

A message from innocent people who have been freed from Death Row:

There are innocent men and women on death row in this country. We know, for we were numbered among them. Many of us endured for years in the narrow and isolated confines of a barren cell designed to murder our spirits, as the State struggled to win final legal sanction to steal our lives.

Such is the case with Mumia Abu-Jamal, an award-winning journalist, an outspoken opponent of racism and police brutality, a militant champion of justice for Black people, a man who for decades has been the voice of the dispossessed and the disenfranchised—and an innocent man on death row in Pennsylvania.

We know Mumia's struggle, because no-one knows better than we of the lengths to which the criminal "justice" system will go in its relentless quest to take a life. Many of us are intimately familiar with the daily degradation of Mumia's seventeen years on death row: locked in his cell for 23 hours each day, forbidden to embrace or even see his family members, prohibited from being filmed or audio taped by reporters, slapped into punitive detention for writing and publishing his views, refused the right to confidentially communicate with his attorneys. We were sustained in our struggle for justice, as Mumia is, by the tireless support of our families, friends, and people of principle who organized to liberate us from the machine that tried to slay us. And above all else we were sustained, as Mumia is, by the only real certainty we were allowed on death row—the knowledge that we were innocent.

The State sought to poison us, electrocute us or hang us with the machine-like indifference it reserves for people it has determined to be worthless and therefore disposable—in this country, overwhelmingly poor people and people of color. If our murders could be used to enhance a political career or a partisan policy debate, then so much the better. But the State seeks to murder Mumia with a ruthless and relentless fervor that has publicly defied any pretext of fairness or decency. Let us be clear: the State's campaign to murder Mumia is designed above all else to silence a Black man who dares to speak truth to power. As Mumia himself has said, the State does not seek just his death, it seeks his silence.

It is for these reasons that we call on all people of conscience to speak out, to organize against this travesty of justice, and to demand Mumia's freedom. To allow Pennsylvania to murder Mumia is to allow the State to succeed in slaughtering another innocent and in silencing a voice for the voiceless. We know that the State will not concede its wrongdoing without a struggle. We know that the authorities who have sought to murder this man will not submit to justice unless we, the people, organize to fight the State's abuse of power.

Join us. Stand with Mumia Abu-Jamal, our brother and our friend, and demand that the State of Pennsylvania set him free.

List Of Signatories:

Kirk Bloodsworth: Maryland, Convicted 1984, Released 1993

Joseph Burrows: Illinois, Convicted 1989, Released 1994

Perry Cobb: Illinois, Convicted 1979, Released 1987

Muneer Deeb: Texas, Convicted 1985, Released 1993

Gary Gauger: Illinois, Convicted 1993, Released 1996

Verneal Jimerson: Illinois, Convicted 1985, Released 1996

Troy Lee Jones: California, Convicted 1982, Released 1996

David Keaton: Florida, Convicted 1971, Released 1973

Ronald Keine: New Mexico, Convicted 1974, Released 1976

Carl Lawson: Illinois, Convicted 1990, Released 1996

Wilbert Lee: Florida, Convicted 1963, Released 1975

Bradley P. Scott: Florida, Convicted 1988, Released 1991

Delbert Tibbs: Florida, Convicted 1974, Released 1977

Darby (Williams) Tillis: Illinois, Convicted 1979, Released 1987

Dennis Williams: Illinois, Convicted 1979, Released 1996