

PARTISAN DEFENCE COMMITTEE

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PRESS RELEASE - 16 April 2008

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United-front protests demand Mumia Abu-Jamal's immediate freedom

All out for united-front mobilisations called by the Partisan Defense Committee under the slogans: "Mumia Abu-Jamal is innocent! Free Mumia now! Abolish the racist death penalty!" Oakland, Toronto and London on April 19; Sydney on April 23; Mexico City on April 24; Chicago and Los Angeles on April 26. For more information: www.partisandefense.org

Against the 27 March decision by the US Third Circuit of Appeals, which upheld Mumia Abu-Jamal's frame-up conviction and ordered a new sentencing hearing that would either entomb him for life in prison or reimpose the death sentence, the Partisan Defense Committee in the US and its fraternal organisations internationally have launched an international campaign to demand Mumia's freedom. The London protest on 19 April will take place at the US Embassy in Grosvenor Square. Protests in the US have been initiated by the PDC and the Labor Black Leagues including in Los Angeles where Mumia's daughter, Goldii, will speak.

In its 11 April call for the international united-front protests, the PDC stated: "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 all the more urgent today to revitalize mass protest to free Mumia on the basis that he is innocent, the victim of a racist and political frame-up, and to link his fight to the struggle to abolish the racist death penalty."

Responding to those who viewed the decision as a victory, Mumia underlined in a 7 April radio interview on Berkeley's KPFA that the courts have created "a new rule" to keep him behind bars. He said, "When a court has to make up new rules and make up new law to uphold something that was unjust before, that's not a victory. It's not a victory. But we struggle on." Speaking of the racist rulers' drive to silence him, Mumia stated, "For many people, especially for those in the establishment, I represent, in many ways, their greatest nightmare", adding, "what they fear is the black revolution reigniting". Mumia underlined: "Remember what the elder, Frederick Douglass, taught us: that power concedes nothing without a demand." The interview can be heard at: <http://www.partisandefense.org/media/Mumia-Flashpoints.mp3>.

Over the last two weeks, more than 300 organisations and individuals have endorsed the united-front demonstrations, including trade unions representing hundreds of thousands of workers. The Scottish Trades Union Congress as well as its endorsement issued a 14 April statement that: "The Scottish Trades Union Congress believes that Mumia Abu-Jamal should be freed immediately from prison. He is innocent, and the inherently racist death penalty should be abolished." Other endorsers in Britain include the Aberdeen Trades Union Council; the Finsbury Park Branch of the RMT in London Underground; the Communication Workers Union Eastern Region; the Afrikan Liberation Day Organising Committee; and Day-Mer Turkish and Kurdish Community Centre in London. Internationally endorsers include Amalgamated Transit Union Locals 241 and 308 in Chicago; the Victorian Branch of the Maritime Union of Australia; SUD Rail Workers Union of Paris Left Bank; 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." Also endorsing are 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

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.

Mexico, Senator Rosario Ibarra, the head of the ¡Eureka! defence committee and an endorser of the protests, declared: “Tyranny imposes a duty upon us—to fight it. Mumia fulfills that duty.” For endorsers of the various united-front protests, go to: www.partisandefense.org/events/index.html#endorsers.

The PDC and LBL in the US and the Committee for Social Defense in France are also building class-struggle contingents that will march in the 19 April demonstration in Philadelphia initiated by the International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal and the protest in Paris on the same day. The contingents will march under the slogans: “Mumia Abu-Jamal Is Innocent! Free Mumia Now! Abolish the Racist Death Penalty! There Is No Justice in the Capitalist Courts! Mobilize Labor’s Power—For Mass Protest!” On 12 April, a class-struggle contingent of some 80 people built by the Committee for Social Defense in Germany marched in a demonstration for Mumia in Berlin of about 300 people.

In Britain the PDC’s 2 April call for the London united-front protest noted: “It is particularly crucial to fight for Mumia in Britain, given the alliance between the Labour government and the US rulers. The combined military might of US/British imperialism makes them the most powerful terrorist force on the planet, as seen in the barbaric occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan. There is no official death penalty in Britain, but there is death meted out by the state, as seen in the cold-blooded police killing of Jean Charles de Menezes in 2005. This was ‘shoot-to-kill’--long part of the British state’s arsenal of repression against Catholics in Northern Ireland--brought to the streets of London in the service of the racist ‘war on terror’.”

PDC counsel Rachel Wolkenstein, who served on Mumia’s legal defence team from 1995 to 1999, stated: “The fight for Mumia’s freedom is at a critical juncture. The recent court decision illuminates for any who continued to have illusions in the ‘fairness’ of capitalist justice that there is no justice in the capitalist courts. Every possible legal avenue must be vigorously pursued to challenge the Court of Appeals’ decision. But we cannot afford to have any illusions. The pressure that can make the courts yield is that of mass international protest, crucially based on the power of labor. Working people around the world and all opponents of racist oppression must be mobilized in the fight to free Mumia now!”

United-front protests will take place on the following dates:

Saturday 19 April:

London: US Embassy, Grosvenor Square, London W1A, at 1.00 pm. For more information: 020 7281 5504 or e-mail: partisandefence@yahoo.co.uk

Oakland: 14th and Broadway at 2.30 pm. For more information, call the PDC: (510) 839-0852 or e-mail: pdcbayarea@sbcglobal.net

Toronto: Across the street from the US Consulate, 360 University Avenue, between Dundas (St. Patrick Station) and Queen (Osgoode Station), at 1.00 pm For more information: (416) 593-4138 or e-mail: pdctoronto@bellnet.ca

Wednesday 23 April:

Sydney, Australia: Outside US Consulate, corner Martin Place and Castlereagh St., at 5.30 pm. For more information: Sydney (02) 9281 2181 • Melbourne (03) 9654 4315 or e-mail: pdcsydney@exemail.com.au

Thursday 24 April:

Mexico City: Fac. de Filosofía y Letras (main entrance), C.U., UNAM (National Autonomous University of Mexico), at 5.00 pm. For more information: je_contacto@yahoo.com.mx

Saturday 26 April:

Chicago: Federal Plaza (Adams and Dearborn) at 12 Noon. For more information call the PDC: (312) 563-0442 or e-mail: chicagopdc@sbcglobal.net

Los Angeles: Westwood Federal Building, 11000 Wilshire Blvd., at 1.00 pm. For more information call the PDC: (213) 380-8897 or e-mail: pdcl@sbglobal.net

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