

Mumia Abu-Jamal is Innocent!

FREE MUMIA NOW!

ABOLISH THE RACIST DEATH PENALTY!

RALLY!

Partial list of speakers:

Canopy-san, Coordinator, Leonard Peltier Support Group, Melbourne

Len Cooper, Secretary, Communications Union CEPU, Melbourne

David Cushion, Assistant Secretary, Maritime Union of Australia, Victorian Branch

Neil Florrimell, Partisan Defence Committee

Dave Kerin, Coordinator, Union Solidarity

Piergiorgio Moro, Union Convenor, Australia Asia Worker Links

Peter Murray, Freedom Socialist Party

Margaret Rodda, Spartacist League of Australia

Robert Thorpe

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.



COC Productions

Saturday 17 May, 3:30 p.m.
Meeting Room 1, Trades Hall
corner Victoria and Lygon Streets, Carlton
(entrance on Victoria Street)

MELBOURNE

Mumia's Life is in Danger—Mobilise Now!



Workers Vanguard

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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.

Free Mumia Abu-Jamal Now!

America's racist rulers want to silence the powerful voice of Mumia Abu-Jamal. The U.S. Third Circuit Court of Appeals decision on 27 March upholding the frame-up conviction of black political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal for the 1981 killing of Police Officer Daniel Faulkner is an outrage! It proves, once again, that *there is no justice in the capitalist courts!* It is a slap in the face to all opponents of racist injustice. The court's ruling means that Mumia faces either execution or the living death of life in prison. *We must not let this happen! Mumia must be freed now!*

In response to this ruling the Partisan Defence Committee and its fraternal defence organisations internationally initiated united-front protests demanding *Mumia Abu-Jamal is Innocent! Free Mumia Now! Abolish the Racist Death Penalty!* These protests which took place in Oakland (California), Chicago, Los Angeles, Toronto, London, Sydney and Mexico City were endorsed by more than 300 organisations and individuals, including trade unions representing hundreds of thousands of workers. The PDC also mobilised class-struggle contingents for protests called by other organisations, in Philadelphia, Paris and Berlin.

International endorsers of the united-front protests included the SUD Rail Workers Union of Paris Left Bank, the Timor Leste Trade Union Federation, the International Longshoremen's Association Local 1422, Charleston, U.S. and the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU)—Western Cape, which issued a statement declaring, "We will stand with the millions of people across the world that are calling for justice to be done and will join the protest against this travesty of justice." From Australia, endorsers included the Victorian Branch of the Maritime Union of Australia, the Secretary of the Communications Union CEPU, Melbourne, the Leonard Peltier Support Group Melbourne, Australia Asia Worker Links, the Spartacist League of Australia, the Melbourne Anarchist Communist Group, Aboriginal activists Jenny Munro and Sam Watson, Workers Radio Sydney and Community Radio 3CR. Also endorsing these demonstrations were writer Gilles Perrault in France, and Professor Dr. Heinrich Fink, Chairman of the Association of the Victims of the Nazi Regime—Coalition of Anti-fascists, in Berlin. In Mexico, Senator Rosario Ibarra, the head of the ¡Eureka! defence committee and endorser of the protests, declared: "Tyranny imposes a duty upon us—to fight it. Mumia fulfils that duty."

Mumia was framed up because of his lifelong struggle against racist oppression and police terror—first as a Black Panther Party spokesman, then as a MOVE supporter and an outspoken journalist renowned as the "voice of the voiceless." The cops, prosecutors and courts—with the support of capitalist politicians, Democrats and Republicans—see in Mumia the spectre of black revolt, a voice of defiant opposition to the oppression of black people that is a cornerstone of American capitalism. It is urgent today to revitalise mass protest centred on the working class to free Mumia on the basis that he is innocent, the victim of a racist political frame-up, and to link his fight to the struggle to abolish the racist death penalty.

Mumia's struggle is an *international* fight against the injustices inherent in capitalism: poverty, racist oppression, war. The fight for Mumia is the fight for black rights, for workers' rights, for the rights of all the oppressed. The rulers' vendetta against him is a vendetta against all who challenge cop repression, trade unionists who defend their picket lines, those who protest imperialist depredations from Iraq, to Afghanistan to East Timor and the South Pacific. After more than 25 years on death row, Mumia still stands defiant, writing commentaries in defence of the rights of black people, immigrants, unions. Workers, blacks, immigrants and all opponents of racist oppression must mobilise *now* for Mumia's freedom.

