID-19, congestive heart failure, liver cirrhosis, and a worsening of the severe debilitating chronic skin condition.

On Feb. 27, Mumia Abu-Jamal telephoned Pam Africa (coordinator of the uncompromising International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal) to report his COVID symptoms, telling her that his breathing felt "like an elephant sitting on his lungs." Pam and supporters immediately began [an action campaign to](#)

telephone Pennsylvania Secretary of Corrections John Wetzl, Philadelphia District Attorney Larry Krasner, and Pennsylvania Governor Tom Wolf.

The phone calls succeeded by having Abu-Jamal taken to an outside hospital where he received four days of treatment, including the removal of fluid from his lungs. However, [a Mobilization4Mumia press release](#) explains that “during this treatment, his legs and arms were inhumanely shackled to the hospital bed, creating additional and unnecessary suffering—impacting open and bloody wounds from his unrelenting skin ailment.” The shackling was so unpleasant that Abu-Jamal is now afraid to go back to the hospital again.

On February 27, when Mumia’s current health crisis became known, [the first issue of the newly restarted Jamal Journal](#) had literally just finished printing. The newspaper was published mostly to present the evidence supporting our new [Color of Change petition to Philadelphia District Attorney Larry Krasner](#) calling for DA Krasner to stop defending Mumia Abu-Jamal’s unjust conviction and to secure his release as quickly as he possibly can.

To support our demand for Abu-Jamal’s release, the petition cites the overwhelming evidence of police, prosecutorial, and judicial misconduct that has forever destroyed the legitimacy of Abu-Jamal’s 1982 conviction. Our 40-page newspaper presents this overwhelming evidence for DA Krasner and the whole world to see.

We recently updated this petition to cite the current health emergency as now making Abu-Jamal’s release even more urgent. The updated petition begins by declaring:

“Mumia Abu-Jamal is currently suffering from COVID-19, congestive heart disease, liver damage, and a worsening of a severe and debilitating chronic skin condition. The cirrhosis of the liver and increased likelihood of liver cancer resulted from his untreated Hepatitis C in spring 2014. His Hep C went untreated for nearly two years

until attorneys secured a preliminary injunction that forced the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections to meet basic national treatment guidelines and give him the fast acting anti viral Hep C cure. In addition, Mumia was treated with topical steroids for his skin condition, which caused a diabetic reaction. Prison medical staff neglected to monitor and follow up on their own chart notations for three weeks! His unmonitored glucose levels resulted in a severely high glucose level resulting in ketoacidosis, requiring Mumia to be rushed to the ICU. Mumia Abu-Jamal now relies upon that very same prison healthcare system, the prison infirmary, for treatment during his current health crisis. Our collective call for Abu-Jamal's release could not be more urgent. As Abu-Jamal's physician Dr. Ricardo Alvarez says: The Only Treatment is Freedom."

Please [sign the Color of Change petition here](#), and visit www.JamalJournal.com for other ways to support Abu-Jamal, including the current campaign to directly contact Secretary Wetzl, Governor Wolf, and DA Krasner through telephone calls, email, and social media.

Jamal Journal: *Mumia Abu-Jamal is now suffering from COVID-19, congestive heart failure, liver cirrhosis, and a severe worsening of his chronic debilitating skin condition. As a consultant physician, please tell us about his current condition. What does Abu-Jamal need that he is not getting from the prison authorities?*

Dr. Ricardo Alvarez: The first thing I should note is that in discussing Mumia's health, it is important for his supporters to understand that he has sacrificed some measure of privacy. This sacrifice has been necessary at times so that supporters can be vigilant of his health and I believe Mumia seeks to help improve the conditions of ALL prisoners. We saw this with the example of the legal precedent set to access Hepatitis C medications. In this regard it is particularly important that Mumia supporters continue to link with and support all political prisoners and all prisoners.

Jamal Journal: *Can you please tell us about Mumia's COVID diagnosis?*

Ricardo Alvarez: Mumia needs freedom for his COVID. He can get that from Prison authorities. There is a compassionate release program, which cruelly is used to release prisoners on their deathbed and then only in limited cases. It doesn't have to be that way. Covid is an extraordinary circumstance and a compelling basis for decarceration of our elderly. It won't happen until we demand action.

