

Freedom is Now in Sight

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New evidence, recently found, and suppressed for decades, could be the key to relief for Mumia Abu-Jamal.

Joe McGill and Ed Rendell, trial prosecutor and DA, respectively, manipulated evidence and framed Mumia Abu-Jamal for first degree murder in 1982.

Six boxes of undisclosed case files labeled "Mumia Abu-Jamal" were found in a furniture closet last December by new DA Larry Krasner. Here is the exculpatory "Brady" evidence that was inside:

- A letter from a witness demanding his money.
- Memo after memo to and from Joe McGill tracking the open cases of another key witness.
- Handwritten notes on original files, closely tracking the race of jurors.

Now we know that for 37 years the District Attorney's office actively lied. They scrubbed clean every single document production, during multiple appeals, for years. It is cliché and almost predictable: evidence "lost" in a storage closet for 37 years by evil, absent-minded hoarders.

Make no mistake-- this evidence would have directly challenged the only "witnesses" at trial who identified Mumia Abu-Jamal as the shooter of officer Daniel Faulkner on Dec. 9, 1981.

The testimony of these two witnesses was compromised, something the jury was kept from knowing. One witness had as many as 35 prior convictions and 4-5 open cases. Now we know the DA was monitoring those cases very closely and asking to be advised when they were in court. The other witness to the shooting was driving a cab on a suspended license and was on probation for throwing a Molotov cocktail into a school for pay. The jury never heard this. This information certainly would have challenged prosecutor Joe McGill's statement to the jury that they had nothing to gain from lying. Remember, this is a jury who asked for re-instruction on the charges and were wavering on a finding of 1st Degree Murder. Remember Albert "I am going to help them they fry the nigger" Sabo, was the judge. And Alfonso "I retired with full pay and was indicted" Giordano, a commander, was the highest ranking officer on the scene that night.

On July 3rd, 1982, this was not an open and shut case. The petition to the Superior Court also raises the reinstated appeal issues from the Castille decision handed down by Judge Tucker. These include claims of improper jury selection (Batson Claims), Ineffective assistance of counsel, and errors of law made by the court in previous appeals.

Every time you see Joe McGill in the courtroom or at an FOP event, or you see Ed Rendell at a party or a campaign event, remember this- they were stepping on the scales of justice from the beginning.

Mumia came within 10 days of being executed because of this misconduct. I was there. I got that call from the strip cell. Mumia had nothing but an orange jump suit, a half a sheet of paper and the cartridge of a pen (so he could send another prisoner as a proxy to the law library). Before and after his two death warrants he was held in solitary confinement on death row for decades!

Fast forward to 2017: Common Pleas Court Judge Leon Tucker admonishes the District Attorney to produce all of the requested material from their files. Finally, having no faith in their review, he demands that they deliver all of their files to his chambers. There he found documents revealing the bias of PA Supreme Court Judge Castille that the DA had somehow “missed” - or willfully suppressed. After all of that, in 2018, newly elected DA Larry Krasner comes across six boxes of original trial material labeled “Mumia Abu-Jamal” in a storage closet. A week later they find hundreds of more boxes in that “storage cavern.”

Please know that the road ahead may still be rough. But there is hope.

Freedom is more possible than it has ever been before. Join Judith Ritter & Sam Spital, of the NAACP Legal Defense & Education Fund, his criminal defense team. Join Bret Grote of the Abolitionist Law Center and Robert Boyle the legal team on his medical treatment case.