

# Prison Radio

A project of the Redwood Justice Fund

## Mumia Abu-Jamal's Radio Broadcasts

### Ra'shida & JR: The Block Report

(with Jamal Abdullah Al-Amin)

Star People's Sound: [mp3, 124 KBs, :09](#)

Part I: [mp3, 16.8 MBs, 20:59](#)

Part II: [mp3, 21.2 MBs, 26:32](#)

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POCC Radio- "Ra'shida & JR: the Block Report with Mumia Abu-Jamal " (8:31)

JR:

You're listening to the Block Report with JR and Ra'shida AKA POCC Radio. Our guest is political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal- a famed political prisoner. Many of you may know him, if not by name, by the persona: he dreads, one of the founding members of the BPP in Philadelphia at the age of sixteen. He has been locked down since 1981 for a crime that he did not commit, which was the alleged killing of a police officer. He became a supporter of the MOVE organization in exposing the police terrorism that the group was encountering because of their political and spiritual beliefs. How you doin Mu?

MAJ:

Good JR and Ra'shida, I'm cool, I'm cool, long live John Africa.

R'ashida:

Mumia, can you describe the conditions of the concentration camp you're in, and what's going on with your case?

MAJ:

Well, this joint is probably very similar to joints all over the country, especially in California when you think about it, it's 22 and 2 lock down- meaning 22 hours in a cell 2 hours in a cage they call the yard. The yard has about 15 or 17 dog pens about, I think about 50 square feet or something like that.

The case is on appeal to the third circuit and the federal courts in Pennsylvania, and you know, it's a rumble, like every day is. A court room is just another place to rumble.

Ra'shida:

Are you still on death row right now?

MAJ:

Absolutely (laughing), ain't nothin changed, I think. You know, I'm surprised sometimes when I read stuff in the paper because I'm like damn, who they talking bout. I've read that I've got life, I'm out in population, Im rollin. I'm the same cell surrounded by dudes in the same type of situation- death row cells. Ain't nothing changed

JR:

You, like so many of our political prisoners such as Jamil Abdullah Al-Amin are locked up primarily because of your ability

to communicate with the average person. Why is that a threat to the United States Government?

MAJ:

Well, you know, what we've had in this country- and I'm not just talking about since the 1960's, but what we've had for literally 500 years is a war against Black life. As I was telling Ra'shida a few moments ago, you know, I was talking about Columbus coming to the United States. Well, the first day he came, he brought to the so-called Native Americans slavery. When they died out so quickly from their genocide, a priest named Bartolemew De Las Casas wrote to Spain and said look, we need to go to Africa and pick some of them people up because they're tougher than these Indians were. That brought unmitigated hell on millions and millions of African people. And that war goes on today. Look at the condition of Black people in America, and it's just sad. I mean its really quite messed up no matter how you want to count it. You want to talk about education, you want to talk about healthcare, you want to talk about housing, you want to talk about hey- the prison industrial complex.

We're badly impacted anywhere you look and that's because, whether we're conscious of it or not, everyday we breathe, we're at war.

Ra'shida:

Mumia, can you talk about the US government's tracking, incarceration and assassination of the children of Black political leaders such as your son Jamal, such as chairman Fred Hampton Jr, son of chairman Fred Hampton of the BPP of Chicago, or DeAndre Williams who's the grandson of chancellor Williams, Tupac Shakur- the son of Black Panther member Afeni Shakur. Can you talk about that?

MAJ:

A lot of people, even so-called scholars, people of the so-called left, will tell you that COINTELPRO ended about 1971-72 when it was uncovered by a group of Radicals in Media, Pennsylvania which outlined COINTELPRO. But, that's not so. A former FBI agent, who was a Black man raised in Baltimore, wrote a book about his life in the FBI and he read the files, read the library works and he said if something works, why do you stop doing it? He said what they did is they changed the name and they're doing the same thing then as they're doing now. I mean, this is not just a guess. If you look at the so-called Patriot Act, everything in the patriot act, that is everything that is law now was illegal during the 1970's. You know, how they're going through people's mail, how they're listening to phone calls, not just prison, but everybody. How they're going in people's houses, how they're setting people up and framing them- all that stuff now, they're using the system and law to do what was illegal back in the 1970's. People who we son's of panthers and daughters of Panthers, if they manifested the least amount of political consciousness, I'm convinced they were targeted. They didn't have to be sons and daughters of Panthers, but just sons and daughters of people who were conscious like the grandson of Malcolm X, like the son of Chancellor Williams-the great African-American historian. If people understand that it's a state of war, you won't be surprised with what the enemy does. But if you believe the fiction that "we all free," then you will be surprised, it will come from left field and you'll never see it coming.

JR:

You talked about your life and the lives of many in the BPP, as well as your analysis reflecting back on those years. What are some of some of the most important things that you think that the young people of today can learn from the BPP?

MAJ:

I think the most important thing is that this was a young people's party- most people your age and Ra'shida's age. When you think of Huey or Eldridge or Bobby, you think of them as old heads, it's natural. But, they weren't old heads when they started the BPP. No, Eldridge was older than most, but people don't remember that Huey was like 24 years old. 24 Years old! And he built one of the most powerful revolutionary organizations in recent Black history. That's the most important thing, I want people, especially young people to understand that they have it within themselves to build whatever they feel needs to be built. He didn't ask for permission, I mean he didn't like write a letter to Malcolm when he was alive, or to Dr. Martin Luther King and say hey this is a good idea, I think I need to do this. Him and some brothas got together and he said we've got to do this! And they studied and they made it happen, they did it. Most of the established leaders were aghast, they were freaked out, they were not at all pleased, but he didn't care and they didn't care. Young people today shouldn't care what old-heads and elders think. Do what you feel in your heart is right, what you feel is necessary to bring our people forward from the situation we're in. And you'll get a lot of opposition, but so what we getting opposition everyday, anyway.

Thank you both JR and Ra'shida and the Block Report. Just love to the youth, love to all the people, continue to resist, continue to love and support your people. You know, learn from history and learn even the mistakes from history. I think I was pretty honest in We Want Freedom in talking about many of the mistakes we made. Nobody's perfect, you know, we try, we fail, we get up, we try again. We're only human. But it's our job to free our people from this hell we're living in and have been living in for 500 years

Prison Operator: You have 15 seconds left to talk.

MAJ:  
You're doing a hell of a job.

JR:  
Man, keep ya head up, know we're struggling for you Mu- We ain't forgot you.

MAJ:  
This is Mumia Abu-Jamal on the Block Report

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