In fact, Dr. Brie Williams, a Professor of Medicine at the University of California, San Francisco, and director of the [Amend: Changing Correctional Culture Program](#), and one of the nations experts on care of the elderly incarcerated, has written [an affidavit for release based on COVID](#) .

Dr. Williams writes: "I submit this affidavit in support of any defendant seeking release from custody during the COVID-19 pandemic, so long as such release does not jeopardize public safety and the inmate can be released to a residence in which the inmate can comply with CDC social distancing guidelines. The statements in this affidavit are based only on the current state of emergency..."

According to Dr. Williams, because of the COVID pandemic, the entire community is at risk if prison populations are not reduced. Prisons are ill equipped to humanely stop the spread of infection. Correctional Officers bring COVID into and out of prisons.

Furthermore, inmates have the highest risk of acute illness and poor health outcomes if infected with COVID. There are more than 2.3 million people incarcerated in the United States, approximately 16% of whom are age 50 or older. The risk of coronavirus to incarcerated seniors is high. Their advanced age, coupled with the challenges of practicing even the most basic disease prevention measures in prison, is a potentially lethal combination. To make matters worse, correctional facilities are often ill equipped to care for aging prisoners, who are more likely to

suffer from chronic health conditions than the general public. 70% of older people have at least one chronic disease.

So the most important point of advocacy is for the release of all our elders in COVID prisons. Prisons are becoming a death sentence. Some prisoners have feared to share their symptoms for fear of isolation in barbaric conditions.

There is good data to show that releasing our elders is not a significant public safety risk.

Jamal Journal: *Then there is the congestive heart failure.*

Dr. Ricardo Alvarez: Yes, Mumia needs freedom for his congestive heart failure. We don't fully know what he needs medically inside prison because we do not yet have all the records. From what we have it is clear he needs regular monitoring.

A diagnosis of Congestive Heart Failure is a serious disease with 50% mortality in 5 years in the best of circumstances. There is interesting data to show that the physiological age of prisoners averages 10 to 15 years older than their chronological age, which means that their physical bodies literally age faster. It makes sense when you consider the enormously stressful conditions of the constant threat of violence. But it also makes sense when you consider that prisoners are denied physical contact and loving connection.

Patients in the general population with congestive heart failure often have to check their weights daily and eat well with low salt diets. Mumia's diet will always be limited by the poor quality food that is contracted to major food service corporations.

Congestive heart failure may be prone to frequent hospitalizations due to the delicacy of the heart's inability to adequately pump blood. But just as prisoners may fear declaring their symptoms of COVID for fear of isolation, so too Mumia and other

prisoners may fear declaring symptoms that would lead to hospitalization because of fear of the barbaric four point restraints. Prisoners are going to think twice about what threshold they will use to seek medical care when they are denied compassionate conditions of hospitalization.

Jamal Journal: *The liver cirrhosis?*

Dr. Ricardo Alvarez: Mumia needs freedom for his liver cirrhosis. Again, we do not have the full records to determine if he is meeting the highest standard of care to monitor for cancer which would require ultrasounds every six months and checking for certain markers.

We do know that the cirrhosis was caused by the unnecessary delay in treatment that resulted from Hep C treatment protocols. That has been proven in the courts and Mumia's legal case to force the PA DOC to give him treatment consistent with current guidelines has paved the way for other inmates to get effective but expensive anti-viral medications.

Just as Mumia may fear hospitalization so too he may reasonably fear care in the prison infirmary where in 2015 he was repeatedly given courses of steroids for his skin condition even when there was clear documentation of a grossly elevated blood sugar level. Steroids are known to elevate blood glucose. He eventually needed to be admitted to the ICU in diabetic ketoacidosis as result of this negligence. And yet Mumia is dependent on these facilities for his care.

Jamal Journal: *What about the skin condition?*

Dr. Ricardo Alvarez: Mumia needs freedom for his severe debilitating skin condition. It makes sense that Mumia's skin condition is exacerbated in the stressful conditions of imprisonment.

