

Mumia Abu-Jamal is an innocent man!

FREE MUMIA NOW!

Mumia's life is in danger — mobilise now!

RALLY!

Partial list of speakers who have endorsed the above slogans:

Stephen Hedley, RMT*

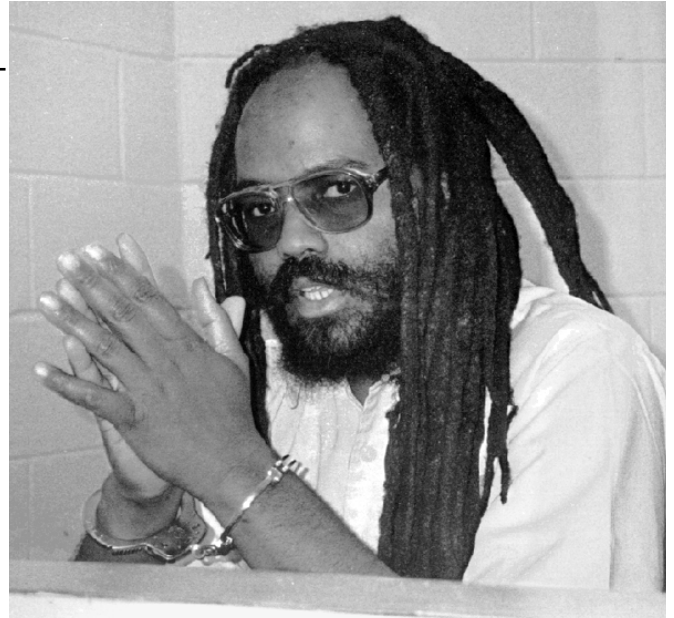
Paul Moffat, Eastern Region Secretary, Communication Workers Union

Gareth Peirce

Matthew Ryder, Barrister, Matrix*

Glenroy Watson, General Secretary, Global Afrikan Congress; Finsbury Park Branch Chair, Rail Maritime and Transport (RMT) 0543 Branch

Rachel Wolkenstein, Partisan Defense Committee (US) counsel and former member of Mumia's legal team



Workers Vanguard

*Speaking in an individual capacity; organisation listed for identification purposes only

We want to make it very clear that speakers at the rally initiated by the Partisan Defence Committee do not necessarily agree in any particular with any publicity for this rally printed by the Partisan Defence Committee.

Saturday 5 May, 1pm
University of London Union,
Room 3C&D, Malet Street,
London WC1

Nearest Tube: Russell Square or Goodge Street

ABOLISH THE RACIST DEATH PENALTY!



Workers Vanguard

Sponsored by Partisan Defence Committee, BCM Box 4986, London WC1N 3XX
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The Partisan Defence Committee is a class-struggle, non-sectarian legal and social defence organisation which champions cases and causes in the interest of the whole of the working people. This purpose is in accordance with the political views of the Spartacist League.

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Mumia Abu-Jamal is an innocent man in his 25th 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 is at a critical juncture. The United States Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit will hear oral argument on Mumia’s *habeas corpus* appeal on 17 May in Philadelphia. 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. Any decision by the Third Circuit will likely be appealed to the reactionary US Supreme Court. The outcome could be life imprisonment, further legal proceedings, or as Mumia’s attorney Robert Bryan said in a letter to supporters, “If all is lost, he will be executed.”

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 five 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 US/Britain’s colonial occupation of Iraq. In Britain there is every reason for the working class and oppressed to rally behind Mumia; a tide of protest internationally, centred on the power of the workers movement, could be a giant step forward in the defence of all of us against the racist warmongers in Washington — both Republican and Democrat — and their loyal lapdog, Blair’s Labour government.

As in the US, the British government’s “war on terror” targets at first the Muslim population, aiming ultimately at

the working class. In January police raided Muslim homes in Birmingham, arresting nine on the pretext of a supposed plot to behead a British Muslim soldier. One of the arrested men, Abu Bakr, who was released after a week for lack of evidence, aptly described Blair’s Britain as a “police state for Muslims”. In July 2005, the police shot and killed Jean Charles de Menezes, an innocent 27-year-old Brazilian electrician, and in June 2006 carried out a terrifying raid on an innocent Muslim family in Forest Gate in the course of which they shot Mohammed Abdul Kahar. 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, who were framed for a 1974 pub bombing and 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 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. Many of these groups now raise “freedom for Mumia” in conjunction with calls for a “new trial”. However, their politics remain in the framework of reliance on the bourgeois state. Behind the attempts to limit the struggle for Mumia to a call for a “new trial” is a **political programme** premised on reliance on the capitalist state — a programme directly counterposed to a mobilisation of working-class power for his freedom. This political programme of tying the masses to their class enemies and pushing faith in the capitalist state demobilised millions who once filled the streets in support of Mumia, staying 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!**

Partisan Defence Committee
16 April 2007