

In one of the latest appeals on June 16th 2005, Judge Pamela Dembe of the Pennsylvania Court of Common Pleas ruled against considering testimony from Donald Pate, and Yvette Williams, supporting allegations of witnesses being coerced to testify against Mumia in his original trial. Despite this there have been some potentially positive developments on the legal front. In 2004 the US Supreme Court ruled in the case of Miller-El v. Dretke that racist techniques of jury selection precluded the possibility of a fair trial in that case, and required that either the defendant be freed or granted a new trial. There are strong parallels between this case and that of Mumia's where similar racist techniques of jury selection were used. In addition the confession by Arnold Beverly and the accounts of others who have come forward in the last roughly 10 years, help to undermine the case of those who seek to uphold Mumia's conviction.

The Movement

A broad international movement has formed in support of Mumia. Celebrities such as Danny Glover, Ossie Davis, and Susan Sarandon, world leaders like Nelson Mandela, Danielle Mitterand (former first Lady of France), and Fidel Castro, governing bodies such as the Japanese diet, 22 members of British Parliament, and the European parliament have all recognized the blatant injustice in this case and have called for a new trial at the very least. Millions of people throughout the world have taken to the streets to protest his unjust imprisonment.

Mumia's case has been a unifying point for many social struggles because it concentrates issues vitally important to our future, such as the rise in prison populations, police brutality, the death penalty, persecution of political dissent, and the continuation of white supremacy and racism in the U.S. from Death row Mumia has continued to speak out for all who are oppressed through his journalism. He has published four books, and his weekly columns are published throughout the world. His case is one of the most important social justice fights of our time.

Local Contact Info:

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Abolish The Death Penalty!

Blacks make up 40% of those on death row from Philadelphia, and Black men from that city are almost 4 times more likely to receive a death sentence than other defendants.

How To Help

- Keep yourself well informed by calling the above number or signing on to our e-mail list .
- Copy this flyer and distribute it.
- Do Video showings or book readings of Mumia's books to raise awareness (books and videos available from ICFMMAJ.)
- Organize phone trees to spread the word when there is a breakthrough in the case and BE READY TO COME TO PHILADELPHIA IF NECESSARY.
- Donate to the Defense Fund: National Black United Fund 40 Clinton St Newark, NJ 07102 (Make checks out to NBUF/Mumia Abu-Jamal Defense.)

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The Case of Mumia Abu-Jamal

Evidence Ignored!
23 Years Stolen!

An Innocent Man



on Death Row

Who is Mumia Abu-Jamal?

Mumia Abu-Jamal is a renowned journalist from Philadelphia who has been in prison since 1981, and on death row since 1983 for allegedly shooting Philadelphia police officer Daniel Faulkner. He is known as the “Voice of the Voiceless” for his award winning reporting on police brutality, and other social and racial epidemics that plague communities of color in Philadelphia and throughout the world. Mumia has received international support over the years in his efforts to overturn his unjust conviction.

Mumia Abu-Jamal was serving as the President of the Association of Black Journalists at the time of his arrest. He was a founding member of the Philadelphia Chapter of the Black Panther Party as a teenager. Years later he began reporting professionally on radio stations such as NPR, and was the news director of the Philadelphia station WHAT. Much of his journalism called attention to the blatant injustice and brutality he watched happen on a daily basis to MOVE, a revolutionary organization that works to protect all forms of life-human, animal, plant-and the Earth as a whole.

The Scene

In 1981 Mumia worked as a cab driver at night to supplement his income. On December 9th he was driving his cab through the red light district of downtown Philadelphia at around 4 A.M. Mumia testifies that he let off a fare and parked near the corner of 13th and Locust Streets. Upon hearing gunshots, he turned and saw his brother, William Cook, staggering in the street. Mumia exited the cab and ran to the scene, where he was shot by a uniformed police officer and fell to the ground, fading in and out of consciousness. Within minutes, police arrived at the scene to find Officer Faulkner and Mumia shot; Faulkner died. Mumia was arrested, savagely beaten, thrown into a paddy wagon and driven to a hospital a few blocks away (suspiciously, it took over 30 minutes to arrive at the hospital). Mumia somehow survived.