The fight for Mumia's freedom has everything to do with the fight against "war on terror" capitalist repression. As the cases of the Barwon 13, Mamdouh Habib, David Hicks show, the bogus "war on terror"—which has been prosecuted by Liberal and Labor governments alike—has led to a massive increase in state surveillance and repressive measures especially targeting Muslims, Middle Eastern and South Asian immigrants and other Asian peoples. It has incited racist reaction on the streets and provided justification for shredding democratic rights and for massively strengthening state repression targeting all opponents of capitalism, the left and organised labour movement.

It was only in 1985 that the last legal vestiges of the death penalty were removed federally in Australia. This followed considerable social struggle, particularly in the 1960s, including militant protests by waterside workers in Victoria. However, ongoing Aboriginal deaths at

the hands of cops and prison screws—from TJ Hickey to Mulrunji Doomadgee—show that a *de facto* death penalty applies to Aborigines. The current cop/military takeover of Aboriginal lands in the Northern Territory has meant more Aborigines in prison and more deaths in custody. As with the whitewash trial of Queensland policeman, Chris Hurley, for the killing of Mulrunji Doomadgee on Palm Island in 2004 and the ongoing racist state persecution of Aboriginal community activist, Lex Wotton, for protesting this brutal killing, Mumia's case demonstrates that workers and the oppressed face a system of capitalist injustice. *Drop the charges against Lex Wotton now!*

Mumia is the victim not of one rogue cop, "overzealous" prosecutor or racist judge but the entire capitalist injustice system. His freedom will not be won through reliance on the capitalist courts or politicians, but through the independent mobilisation of the social power of the working class. It was international protest, involving the labour movement worldwide that won Mumia a stay of execution when a death warrant was signed in 1995. This perspective stands in sharp contrast to those groups internationally who subordinated the fight for Mumia's freedom to the call for a "new trial," promoting the lie that Mumia could get a fair hearing from the courts that have kept him behind bars and rejected appeal after appeal.

To the millions of activists who saw in Mumia's struggle their own struggles, the reformists' message was *not* to fight but instead to look to the "next court." According to the reformists, the same capitalist state that killed 38 Black Panthers under COINTELPRO, that massacred eleven black people in the 1985 firebombing of MOVE's Osage Avenue home in Philadelphia, that imprisons nearly a million black men and women in the U.S. today, was going to give Mumia justice! Such reformist illusions are pushed in this country by those like Socialist Alliance who promote government inquiries such as the 1987 Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody, which whitewashed the crimes of the state endorsing police and coroner verdicts in *all* 99 Aboriginal deaths it reviewed—i.e., not one cop was ever prosecuted.

Behind the call for a "new trial" is a political program directly counterposed to a mobilisation of working-class power for Mumia's freedom. *The 27 March decision should be a wake-up call to any activists who bought into the reformists' lies about the "fairness" of the courts.* We emphasise that while every legal avenue must be pursued in the fight to free Mumia, the pressure that can make the courts yield is that of mass international protest, crucially based on the power of the working class. What is necessary is *class-struggle defence* based on the understanding that capitalist society is fundamentally divided between two hostile classes—and that the capitalist state and its courts are organs of repression against the working people and the oppressed. We need trade-union centred united-front actions, protests across a broad spectrum of political views while assuring all the right to have their say.

The rulers know that Mumia is innocent. Starting over 15 years ago, PDC counsel Rachel Wolkenstein and Jonathon Piper, who served on Mumia's legal defence from 1995 to 1999, uncovered additional massive evidence of his innocence. This included witness William Singletary who said Mumia was not the shooter; witnesses, Veronica Jones and Pamela Jenkins who testified that prosecution witnesses were coerced into lying; forensic evidence that proved that the prosecution's story of the shooting was fabricated; the sworn confession of Arnold Beverly that he, not Mumia, shot officer Faulkner. But time and again, the courts have rejected or refused to even hear this evidence.

Combating every manifestation of racist capitalist oppression, we underline that full equality for the oppressed masses requires that the working class rip the economy out of the hands of the capitalist rulers and reorganise it on a socialist basis. Only then will it be possible to eliminate the material roots of racist oppression and build an egalitarian socialist society based on a collectivised economy with quality jobs, housing, health care and education for all. The fight to free Mumia is the fight for black liberation, part of the broader fight for socialist revolution and therefore for the liberation of us all.

The multiracial international working class has every interest in fighting for Mumia. Mass united-front mobilisations are urgently needed internationally to free Mumia and to send a message to the racist capitalist rulers and their courts: *We will not let Mumia die or rot another day in prison! Free Mumia Now!*

—Partisan Defence Committee, 1 May 2008