Unfortunately, the number of medications and treatments are limited. We already

know the dangers of steroids. Mumia has a deep understanding of his own health and makes clear that he believes in natural remedies when possible.

The release from prison will not only help his skin condition because he can be in a loving and supportive community with human touch but also because he will have access to a variety of balms and other healing products that are denied in prison. Only FDA approved medications or simple emollients such as Eucerin or Vaseline will be administered in prison.

If the severity of his skin condition is exacerbated and hospitalization might be an option then he must suffer the concern of being chained during his entire hospital stay. What he needs now is assurance that he will not be in four point restraints when hospitalized and to have access to healing balms from traditional healers consistent with his medicinal beliefs.

-The Jamal Journal is published by the uncompromising International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal. Please visit our website www.JamalJournal.com to learn more.

Source: [Jamal Journal](http://www.JamalJournal.com)



To: Philadelphia District Attorney Larry Krasner: Stop defending Mumia Abu-Jamal's unjust conviction

written by Struggle - La Lucha

April 15, 2021

Please sign the Color of Change petition to Philadelphia District Attorney Larry Krasner: [Stop Defending Mumia Abu-Jamal's Unjust Conviction](#)

Dear Philadelphia District Attorney Larry Krasner,

We, the signers of this petition, declare:

Mumia Abu-Jamal is currently suffering from COVID-19, congestive heart disease, liver cirrhosis, and a worsening of the severe debilitating chronic skin condition. The cirrhosis of the liver and his skin condition resulted from a near-fatal bout with Hepatitis C in early 2015, which went unattended for nearly two years until

attorneys sued the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections for failure to meet basic treatment guidelines. At that same time Mumia was repeatedly treated with steroids courses for his skin condition while medical staff neglected to follow up and monitor a severely high glucose level. Because steroids cause an increase in sugar levels, they effectively induced a diabetic ketoacidosis, which required Mumia to be rushed to the ICU. Abu-Jamal now relies upon that very same prison healthcare system for treatment during his current health crisis, and while the higher level of vigilance that occurs with advocacy will surely prompt more responsible monitoring, the very conditions of prison medicine will never suffice for the care of our elders in prisons. Our collective call for Abu-Jamal's release could not be more urgent. As Abu-Jamal's physician consultant, Dr. Ricardo Alvarez says: The Only Treatment is Freedom.

Even without the current health emergency, Mumia Abu-Jamal's 1982 conviction was already a travesty of justice, obtained through a combination of police, prosecutorial, and judicial misconduct, as documented by Amnesty International. Abu-Jamal has suffered from extreme injustice at all levels of the criminal justice system. These numerous improprieties have tainted Abu-Jamal's conviction beyond repair.

Mumia Abu-Jamal is currently represented by the NAACP Legal Defense Fund. We the petitioners are not his lawyers and do not speak for them. Instead, we are the grassroots movement of people united by the fact that we care about the fate of Mumia Abu-Jamal.

We are outraged by the many different ways that racism and institutionalized white supremacy have irreparably harmed Mumia Abu-Jamal's civil and human rights, and his rights to the fair adjudication of his case. The District Attorney's continued defense of the 1982 conviction & subsequent appeals process only affirms the longstanding racial injustice that has marred this case.

DA Krasner, you have the authority to secure the release of Mumia Abu-Jamal. You

have secured release of over a dozen persons whose unjust convictions were based on evidence of innocence deliberately ignored through improprieties by police and prosecutors. Abu-Jamal deserves the same level of fairness. If law has plain letter meaning, then please adhere to the 1889 directive from the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania that the District Attorney's Office "...seeks justice only..." Also remember that same Court's 1959 reminder that regardless of a DA's belief in guilt, all defendants are "...entitled to all safeguards of a fair trial as announced in the Constitution..."

Therefore, we respectfully urge you, in the strongest possible terms, to stop defending Mumia Abu-Jamal's conviction. Please secure the release of Mumia Abu-Jamal as soon as you possibly can.

