

2009 ILWU Convention Resolution: Racist Oppression and the Death Penalty

Whereas, the ILWU and the militant wing of the American labor movement, the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) grew out of the class struggles in the 1920's and 1930's mobilizing against anti-worker and racist oppression, notably the cases of San Francisco labor organizer Tom Mooney and the 9 black Scottsboro Boys of Alabama, falsely accused of rape, and

Whereas, police, courts and laws have historically been used against working people in our struggle to organize unions and fight back against racist oppression, and

Whereas, the ILWU has a long-standing principle of opposition to racism and to the death penalty, a vestige of slavery, which is the ultimate form of government oppression, and

Whereas, African Americans, Latin Americans and other people of color are disproportionately imprisoned on death row across the country facing execution, and

Whereas, Mumia Abu-Jamal, Troy Anthony Davis, Kevin Cooper, Leonard Peltier and the San Francisco 8 are some of the most prominent victims of these government frame-ups, Jamal and Davis accused of killing police and Peltier of FBI agents on an Indian reservation, and

Whereas, the U.S. Supreme Court recently denied the appeal of Jamal, while Davis and Cooper lost before federal appeals courts, and

Whereas, Martina Correia, sister of Troy Davis, spoke passionately this year at ILWU Local 10's Black History month rally against racist repression and has now initiated a lawsuit challenging the constitutionality of executing an innocent person,

Therefore Be It Resolved that the ILWU reaffirms our opposition to the death penalty, supports Martina Correia's lawsuit and demands freedom for these victims of government repression, just as we did for Tom Mooney and the Scottsboro Boys in the wake of the Big Strike of '34, on this the 75th anniversary of that momentous struggle.

**reprint by: The Labor Action Committee To Free Mumia Abu-Jamal
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