

In the U.S. and everywhere: Abolish the death penalty

Free Mumia Berlin, Oktober 2026

Keith LaMar is not an isolated case. State-sanctioned killing in the United States has been carried out almost continuously since the country's founding in 1776 and, following a brief hiatus, has resumed in several U.S. states since 1976. Of the 50 U.S. states, 27 still have the death penalty in their constitutions, even though four of them do not currently apply it. Twenty-three other U.S. states have already abolished the death penalty entirely.

In Ohio, for example—where Keith LaMar is also facing the death penalty—a total of 27 executions are scheduled between 2027 and 2030. These are all executions that outgoing Governor Marc Dewine postponed during his term because he refuses to carry them out for various reasons. It is currently unclear whether a successor following the midterm elections on November 20 will continue this de facto moratorium or, instead, order the execution of the prisoners, as some Republican governors are currently doing with great zeal in other states.

Florida Governor DeSantis is the leading executioner of prisoners in the U.S. this year: he has already carried out 15 executions, and more are already scheduled. In a total of 8 other states, 55 executions have been scheduled this year, most of which have already been carried out. The far-right discourse on criminal justice in the U.S. since Trump took office has thus led to another increase in state-sanctioned killings—which is what executions of prisoners are, in legal terms—compared to previous years. Last year, there were 33 executions, and 11 in 2021.

What lies behind this ideological enthusiasm for the murder of defenseless people?

As early as 1955, Albert Camus wrote the essay “The Guillotine: Reflections on the Death Penalty.” In the essay, he examines the argument that the death penalty serves as a deterrent. He expresses strong doubts about its deterrent effect. He cited three key counterarguments: (Quote)

1. Society itself does not believe in the deterrent effect.
2. There is no evidence that people who have decided to commit murder are dissuaded from their plans by the threat of the death penalty.
3. Does the imposition of the death penalty serve to satisfy repugnant urges? (End of quote)

The death penalty is not an answer to murder or brutal violence. When the state sets itself up as the judge of life and death, it is not justice that prevails, but revenge and retribution—and in many cases, the verdicts are driven by entirely different motives, such as politically repressive, racist, and classist reasons aimed at securing dominance.

The oft-cited authoritarian argument—that the families of murder victims can thus find closure—has been refuted time and again. In recent years, we have seen, particularly in the United States, that family members have frequently spoken out against executions and stood in solidarity with the prisoners. Their call to the state has often been: “Not in my name!”

Whether it’s the criminalization of the poor, racial exclusion, the detention and deportation of refugees, the terror inflicted by the ICE agency, compulsory military service, or the industrial exploitation of prisoners: the current authoritarian tide in the U.S., with its repressive propaganda, seems to be sparking enthusiasm and following worldwide by offering people the chance to brutally trample on those below them.

Fortunately, however, there are many people far beyond the United States who recognize this and are taking action against it: whether by raising public awareness of the struggles for survival waged by affected prisoners—such as Mumia Abu-Jamal or, more recently, Keith LaMar—by waging legal and political battles against the death penalty, or by providing material support to family members and prisoners. The death penalty is one of the most brutal instruments of terror used by those in power, whether in Iran, China, Japan, Uganda, or—soon—in Israel or the U.S. Upholding human rights and building a liberated society also requires the worldwide abolition of the death penalty:

No state has the right to murder prisoners!

Abolish the death penalty—everywhere!

Free Keith LaMar, Free Mumia - Free Them All!