

Political Prisoners in America's Gulag

By [Stephen Lendman](#)

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Picture: Mumia Abu-Jamal, sentenced to death in 1982, is the former President of the [Philadelphia Association of Black Journalists](#) and was member of the [Black Panther Party](#) until the late 70's.

With around 2.4 million incarcerated, America has by far the world's largest prison system. Two-thirds in it are Black or Latino.

Most held are non-violent. Over half are for drug related charges. Around 75% are Blacks or Latinos. On all charges, many are persecuted political prisoners.

In her book titled, ["The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness,"](#) Michelle Alexander called today's Jim Crow a modern-day elitist-designed racial caste system. Believing poor Blacks (and Latinos) are dangerous and economically superfluous, America's gulag became an instrument of social control. According to Alexander:

"Any movement to end mass incarceration must deal with (it) as a racial caste system, not (a method) of crime control. We need an effective system of crime prevention and control in our communities, but that is not what the current system is. (It's) better designed to create crime, and a perpetual class of people labeled criminals, rather than to eliminate crime or reduce the number of criminals."

America's most vulnerable are victimized by racism, poverty, judicial unfairness, get tough on crime policies, a guilty unless proved innocent mentality, three strikes and you're out, bigoted drug laws, and advocacy for social justice issues challenging repressive state policies.

An earlier article called America's gulag the shame of the nation. It reflects mercilessly persecuting its own. At the same time, it wages imperial wars, lets banks commit grand theft, frees other corporate predators to operate extrajudicially, and punishes society's most vulnerable for resisting. It also targets Muslims to facilitate America's global war on terror.

Russell Maroon Shoats



A self-designated "New African Political Prisoner of War," he's serving life/plus for alleged

1970 involvement in a policeman's death and wounding of another.

Incarcerated in 1972, he's spent 40 years in over a dozen federal, state, and local prisons and jails, including over 21 years in solitary confinement locked down 23 or more hours daily. More on that below.

In 1979, he was in maximum security confinement, during which time he was "forcibly drugged and on one occasion hospitalized from a hospital induced overdose...."

In the 1960s, he became politically active. He joined the African liberation movement, and was a Philadelphia-based Black Unity Council founding member. In 1969, it merged with Black Panther Party's Philadelphia chapter.

Compromised of prisoners' families, former inmates, and supporters, the [Human Rights Coalition](#) (HRC) calls America's prison system exploitive, punitive and corrupt. It says:

Most people "in prisons are poor, (black or) brown, urban, functionally illiterate, unemployed or under-employed before they were locked down, and are there for (alleged) non-violent crimes. The prison system reflects all inequalities in our society...."

As a result, it wants the current system abolished. It's racist and unjust. Shoats co-founded HRC.

Together with the Center for Constitutional Rights (CCR), National Lawyers Guild and others, HRC's campaigning to free Shoats from isolation and return him to the general prison population.

On his behalf, a letter-writing/petition campaign was launched. Support him by [signing the petition](#) for humane treatment. Now 68, he's held at Pennsylvania's:

State Correctional Institution (SCI) Greene

175 Progress Drive

Waynesburg, PA 15370

724-852-2902

Prison authorities call him a security threat because of past attempted and successful escapes. In fact, he's kept isolated based on false allegations about planning a 1980 prison takeover. He's also persecuted for his activism, leadership, and human rights support.

America's Eighth Amendment prohibits cruel and unusual punishment. It's prison system commits it ruthlessly with impunity. Shoats is one of many victims. Locked up, they're out of sight and mind.

Everyone deserves justice. America's most vulnerable get none, especially those in the maw of a racist, brutalizing, dehumanizing prison system.

Comments on Two Other Prisoners

On February 16, the [FBI Detroit Division](#) announced "underwear bomber" Uman Farouk

Abdulmutallab's life sentence for conviction on charges of:

conspiracy to commit terrorism;

attempted murder;

willfully placing a destructive device on an aircraft;

attempting to use "a weapon of mass destruction;"

attempting to destroy a civil aircraft; and

three counts of "possession of a destructive device in furtherance of a crime of violence."

Attorney General Eric Holder called Abdulmutallab "a remorseless terrorist who believes it is his duty to kill Americans." Holder's only skills include hyperbole, making false allegations, and sending innocent victims to prison.

Abdulmutallab was set up. On December 25, 2009, he was aboard an Amsterdam - Detroit bound flight. US officials claimed he was trained in Yemen by Al Qaeda, obtained explosive chemicals (PETN), and tried detonating them on board.

In fact, he was a protected CIA patsy, set up as a provocation to facilitate America's Yemen's civil war involvement.

Earlier denied a UK entrance visa, he wasn't on a no fly list. He paid cash for a one-way Detroit ticket, checked no luggage, had a US visa but no passport, and was helped on board by a "well-dressed Indian" to facilitate a false flag scheme, using him as a convenient dupe.

CIA/Mossad/Indian Research Analysis Wing (RAW) planned it. Abdulmutallab's PETN was weak, technically deficient, didn't go off properly, and had fire cracker strength at most.

No matter. Railroaded by Justice Department prosecutors, he'll spend the rest of his life doing hard time in prison.

On February 17, [New York Times](#) writer Charlie Savage headlined, "FBI Arrests Man in a Suspected Terrorist Plot Near the US Capitol," saying:

Amine El Khalifi, a Moroccan national, was arrested "carrying a MAC-10 gun and a vest packed with nails and what he thought (were) explosives in what (federal agents) said was a plan to carry out a suicide bombing at the United States Capitol."

Based on numerous past false flags, be very suspicious about all Justice Department charges. Against El Khalifi, they look very much like entrapping an innocent/naive dupe into involvement in what he had no prior intent, desire, or willingness to do.

Holder, however, defends entrapment. He calls it an "essential law enforcement tool in uncovering and preventing terror attacks."

In fact, they're maliciously manufactured to manipulate fear and justify America's global war on terrorism. Nearly always, Muslims are charged. It's part of America's war on Islam.

Innocent victims are charged, prosecuted, convicted and imprisoned. Justice is malevolently denied. Imperial wars are facilitated. Vital social benefits are lost to fund them.

The Times article said El Khalifi posed no threat. An undercover sting operation gave him "inoperative weapons." He was set up to entrap another victim. He's like numerous others foiled in the nick of time. Ask why alleged home-grown terrorists don't succeed.

Perhaps it's because they don't exist except in bogus Justice Department charges and major media scoundrels regurgitating them without challenge.

Assistant attorney general Lisa Monaco lied, saying:

"Today's case underscores the continuing threat we face from home-grown violent extremists. Thanks to a coordinated law enforcement effort, El Khalifi's alleged plot was thwarted before anyone was harmed."

In fact, the only extremist home-grown threats are federal, state and local officials, as well as corporate ones they serve.

As a result, innocent victims wrongfully suffer. Many rot unjustly in federal and state gulags while government and corporate criminals do what they please with impunity. It's high time public rage challenged them.

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