The Evidence of Police, Prosecutorial, and Judicial Misconduct:

The racism throughout Abu-Jamal's case is stark and unmistakable. Please remember that Albert Sabo, the 1982 trial judge, declared his intent to help prosecutors "fry the ni**er," according to an 2001 affidavit by a court stenographer that was rejected by the Court. This and other egregious examples of overt racism thus form a key reason why he has attracted such wide-ranging support. This support includes the most prominent Black intellectuals of our generation, including Nobel Prize winner Toni Morrison, Alice Walker, Angela Davis, Cornel West, Henry Louis Gates, Jr, Michael Eric Dyson, and Marc Lamont Hill. In November, the blacklisted football player and anti-racist activist Colin Kaepernick declared his support for Abu-Jamal. Outside the US, support for Abu-Jamal has come from such luminaries as Nelson Mandela and Bishop Desmond Tutu, as well as the European Parliament, Japanese Diet and the country of France. The widely-respected human rights organization Amnesty International determined in its 2000 investigation that "numerous aspects of this case clearly failed to meet minimum international standards safeguarding the fairness of legal proceedings."

One example of the injustice is the Batson issue regarding racial discrimination in the jury selection process. Even before your office's discovery of the six previously undisclosed file boxes, we already knew that the trial prosecutor, Assistant DA Joseph McGill used 10-11 of his 15 peremptory challenges to strike otherwise qualified black potential jurors. In his 2008 dissenting opinion, federal Third Circuit Judge Thomas Ambro argued that this one fact alone was sufficient evidence for granting Abu-Jamal a Batson hearing. Therefore, he argued that the Third Circuit Court's 2-1 ruling against Abu-Jamal's Batson claim was unfair, and he wrote that the ruling went "against the grain of our prior actions...I see no reason why we should not afford Abu-Jamal the courtesy of our precedents."

When, in 2009, the US Supreme Court then ruled against considering Abu-Jamal's appeal of the 2008 Third Circuit Court ruling, it effectively ended Abu-Jamal's Batson claim. However, upon inspecting the contents of the six file boxes that you thankfully handed over to the defense as the law required, Abu-Jamal's defense team found two major pieces of evidence. The first, a handwritten letter to assistant district attorney Joe McGill penned by Robert Chobert, a key prosecution's witness. In the letter, Mr. Chobert asks for his money—which suggests Mr. Chobert's testimony against Abu-Jamal may have been bribed. The boxes also reveal other handwritten notes on original files, closely tracking the race of jurors. These notes are new evidence of racial discrimination in Joseph McGill's selection of the 1982 trial jury. And, as a result, the Batson issue is now up for reassessment and review.

When the Third Circuit majority ruled against Abu-Jamal's Batson claim in 2008, it ignored irrefutable evidence that Abu-Jamal's defense had been blocked from introducing the very evidence that the Third Circuit majority faulted the defense for not introducing. During the 1995 PCRA proceedings, Judge Albert F. Sabo (the original 1982 trial judge) literally had Abu-Jamal's lawyer arrested for trying to subpoena clerks from the Pennsylvania and Philadelphia court systems as part of the defense's PCRA petition argument that jury pools were not drawn "from a fair cross

section of the community.” Outrageously, in 2008, when the Third Circuit Court ruled against Abu-Jamal’s Batson claim, the Court actually justified the denial by citing the absence of this very data that his lawyer had been arrested in court for trying to obtain.

Entire books have meticulously detailed the injustice throughout Abu-Jamal’s case, such as those by authors Dave Lindorff (*Killing Time*, 2003), Michael Schiffmann (*Race Against Death*, 2006), and J. Patrick O’Connor (*The Framing of Mumia Abu-Jamal*, 2008). Veteran journalist Linn Washington, Jr. has been writing newspaper columns and articles about the Abu-Jamal case since it began on December 9, 1981 with the shooting death of Philadelphia Police Officer Daniel Faulkner and the near-fatal shooting of Abu-Jamal. Hence, the evidence of Abu-Jamal’s unfair trial is abundant and quite accessible to anyone who reads the work by any of these four writers.

