

The Troy Davis case. An example of injustice and racism

Troy Davis reprieved for 1 to 7 days: a miracle for the fourth time

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There has been, for the fourth time, a miracle. It is one hour and thirty-seven minutes after the time scheduled for Troy Davis's execution. There is apparently a reprieve for 1 to 7 days by the Supreme Court. A reprieve is different from a stay. Even if it only lasts till tomorrow, this again is a victory for all those people who stood up for justice.

Martina Correia, Troy Davis's sister, Dejuan Correia, her 17 year old son who spoke on the meaning of "I am Troy Davis," the sign of this movement held by several hundred students from Morehouse and Spelman, the centers of the early civil rights movement and this one, Ed Dubose, President of the Georgia NAACP, Benjamin Jealous, President of the NAACP, Pastor Raphael Warnock of the Ebenezer Baptist Church (the church King led) and Larry Cox, the President of Amnesty International have been very impressive. This is a serious and admirable continuation of the civil rights movement, and is calling many people into action. It is an international movement; there are large demonstration to free Troy Davis in London, Paris, Marseille, Reykjavik, Iceland, and many other countries.

One other note. Mark McPhail, the police officer who was murdered, was working off duty that night in 1989. He saw a homeless person being pistol whipped and tried to stop it. He was shot. What he did is an admirable thing and what police officers should do. Anyone who cares about the law should want to put his murderer off the streets for life. The Georgia "legal" establishment has behaved and behaves wretchedly, with no concern for the law, willing to execute an innocent man sooner than find the murderer. The murder appears to be – there is now a witness – the eyewitness who first accused Davis, Sylester "Red" Coles. The witness is a woman, one of the 7 who have recanted, who was threatened by Coles because she heard him say that he did the murder but that he had children and had to let Troy Davis die to take care of them. Her apartment was destroyed and she has left the state, but has spoken out..

While there was no physical evidence against Troy Davis, Coles had a gun registered to him of the type that fired the bullet. Police and district attorneys and judges, worthy of the name, could investigate..

Clarence Thomas, on this one issue, is apparently working on the Supreme Court for a decent resolution.

I spoke in a class today about this – comparative practices of capital punishment in the trial

and hemlock given to Socrates (and also to Polemarchos by the Tyranny of the Thirty) and capital punishment in the United States. I asked the students how many countries in addition to the United States practice capital punishment – 4 – and which they are. The guesses were slow but China came quickly and finally Iran, Saudi Arabia and Pakistan. Mexico, Malaysia and Israel were erroneous guesses (those countries are comparatively civilized in this respect). 49% of the death row prisoners are black (13% of the population); some 234 prisoners have now been freed because of DNA testing, a very large number with an execution rate now at 100 per year (down from 300 in the 1990s). Racism toward blacks (which also drags down chicanos and white) plainly makes the American “legal” system stand out compared to the injustice toward Socrates who had a serious trial, spoke his mind, and accepted (though

The Troy Davis case is now an example of injustice which rivals Dumas’ Man in the Iron Mask. Troy Davis said today that he is part of and wants to stand for all the Troy Davises who are in this position, past and future. One has but to look at the case and the grotesqueness – and, in particular, the racism – of the death penalty stands out.

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