



# NATIONAL FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLICE®

328 MASSACHUSETTS AVE., N.E.  
WASHINGTON, DC 20002  
PHONE 202-547-8189 • FAX 202-547-8190

CHUCK CANTERBURY  
NATIONAL PRESIDENT

JAMES O. PASCO, JR.  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

14 April 2011

Randi Weingarten  
President  
American Federation of Teachers  
555 New Jersey Avenue, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20001

Dear President Weingarten,

I am writing on behalf of the members of the Fraternal Order of Police to express my outrage and disgust at the passage of a resolution adopted at the March 2011 conference of the California Federation of Teachers (CFT) in support of convicted cop-killer Wesley Cook, who is better known by his alias--Mumia Abu-Jamal.

I cannot understand why the CFT, which like us represents rank-and-file employees, would support a murderer. In fact, Abu-Jamal's victim was a rank-and-file law enforcement officer and a member of F.O.P. Local Lodge #5 in Philadelphia. I can only assume that the membership did so out of ignorance of the facts or that they were misled by this killer's propaganda machine. I want to set the record straight and would respectfully, yet urgently, request that you and the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) publicly reject this repugnant resolution. I do not want this to jeopardize the ability of our organizations to cooperate in defense of collective bargaining for public employees or public pension issues.

Wesley Cook, a cab driver calling himself Mumia Abu-Jamal, was convicted in 1982 for the murder of 26 year-old Philadelphia Police Officer Daniel J. Faulkner. He was sentenced to death by a jury he personally helped select. Since his conviction, Abu-Jamal has assembled an impressive array of celebrity spokespersons and cynically directs them to raise money and stage benefits on his behalf. Using false and misleading information, he has convinced many people and organizations that he, not Danny Faulkner and his widow, is the victim of injustice. Nothing could be further from the truth.

His conviction is based on the sworn testimony of five eyewitnesses and overwhelming forensic evidence. The murder weapon, a firearm owned and registered to the killer, was found at the scene a few feet from Abu-Jamal who wore an empty holster.

Following his conviction, the murderer alleged that his 1982 trial was unfair and unconstitutional. With his celebrity supporters, death penalty opponents and a variety of radical organizations in tow, Abu-Jamal launched an international fund-raising and public relations effort to demand a new trial and win his release. The CFT is merely his most recent dupe.

Under Pennsylvania's Post Conviction Relief Act (PCRA), Abu-Jamal was entitled to one PCRA hearing, which he was granted in 1995. His public relations campaign was so effective that the State

—BUILDING ON A PROUD TRADITION—

of Pennsylvania granted him an unusual second hearing in 1996 and then an unprecedented third PCRA hearing in 1997. The effectiveness of his media campaign, however, was insufficient to eclipse the overwhelming evidence against him in the courtroom. The Pennsylvania Supreme Court dismissed his claims of unfairness and unconstitutionality on all three occasions, most recently in their 1998 decision. The U.S. Supreme Court rejected his appeal in 1990 and again in October 1999.

His conviction was upheld yet again in 2001, although the death sentence was voided pending a new sentencing hearing. The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit issued an opinion specifically rejecting the false claims which appear in CFT's Resolution 19—those of racial bias on the part of the judge and jury and those made by the killer under *Batson v. Kentucky*. The Third Circuit did support the early ruling that the death penalty should be voided, yet despite this, the murderer's lawyers appealed the decision and requested a hearing before the full court. This appeal was rejected, as was his appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court.

Most recently, the U.S. Supreme Court ordered the Third Circuit to reconsider its decision and reinstate the death penalty for Abu-Jamal. A three judge panel heard arguments last November but no decision has been announced.

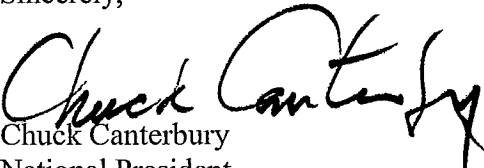
It is important, Madam President, to recognize two things: our criminal justice system has provided this killer with every possible platform and avenue to argue his case and at no time in the almost 30 years since his conviction has any jury or court found a reasonable doubt as to the fact that he shot and killed Officer Danny Faulkner on the night of 9 December 1981. This makes the premise of this resolution hateful to us and to all law enforcement officers in every region of the country. It has no basis in reality, much less fact, and we utterly reject it.

The FOP is working hard to defend the rights of teachers in every region of the country as part of a unified front of public employees. All of us are engaged in a pitched battle for survival and the defense of our hard-earned rights as employees. Yet, the CFT is devoting its precious time to defending a murderer.

This resolution, if it remains unchallenged by the AFT, would cast grave doubts on your leadership as well as pose serious questions as to the ability of the FOP to work with your organization at any level. On behalf of the more than 330,000 members of the Fraternal Order of Police, the families of slain law enforcement officers and the honored memory of the officers killed in the line of duty, I urge you repudiate the resolution supporting this cop-killer.

I look forward to hearing from you on this matter..

Sincerely,

  
Chuck Canterbury  
National President

cc: Richard L. Trumka, President, AFL-CIO  
Marty Hittleman, President, California Federation of Teachers