In 2010, investigative journalists Dave Lindorff and Linn Washington performed [a test to see whether bullets fired into the sidewalk at close range would leave visible markings](#). The test was designed to replicate the shooting scenario presented at Abu-Jamal’s 1982 trial by ADA Joseph McGill, alleging that Abu-Jamal stood directly over Officer Faulkner and fired downwards at him, execution style. According to McGill’s theory, Abu-Jamal missed several times because Faulkner actively dodged the shots by rolling side-to-side, until the final shot entered Faulkner’s forehead and killed him.

Lindorff and Washington sought to test a central argument of German author Michael Schiffmann’s 2006 book *Race Against Death*, written as his PhD dissertation at the University of Heidelberg. Dr. Schiffmann examined the crime scene photos, including those taken by freelance photographer Pedro Polakoff, and concluded that there were no visible divots or markings in the pavement, which Schiffmann asserted should have been visible if the testimonies of key prosecution eyewitnesses

Robert Chobert and Cynthia White had been accurate.

In 2010, Lindorff and Washington tested Schiffmann's assertion by firing a .38 caliber revolver several times into a concrete slab. They then closely analyzed the bullet marks left in the concrete slab. They concluded, without any ambiguity, that the bullets had indeed left visible markings. Therefore, if ADA McGill's theory (supported by Robert Chobert and Cynthia White's trial testimony) was truthful, there must have been similar bullet markings in the pavement next to where Officer Daniel Faulkner's body was found.

For their 2010 test, Lindorff and Washington also examined the 1981 Abu-Jamal / Faulkner crime scene photos taken by Pedro Polakoff, scrutinizing the exact area of the sidewalk pavement where Faulkner's body was found. Lindorff and Washington had one of Polakoff's 1981 photos and a 2010 gun test photo compared & analyzed by a NASA photo analyst named Robert Nelson. They concluded definitively that the 1981 photo did not show any markings similar to what was visible in the 2010 photo, meaning 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."

Before publishing their findings, Dave Lindorff and Linn Washington informed the Philadelphia DA's office about the results of their test, and specifically asked the DA for a quote to explain the lack of photographic evidence or testimony about bullet impact marks in the sidewalk around Faulkner's body. The DA's office responded to their questions with what Lindorff and Washington considered to be "a non-response." All the DA's office told them was: "The murderer has been represented over the past twenty plus years by a multitude of lawyers, many of whom have closely reviewed the evidence for the sole purpose of finding some basis to overturn the conviction. As you know, none has succeeded, and Mr. Abu-Jamal remains what the evidence proved - a murderer."

Unfortunately, there is even more in this story that reflects poorly upon the Philadelphia District Attorney's office. Freelance photographer Pedro Polakoff told Dr. Michael Schiffmann in *Race Against Death*, that he approached the DA's office with his photos in 1981, 1982 and 1995 but that the DA completely ignored him. Polakoff also told Schiffmann that because he had believed Abu-Jamal was guilty, he had no interest in approaching the defense, and never did. Furthermore, the DA never informed Abu-Jamal's defense team about the existence of Polakoff's photos, as they are required by law to do.

Consequently, neither the 1982 jury nor Abu-Jamal's defense ever saw Pedro Polakoff's photos. "The DA deliberately kept evidence out," declared Pam Africa, representing The International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal at a Dec. 6, 2008 protest outside the Philadelphia DA's office. "Someone should be arrested for withholding evidence in a murder trial," said Africa

Mr. Krasner, we have presented sufficient evidence to explain why we believe that police, prosecutorial, and judicial misconduct has forever destroyed the legitimacy of Mumia Abu-Jamal's 1982 conviction. We urge you in the strongest possible terms to stop defending Abu-Jamal's conviction. Please secure his release as soon as you possibly can.

Ending the persecution of Abu-Jamal upholds the sworn duty of the District Attorney to obey the Constitution, that document that is supposed to ensure justice for all.

Please sign the Color of Change petition to Philadelphia District Attorney Larry Krasner: [Stop Defending Mumia Abu-Jamal's Unjust Conviction](#)



Spain punishes anti-monarchy speech: Free Pablo Hasél

written by Struggle - La Lucha

April 15, 2021

Monarchies, monarchies ... what are they good for?

