

Free the Class-War Prisoners!

This year's Holiday Appeal marks the 24th year of the Partisan Defense Committee's program of sending monthly stipends as an expression of solidarity to those imprisoned for standing up to racist capitalist repression and imperialist depredation. This program revived a tradition initiated by the International Labor Defense under James P. Cannon, its founder and first secretary (1925-1928). The PDC sends stipends to 16 class-war prisoners.

Mumia Abu-Jamal is a former Black Panther Party spokesman, a well-known supporter of the MOVE organization and an award-winning journalist known as "the voice of the voiceless." This past April, the U.S. Supreme Court summarily threw out Mumia's efforts to overturn his frame-up conviction based on the racist exclusion of black jurors from his 1982 trial. Ominously this same court has yet to rule on the prosecution's petition to reinstate the death penalty. The Philadelphia district attorney's office states that, whatever the Supreme Court decides, it will continue to push for Mumia's execution.

9 December 2009 is the 28th anniversary of Mumia's arrest for a killing that the cops know he did not commit. Mumia was framed up for the 1981 killing of Philadelphia police officer Daniel Faulkner and sentenced to death explicitly for his political views. Mountains of evidence proving Mumia's innocence, including the sworn confession of Arnold Beverly that he, not Mumia, shot and killed Faulkner, have been submitted to the courts. But to the racists in black robes, a court of law is no place for evidence of the innocence of this fighter for the oppressed.

While others plead with the current U.S. president and his attorney general to "investigate" violations of Mumia's "civil rights," the PDC says that Mumia's fate cannot be left in the hands of the government of the capitalists. The racist rulers hate Mumia because they see in him the spectre of black revolt. The stakes are high and the situation is grim, but any real fight for Mumia's freedom must be based on a class-struggle opposition to the capitalist rulers, who have entombed this innocent black man for more than half his life.

Leonard Peltier is an internationally renowned class-war prisoner. Peltier's incarceration for his activism in the American

Indian Movement has come to symbolize this country's racist repression of its native peoples, the survivors of centuries of genocidal oppression. Peltier's frame-up trial, for the 1975 deaths of two marauding FBI agents in what had become a war zone on the South Dakota Pine Ridge Reservation, shows what capitalist "justice" is all about. Although the lead government attorney has admitted, "We can't prove who shot those agents," and the courts have acknowledged blatant prosecutorial misconduct, the 65-year-old Peltier is still locked away. Outrageously, in August, the U.S. Parole Commission again turned down Peltier's parole request and coldbloodedly declared they would not reconsider his case for another 15 years.

Eight MOVE members—**Chuck Africa, Michael Africa, Debbie Africa, Janet Africa, Janine Africa, Delbert Africa, Eddie Africa** and **Phil Africa**—are in their 32nd year of prison. They were sentenced to 30-100 years after the 8 August 1978 siege of their Philadelphia home by over 600 heavily armed cops, having been falsely convicted of killing a police officer who died in the cops' own cross fire. In 1985, eleven of their MOVE family members, including five children, were massacred by Philly cops. This year, again, after more than three decades of unjust incarceration, nearly all of these innocent prisoners had parole hearings, but none were released.

Jaan Laaman and **Thomas Manning** are the two remaining anti-imperialist activists known as the Ohio 7 still in prison, convicted for their roles in a radical group that took credit for bank "expropriations" and bombings of symbols of U.S. imperialism, such as military and corporate offices, in the late 1970s and '80s. Before their arrests in 1984 and 1985, the Ohio 7 were targets of massive manhunts. Their children were kidnapped at gunpoint by the Feds.

The Ohio 7's politics were once shared by thousands of radicals during the Vietnam antiwar movement and by New Leftists who wrote off the possibility of winning the working class to a revolutionary program and saw themselves as an auxiliary of Third World liberation movements. But, like the Weathermen before them, the Ohio 7 were spurned by the "respectable" left. From a

proletarian standpoint, the actions of these leftist activists against imperialism and racist injustice are not a crime. They should not have served a day in prison.

Ed Poindexter and **Wopashitwe Mondo Eyen we Langa** are former Black Panther supporters and leaders of the Omaha, Nebraska, National Committee to Combat Fascism. They were victims of the FBI's deadly COINTELPRO operation under which 38 Black Panther Party members were killed and hundreds more imprisoned on frame-up charges. Poindexter and Mondo were railroaded to prison and sentenced to life for a 1970 explosion that killed a cop, and they have now served more than 37 years in jail. This year, the Nebraska Supreme Court denied Poindexter a new trial despite the fact that a crucial piece of evidence excluded from the original trial, a long-suppressed 911 audio tape, proved that testimony of the state's key witness was perjured.

Hugo Pinell is the last of the San Quentin 6 still in prison. He was a militant anti-racist leader of prison rights organizing along with George Jackson, his comrade and mentor, who was gunned down by prison guards in 1971. Despite numerous letters of support and no disciplinary write-ups for over 28 years, Pinell was again denied parole this year. Now in his 60s, Pinell continues to serve a life sentence at the notorious Pelican Bay Security Housing Unit in California.

Jamal Hart, Mumia's son, was sentenced in 1998 to 15½ years without parole on bogus firearms possession charges. Hart was targeted for his prominent activism in the campaign to free his father. Although Hart was initially charged under Pennsylvania law, which would have meant a probationary sentence, Clinton's Justice Department intervened to have Hart thrown into prison under federal law. The U.S. Third Circuit Court of Appeals has turned down Hart's *habeas corpus* petition, and he has faced myriad bureaucratic obstacles and racist targeting throughout his incarceration.

Contribute now! All proceeds from the Holiday Appeal will go to the Class-War Prisoners Stipend Fund. Send your contributions to: PDC, P.O. Box 99, Canal Street Station, New York, NY 10013; (212) 406-4252.

October 2009

Build PDC Holiday Appeal for Class-War Prisoners

In 1986, the Partisan Defense Committee revived an International Labor Defense (ILD) tradition of sending monthly stipends to class-war prisoners as an expression of solidarity. In addition to its regular monthly support, the ILD raised extra funds during the holidays for the prisoners and their families. Help build our program of monthly stipends to these victims of racist capitalist injustice.

NEW YORK P.O. Box 99, Canal St. Sta., New York, NY 10013, (212) 406-4252, e-mail: partisandefense@earthlink.net
CHICAGO P.O. Box 802867, Chicago, IL 60680, (312) 563-0442, e-mail: chicagopdc@sbcglobal.net
BAY AREA P.O. Box 77462, San Francisco, CA 94107, (510) 839-0852, e-mail: pdcbayarea@sbcglobal.net
LOS ANGELES P.O. Box 74575, Los Angeles, CA 90004, (213) 380-8897, e-mail: pdc-la@sbcglobal.net

The PDC is a class-struggle, non-sectarian legal and social defense organization which champions cases and causes in the interests of the whole of the working people. This purpose is in accordance with the political views of the Spartacist League.