**The "Educators For Mumia" Ad Campaign Continues!**

Wednesday, 17 May 2000

Scoop Independent News

The "Educators For Mumia" full page New York Times ad appeared on May 7, 2000. It was placed on Page 7 of the Week in Review section in the National Edition of the Sunday Times!

AN APPEAL from :

- Jonathan Kozol - Toni Morrison - Noam Chomsky - Cornel West - Rudolfo Anaya - Frances Fox Piven - Angela Y. Davis - Manning Marable - Leslie Marmon Silko - Rudolfo Anaya - **Marty Hittelman** - Howard Zinn - Sonia Sanchez

Please join us in demanding a new trial for condemned African-American journalist Mumia Abu-Jamal. An outspoken advocate on behalf of poor and working people, Abu-Jamal has spent the last 17 years on Pennsylvania's death row. Although his 1982 conviction was fraught with judicial and prosecutorial misconduct, his appeals in the State courts of Pennsylvania have been denied, and Governor Tom Ridge of Pennsylvania, who has signed a total of 176 death warrants (two already for Mumia) stands ready to sign a third one on Mumia when he can. Mumia's case is now in Federal District court. A crucial Spring-time ruling is expected, when Judge William H. Yohn, Jr., will decide whether Mumia receives an "evidentiary hearing" to consider the new evidence previously ruled inadmissible by "hanging judge" Albert Sabo.

Abu-Jamal's case has tremendous relevance for educators. His writings have galvanized student learning in new ways, especially in low income communities and among people of color, whose economic and educational needs are being subordinated to the increased funding for more prisons to warehouse our youth, and for police forces featuring rising levels of police brutality.

Mumia's voice has become essential to this generation's efforts to understand the social ills of their time and to resist them with creativity and intelligence. His vision and eloquence have been important for nurturing broad-based, multiracial coalitions that address important cultural, political and economic issues in our nation today.

Teachers using Mumia's writings at many levels of education have routinely met with censorship by some administrators and policing authorities. The Fraternal Order of Police maintains a list of Mumia's supporters on its website. A number of educators are included on that list and are targeted for "boycott" by the police union. Since teachers have played a major role in making Mumia's case known, and in reopening a nation-wide debate on the death penalty, these efforts at censorship cannot be taken lightly.

Abu-Jamal's execution would constitute the ultimate censorship of his eloquent and powerful exposure of criminal injustice in America. It would allow politicians and elements of law enforcement to think they can narrow the scope of education in our society, and limit our writers' freedom of expression.

We urge you to sign the ad at the bottom of this page and make a contribution toward continuing to publish it as soon as possible. Please take time to sign on now!

AD TEXT:

WE EDUCATORS . . . Demand Justice and a New Trial for Mumia Abu-Jamal

Mumia Abu-Jamal is an African- American writer and journalist who has spent the last 17 years of his life on Pennsylvania's death row. His demand for justice and a new trial is supported by heads of state from France to South Africa, by Nobel Laureates, the European Parliament, city governments from Detroit to San Francisco, scholars, religious leaders, artists, scientists, the Congressional Black Caucus and other members of U.S. Congress, and by countless thousands who cherish democratic and human rights the world over.

Working people have expressed their support for Jamal through their leading regional, national and international trade union bodies. In an action nearly without precedent in U.S. labor history, the International Longshore and Warehouse Union closed down West coast ports for the day of April 24, 1999.

Jamal's two books and over 400 published columns have been adopted as resource material for the teaching and inspiration of a growing number of students, youth, and educators who have come to see THEIR futures as intimately tied to the outcome of this case.

The 1982 trial that convicted Jamal of killing Philadelphia police officer Daniel Faulkner has been challenged by leading legal analysts and scholars from Stuart Taylor writing in the prestigious American Lawyer to Per Walsoe of the Supreme Court of Denmark.

Jamal's attorneys have presented compelling evidence that key witnesses were intimidated or coerced to provide false testimony, that a purported "confession" was likely fabricated by police, and that vital evidence pointing to his innocence was withheld from the defense. A key eyewitness has now recanted critical court testimony used against Jamal.

Jamal was forced to appeal his conviction before the same judge that sentenced him to death in 1982. That judge, Albert Sabo, is notorious for presiding over capital cases resulting in 33 people being sentenced to death (all but two, people of color), more than twice the number of any sitting judge in the United States.

We educators unite in saying No to Jamal's execution.

- Jamal has long been a POLITICAL TARGET as a prominent journalist critic of police brutality and racism in Philadelphia since the days of Mayor Frank Rizzo. Rizzo's police department incurred an unprecedented suit by the United States Department of Justice for police brutality.

- Jamal is made more vulnerable by TODAY'S FREQUENT USE OF THE DEATH PENALTY. The American Bar Association has opposed the death penalty as immensely discriminatory with respect to class and race. The innocent often find their way onto death row. In Illinois, for example, one inmate has been exonerated for every inmate executed over the last 12 years. Teacher and student actions - from Northwestern University in Illinois, to schools in Oakland, California, to Evergreen State College in Washington, and to Pennsylvania itself - have played key roles in freeing some of those among the 3,500 on death row U.S.A. or in rekindling debate on the death penalty after a decade of law and order vengeance.

- The risk to Jamal's life is magnified in today's climate of GROWING POLICE REPRESSION. Brutality and "racial profiling" are epidemic in the United States, alive on our school campuses, neighborhoods and highways. The nation's largest police organization has shocked civil liberties advocates by publishing a list of the names of educators and other Jamal supporters (reminiscent of the McCarthy witch-hunt era) on its police-maintained website.

- Jamal, often referred to as the "voice of the voiceless," has challenged the present political priorities of SPENDING MORE FOR PRISONS AND PUNISHMENT THAN FOR EDUCATION. The youth who increasingly rally to Mumia's cause in the name of justice and fair play know that we build jailhouse cell blocks more rapidly than schoolhouse classrooms, that we spend more on prisons than on state colleges and universities.

AS EDUCATORS, IN PENNSYLVANIA, ACROSS THE UNITED STATES AND THE WORLD, WE STRONGLY OPPOSE THE EXECUTION OF MUMIA ABU-JAMAL.

While there are those who believe Mumia is innocent and should be freed now, and others who have no opinion about his innocence, we are all united in viewing Mumia's 1982 trial as a travesty of justice, and affirm that he MUST have a new trial!