



## The “Judicial Death” of Cynthia White

Cynthia White is now dead, because Judge Sabo says she is. Never mind that people have seen her walking around very much alive. “As far as I’m concerned, she’s dead,” bellowed Judge Sabo. “I’m making a ruling. We’re finished!”

The reason that Cynthia White had to be ruled dead was to overcome ever more damaging revelations about how Mumia Abu-Jamal was framed up by police and prosecutors. An important new witness, Pamela Jenkins, had come into court and testified about Cynthia White. Cynthia White was the chief witness against Mumia in his original trial in 1982. Jenkins now revealed that Cynthia White had been a police informant, and that both she and White had been pressured by the police to testify that Mumia had been the shooter.

The fact that White had been a police informant had been withheld from the defense in the original trial. This alone is grounds for a new trial for Mumia. But then Pamela Jenkins dropped a real bomb shell. She had seen Cynthia White only a few months before, and in the company of a former police officer - a cop Jenkins had known well, both as his girl friend and later when she provided evidence against him in Philadelphia’s police scandal trials.

### “She’s Dead - Take Our Word for It!”

Since Jenkins had already presented credible testimony against several police officers in other cases, the D.A.’s office had to come up with something special to discredit her testimony. Their new tactic was to claim that Cynthia White had died in 1992. Yet it was only after the Pennsylvania Supreme court ordered Judge Sabo to hear Pamela Jenkins’ testimony, that they suddenly made the claim that Cynthia White was dead. What they produced as evidence was a partial copy of a death certificate for a Cynthia Williams who died in New Jersey in 1992. A Philadelphia police detective then testified that the FBI had

“authenticated” that Williams had the same fingerprints as White. When the defense attempted to call witnesses who could testify that Cynthia White was alive and well, Sabo refused to hear them. He would only allow witnesses who would testify that White was dead. The whole story was so weak that it began to unravel immediately. The DA’s office refused to produce the actual fingerprints. And with good reason because the fingerprint code listed for White in Philadelphia’s documents were quite different from the fingerprint code listed in the New Jersey documents for Williams.

It also turned out that the cause of death for Williams was listed as “unknown,” the New Jersey medical examiner who signed the death certificate had previously worked for 20 years for the Philadelphia Medical Examiners Office, and - to top it off - the body of Williams was cremated so that no one could ever check the facts!

Finally, the Ruth Ray listed on the death certificate the as the mother of the deceased Cynthia Williams has given a sworn statement to the defense that she is not the mother of either Cynthia White or Cynthia Williams.

Philadelphia’s Witness Persecution Program A few days after the Pennsylvania Supreme Court ordered Pamela Jenkins’ testimony to be heard, she was arrested by Philadelphia police on a bogus felony charge of receiving stolen property. As in the case of Veronica Jones, another witness for Mumia who was arrested after she stepped forward to testify, this blatant attempt at witness coercion was a miserable failure. Pamela Jenkins stood strong in court in exposing the details of the frame up. There is a real danger that the police, having declared Cynthia White dead, may now seek to make it a reality.

*SOURCES: Courtroom notes and legal briefs*

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