

# Free the Class-War Prisoners!

*This year's Holiday Appeal marks the 29th 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.*

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**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." Framed up for the 1981 killing of a Philadelphia police officer, Mumia was sentenced to death explicitly for his political views. Federal and state courts have repeatedly refused to consider evidence proving Mumia's innocence, including the sworn confession of Arnold Beverly that he, not Mumia, shot and killed the policeman. In 2011 the Philadelphia district attorney's office dropped its longstanding effort to legally lynch America's foremost class-war prisoner. Mumia remains condemned to life in prison with no chance of parole.

**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 was framed up for the 1975 deaths of two FBI agents marauding in what had become a war zone on the South Dakota Pine Ridge Reservation. Although the lead government attorney has admitted, "We can't prove who shot those agents," and the courts have acknowledged blatant prosecutorial misconduct, the 70-year-old Peltier is not scheduled to be reconsidered for parole for another ten years! Peltier suffers from multiple serious medical conditions and is incarcerated far from his people and family.

Eight MOVE members—**Chuck Africa, Michael Africa, Debbie Africa, Janet Africa, Janine Africa, Delbert Africa, Eddie Africa** and **Phil Africa**—are in their 37th year of prison. After the 8 August 1978 siege of their Philadelphia home by over 600 heavily armed cops, they were sentenced to 30-100 years 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 when a bomb was dropped on their living quarters. After more than three decades of unjust incarceration, these innocent prisoners are routinely turned down at parole hearings. None have been released.

**Albert Woodfox** is the last of the Angola Three still incarcerated. Along with Herman Wallace and Robert King, Woodfox fought the vicious, racist and dehumanizing conditions in Louisiana's Angola prison and courageously organized a Black Panther Party chapter at the prison. Authorities framed up Woodfox and Wallace for the fatal stabbing of a prison guard in 1972 and falsely convicted King of killing a fellow inmate a year later. For over *42 years*, Woodfox has been locked down in Closed Cell Restricted (CCR) blocks, the longest stretch in solitary confinement ever in this country. His conviction has been overturned three times! According to his lawyers, he suffers from hypertension, heart disease, chronic renal insufficiency, diabetes, anxiety and insomnia—conditions no doubt caused and/or exacerbated by decades of vindictive and inhumane treatment.

**Jaun 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. The Ohio 7's politics were once shared by thousands of radicals but, like the Weath-

ermen 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 crimes. 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 are 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 spent more than 40 years behind bars. Nebraska courts have repeatedly denied Poindexter and Mondo new trials despite the fact that a crucial piece of evidence excluded from the original trial, a 911 audio tape long suppressed by the FBI, proved that testimony of the state's key witness was perjured.

**Hugo Pinell**, the last of the San Quentin 6 still in prison, has been in solitary isolation for more than four decades. 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 in 2009. Now in his late 60s, Pinell continues to serve a life sentence after having finally been released from the notorious torture chamber Pelican Bay SHU in California, a focal point for hunger strikes against grotesque inhuman conditions.

*Contribute now! All proceeds from the Holiday Appeals will go to the Class-War Prisoners Stipend Fund. This is not charity but an elementary act of solidarity with those imprisoned for their opposition to racist capitalism and imperialist depredations. Send your contributions to: PDC, P.O. Box 99, Canal Street Station, New York, NY 10013; (212) 406-4252.*

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