The Trial

The trial began in 1982 with Judge Sabo (who sent more people to death row than any other judge) presiding. Mumia wished to represent himself and have John Africa as his legal advisor, but before jury selection had finished, this right was revoked and an attorney was forcibly appointed for him. Throughout the trial, Mumia was accused of disrupting court proceedings and was not allowed to attend most of his own trial. Sabo lived up to his nickname of “Prosecutor in Robes.”

The Evidence

The prosecution claimed that the shot which killed Faulkner came from Mumia Abu-Jamal’s legally registered .38 caliber weapon, contradicting the medical examiner’s report that the bullet removed from Faulkner’s brain was a .44 caliber. This fact was kept from the jury. Moreover, a ballistics expert found it incredible that police at the scene failed to test Mumia’s gun to see if it had recently been fired, or to test his hands for powder residue. One of the most damning prosecution claims was that Mumia confessed at the hospital. However, this confession was not reported until nearly 2 months after December 9th, immediately after Mumia had filed a brutality suit against the police. One of the officers who claims to have heard the confession is Gary Waskshul. However in his police report on that day he stated that “The Negro male made no comments.” Also Dr. Coletta, the attending physician who was with Mumia the entire time, says that he never heard Mumia Speak.

The Witnesses

The star prosecution witness, a prostitute named Cynthia White, was someone no other witness reported seeing at the scene. During the trial of Billy Cook (Mumia’s brother) just weeks before Mumia’s trial, White gave testimony completely contradictory to what she stated at Mumia’s trial. Her testimony at Billy Cook’s trial placed someone at the scene who was not there when police arrived. This corroborates the other five witness accounts that someone fled the scene. In a 1997 hearing, another former prostitute, Pamela Jenkins, testified that White was acting as a police informant.

Other sworn testimony revealed that witness coercion was routinely practiced by the police. In 1995, eyewitness William Singletary testified that police repeatedly tore up his initial statement-that the shooter fled the scene-until he finally signed something acceptable to them. The following year, witness Veronica Jones came forward to testify that she had been coerced into changing her initial statement that two men fled the scene. Witness Billy Cook, who was present the whole time, has stated very clearly that Mumia is absolutely innocent.

The Sentence

Due To police manipulation of witnesses, fabrication of evidence, and the rights of the defense severely denied, Mumia was found guilty. He was sentenced to death during the penalty phase based solely on his political beliefs. Mumia has been unjustly separated from his family for twenty-two years, with the threat of death looming over his head.

New Witnesses

In 2001, court stenographer Terri Maurer-Carter came forward and stated that in 1982, before Mumia’s trial began, she heard Judge Sabo say, “Yeah, and I’m going to help them fry the n****r.” He was referring to Mumia. This backs up evidence of judicial bias and racism in Mumia’s case. In the same year, esteemed Philadelphia journalist Linn Washington stated that on the morning of December 1981, he went to the scene to report on it-and no police were present. This backs up prior claims that police didn’t handle the crime scene properly.

The Confession

In 1999, Arnold Beverly confessed to killing Officer Faulkner. This confession is validated by a lie detector test administered by eminent polygraph expert Charles Honts. Despite concrete evidence supporting his confession, the Philadelphia District Attorney has refused to investigate, and the courts have not even allowed it to be heard. The injustice continues...

The Appeals

Over the past 23 years Mumia’s case has made its way through the various levels of the appeals process multiple times, from the Court of Common Pleas, to efforts to appeal Mumia’s case to the Pennsylvania Supreme Court. Often his legal defense have run up against a virtual wall of silence where the courts refuse to hear, or basically affirm previous decisions made in the appeals process that took place before Judge Albert Sabo, the same judge who presided over Mumia’s frame up in 1982. Legislation such as the 1996 Anti-Terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act, which seriously curtails the number of appeals available to defendants in death penalty cases have also played a part in undermining Mumia’s legal efforts. In addition significant problems with inadequate legal counsel that led to Mumia having had to change his legal team in 2001 also proved an obstacle at one time.

On December 18th, 2001, Judge Yohn issued a decision on the Habeas corpus petition in Federal District Court. He upheld Mumia’s unjust conviction, but challenged the sentencing phase (the death sentence). This means there could be a new sentence hearing after all appeals are resolved, but the only options are life in prison with no possibility of parole or another death sentence. This is not justice. There is massive evidence of Mumia’s innocence and he should be absolutely free. Mumia’s legal team filed an appeal of this decision in January of 2002. **Mumia remains on death row until all appeals by both sides are heard.**