Let's talk about the kingdom of Spain, for example. The Spanish monarchy had been abolished by public demand almost a century ago. In 1936 there was a coup d'état by Spanish fascist Francisco Franco and consequently a dictatorship followed until he died of old age on Nov. 20, 1975.

Before his death, the fascist dictator appointed Juan Carlos I (Bourbon Dynasty) as the head of Spain and made him sign the principles of his dictatorship, which Juan Carlos I agreed to with pleasure.

Due to Juan Carlos I's misbehavior, and with the Spanish monarchy in dire straits (I have to be careful what I say here, because people who have called out his crimes have ended up in prison), it was decided that to preserve the monarchy, he would

abdicate in favor of his son Felipe VI, who became King of Spain on June 19, 2014.

In 2020, some members of the Spanish military exchanged tweets about wishing to kill 26 million Spaniards, because apparently that is the number that are not faithful to the principles of the dictatorship. Gen. Francisco Beca Casanova and Col. Andrés González Espinar openly discussed their wish to murder 26 million people by firing squad.

But that's okay. It's freedom of expression. Never mind that people with the same murderous wishes actually killed millions during and after the Spanish Civil War. Today many of their bodies have still not been recovered by their descendants, who have been searching for their loved ones for almost a century now.

Fascists protected, anti-monarchist jailed

And then we get to 2021. This year the Spanish High Court incarcerated a leftist Catalonian rapper for his songs against the Spanish monarchy and for tweeting his opinions about the monarchy and the Spanish elite. His name is Pablo Hasél.

He has been demonized by the Spanish media and was incarcerated on Feb. 16. In his case, freedom of expression was not allowed. And this is a singer, a poet and an activist. He is not a military guy.

Please write to him to shame the Spanish judiciary for having incarcerated a singer for his songs and his opinions on Twitter. Also, please, know that your letters will be read by this judiciary system that incarcerates people for their opinions.

My wish is that so many letters will arrive that the Spanish monarchy and judiciary feel such embarrassment that they think twice about incarcerating people for their opinions.

There is another rapper, Valtònyc, who is in exile as a political refugee because

Spain wants him incarcerated for the same reason. Another 15 singers are awaiting trial in Spain for their songs.

Then again, it's not all opinions that deserve incarceration. If you are a military fascist wishing to kill 26 million Spaniards, your freedom of expression will be respected.

You may write to Pablo at:

Pablo Rivadulla Duró
Modulo 9
Centro Penitenciario de Ponent
c/ Victoria Kent s/n
25071 Lleida
Spain



Philadelphia: Free Mumia! Free

them all!

written by Struggle - La Lucha

April 15, 2021

Righteously angry people protested outside the office of Philadelphia's "progressive" District Attorney Larry Krasner on March 12. They demanded the immediate release of world-famous political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal and all other incarcerated fighters for the people.

Abu-Jamal has been confirmed to have COVID-19 as well as congestive heart disease. The Pennsylvania deep state has been trying to kill him for almost 40 years.

The people stopped Mumia's execution twice after Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Ridge signed death warrants in the 1990s. After Abu-Jamal was taken off death row, prison officials tried to kill him by medical neglect, first by denying him treatment for hepatitis C and now for COVID and heart disease.

As a sign of how much the wealthy and powerful want Abu-Jamal dead, it's been revealed that National Public Radio asked Philadelphia radio station WHYY-FM for help in writing his obituary!

Over a hundred prisoners in Pennsylvania have died of the coronavirus. Gov. Tom Wolfe has refused to release prisoners over 50 years old who are most likely to die from it.

Pam Africa from the International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal demanded the release of Abu-Jamal and all political prisoners. She denounced the phoniness of DA Krassner, who claimed he was against mass incarceration yet keeps the prisons full.

Krassner has opposed Mumia Abu-Jamal's struggle to get a new trial.

After the speak-out outside Krassner's office, people marched to block traffic in front of City Hall and South Broad Street. The power of the people will free Mumia!

