

Spartacist League/Spartacus Youth Group meeting and video showing

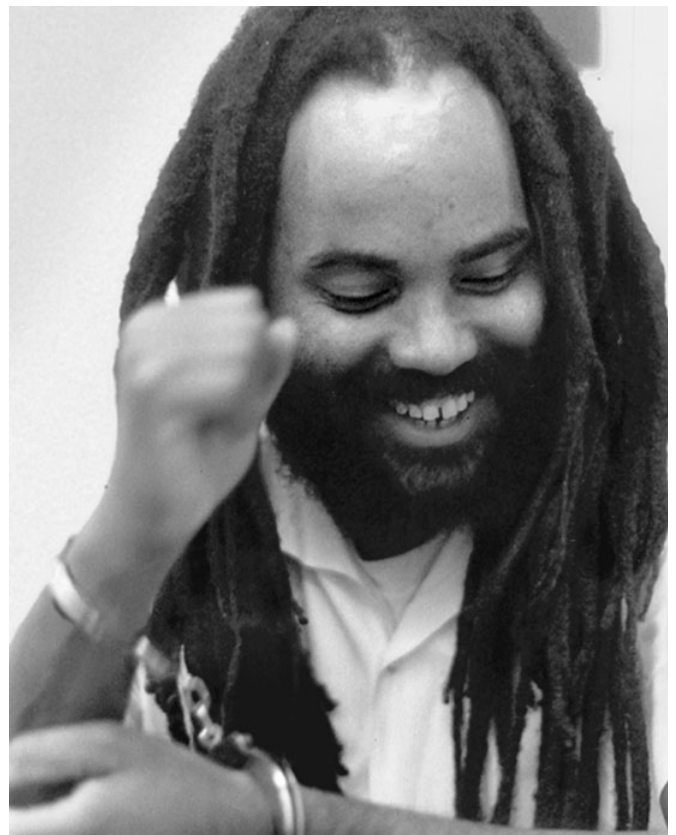
FREE MUMIA ABU-JAMAL! ABOLISH THE RACIST DEATH PENALTY!

Featuring the video *From Death Row, This is Mumia Abu-Jamal*

**Speaker: Rachel Wolkenstein, Partisan Defense Committee Counsel
and former member of Mumia Abu-Jamal's legal defence team**

Mumia Abu-Jamal is an innocent man in his 24th year on death row in the US. Falsely convicted of killing Philadelphia police officer Daniel Faulkner, mountains of evidence show that Mumia is innocent, including the confession of another man, Arnold Beverly, to the murder. All the elements of the capitalist "justice" system colluded in framing up this courageous black journalist known as "the voice of the voiceless".

The fight to free Mumia has now reached a critical juncture. Last December, the federal appeals court put Mumia's case on a "fast track" for decision. Both Mumia and prosecutors are appealing decisions from 2001, when US District Court judge William Yohn overturned the death sentence but upheld every aspect of Mumia's frame-up conviction. The state is as determined as ever to execute Mumia. He has been barred by the courts from presenting evidence of his innocence. But the prosecution opened its current appeal with a venomous, lying statement to portray Mumia as a cop-killer who must be executed. In as little as six months the court *continued overleaf*



COC Productions

Saturday 8 July, 5.30 pm

Birkbeck College, Room B30, Malet Street, London WC1

Nearest Tube: Goadge Street or Russell Square



Workers Vanguard

(Continued....) could decide what is next for Mumia: death, life in prison or more legal proceedings.

A former Black Panther and MOVE supporter, an impassioned defender of black rights, Mumia had been targeted from the age of 15 by the FBI and the Philly cops. He was locked up on death row in 1982 based on lying testimony extorted by the cops without a shred of physical evidence. Judge Albert Sabo was overheard by a court stenographer saying during the trial, "I'm going to help 'em fry the n---r." Rigging the jury to exclude black people, the prosecution incited jurors with the grotesque lie that Mumia's membership in the Panthers as a teenager proved he had long been committed to kill a cop. The 1982 conviction was secured with arguments that the jury could disregard any doubts about Mumia's guilt because he would have "appeal after appeal". In nearly two decades of appeals, each and every court has rejected the reams of documented evidence of this blatant frame-up. ***For over four years, Pennsylvania state as well as federal courts have refused to even consider the sworn confession of Arnold Beverly that he, not Mumia, shot and killed Faulkner.***

Mumia's case demonstrates what the US death penalty is all about. It is the lynch rope made legal, the ultimate weapon in the government's arsenal of repression aimed at the working class and oppressed. A legacy of chattel slavery, the death penalty is maintained in a society where the segregation of the black population is used as a wedge to divide the labouring masses and perpetuate the rapacious rule of capital.

Mumia's appeal takes place in the context of the US government's "war on terror", in the name of which rights won through tumultuous struggles are shredded by the Bush government, supported by the Democrats, in order to terrorise any who would stand in the way of the bourgeoisie's drive for profit and their imperialist adventures, like the colonial occupation of Iraq. There, as in US imperialism's torture and mass murder throughout the world, Tony Blair is Bush's staunchest ally. Workers, anti-racist youth, and all who want to fight the US and British imperialists' bloody depredations must unite ***now*** in a battle to free America's foremost class-war prisoner, Mumia Abu-Jamal!

As in the US, the British government's "war on terror" targets at first the Muslim population, aiming ultimately at the working class. Nearly one year ago, the police executed Jean Charles de Menezes, an innocent 27-year-old Brazilian electrician, and in early June carried out a terrifying raid on an innocent Muslim family in Forest Gate in the course of which they shot

Mohammed Abdulkahar. The template for these acts is the *de facto* "shoot-to-kill" policy of British imperialism for "IRA suspects". The British state may not have an official legal death penalty today, but ***it kills***: Army/RUC collusion with Loyalist death squads in Northern Ireland, including in the murders of Catholic solicitors Pat Finucane and Rosemary Nelson, is not aberrant "misconduct" but the very essence of the capitalist state's *modus operandi*. Paul Hill of the Guildford Four, innocent Irish men framed for a 1974 pub bombing who spent 15 years in prison, remarked of their conviction: "I think the most poignant thing was that the judge expressed regret that the death penalty was not an option."

The case of Mumia Abu-Jamal is an object lesson in the class nature of the capitalist state. Its justice system is class- and race-biased to the core. The cops and courts who framed up this innocent man, the prison system, the executioner, all are instruments of organised violence used to preserve the rule of the capitalist class through the forcible suppression of the working class and oppressed. Smashing this machinery of oppression will require a socialist revolution that overturns the capitalist system, in the US, as well as Britain and the other imperialist centres.

The Spartacist League and the Partisan Defence Committee — a class struggle, legal and social defence organisation associated with the Spartacist League — have always advocated pursuing all possible legal proceedings in Mumia's case. But we place all our faith in the power of the masses and no faith whatsoever in the justice of the courts. Liberals and so-called socialist groups who raise demands for a "new trial" have fed illusions that there can be justice in the capitalist courts and are responsible for the ***demobilisation*** of the worldwide movement of mass protest which stayed the executioner's hand in 1995.

It is now urgent to rekindle mass protest in the US and internationally. Mumia's freedom will not be won by reliance on the rigged "justice" system. The power that can turn the tide is the power of working people, together with anti-racist youth, united in struggle to demand freedom for this innocent man. Crucial to this is the mobilisation of the trade union movement, whose social power derives from its ability to shut down production. We need trade union centred united-front actions, protests across a spectrum of political views while assuring all the right to have their own say. ***Organise now! Raise the demand: Free Mumia Abu-Jamal! Abolish the racist death penalty!***

19 June 2006