

# Jackson Says Abu-Jamal Case Proves Injustice

WASHINGTON, Aug 8 (Reuter) - Civil rights leader Jesse Jackson said Tuesday the O.J. Simpson and Susan Smith trials demonstrated there was no justice in the way the death penalty was applied in the United States.

Jackson compared the treatment of Simpson and Smith with that of Mumia Abu-Jamal, a former Black Panther who Monday was granted an indefinite stay of execution but remains on death row for the 1981 killing of a Philadelphia

policeman. "On one hand there is Susan Smith, who by her own admission of guilt killed her two children. Her life has been spared," Jackson, who met Abu-Jamal as a spiritual adviser Monday, told a news conference.

"There is the highly publicized case of O.J. Simpson, where the first decision made was to spare his life no matter the outcome," he said. The Los Angeles district attorney decided before Simpson's trial began not to seek the death penalty for the football legend.

"You are more likely to die," said Jackson.

Abu-Jamal's case has drawn widespread international attention. Foreign political leaders and activist groups have called for his sentence to be commuted.

Angelou, Henry Louis Gates, Molly Ivins, Spike Lee, Sting, Gunter Grass, Michael Moore and Salman Rushdie, signed a similar statement in the ad.

"Unless Mumia Abu-Jamal gets a fair trial, justice will not be done. I refuse to stand by silently and let this political execution happen. Please grant a new trial for Mumia Abu-Jamal," the coupon-like cards said.

The International Concerned Friends and Family of Mumia Abu-Jamal sponsored the ad, the Times said.

## Man Who Assaulted Rosa Parks Sentenced To 8-15 Years

DETROIT - The man who assaulted civil rights hero Rosa Parks was sentenced to eight to 15 years in prison Monday on the same day Parks was to be honored for her role in the Montgomery bus boycott 40 years ago.

Joseph Skipper was sentenced by Records Court Judge Dalton Roberson about one year after he was arrested for breaking into Parks' Detroit home and striking the then-81-year-old woman several times in the face.

With time off for good behavior, Skipper will be eligible for parole in five years, four months and two days.

Skipper, who was 28 at the time he was arrested, pleaded guilty to unarmed robbery and breaking and entering in the case, which also involved two other elderly women.

Dick Padzieski, chief of operations for the Wayne County Prosecutor's Office, said law

enforcement officials would have preferred Skipper receive the maximum sentence of 10-15 years. But he noted that the judge was hampered by restrictions preventing him from imposing more than two-thirds of the mandatory sentence.

"We are not unhappy with the sentence," he said.

Skipper will soon be turned over to the Michigan Department of Corrections, where he will be assigned to a state prison. Corrections spokesman Warren Williams said Skipper may end up being transferred out of state or to a federal facility for his own protection.

"This is an individual who might be at some increased risk here in our prison system," he said.

Skipper, who like Parks is black, told police he did not know he was breaking into her house when he was searching for money to buy crack cocaine. But he did recognize the woman



ROSA PARKS

often referred to as the "Mother of the Civil Rights Movement" after he was inside her home.

Parks made history in 1955 when she refused a white man's demands to give up her seat in the front of a bus in Montgomery, Alabama. Parks was arrested for violating local segregation laws. Soon after that, blacks boycotted the city's bus system.

A national celebration honoring Parks and the 40th anniversary of that boycott was beginning with a black-tie reception in Detroit Monday.

## Witness Says Reynolds Offered Her Bribe

CHICAGO - A 21-year-old Chicago woman testified Wednesday that U.S. Rep. Mel Reynolds offered her cash not to cooperate with prosecutors regarding sexual misconduct allegations against him.

Stephanie Adams said that Reynolds offered her \$10,000 in January 1995 — \$5,000 "before the trial was over and the other \$5,000 after the trial."

Reynolds is not on trial for his alleged bribe of Adams, but prosecutors are using her testimony to show a pattern of obstruction of justice by Reynolds, court officials said.

Adams testified she met the 43-year-old Reynolds while walking home from school when she was 16, but further details of the relationship were barred from being entered into the court record by Judge Fred Suria.

Adams told the court Reynolds wanted her to change statements she made to the state's attorney's office regarding their relationship and to make it appear as if she initiated their relationship in the summer of 1990.

"I told him I could not cooperate, it was too much pressure on me," Adams said in

testimony. Reynolds is charged with aggravated criminal sexual assault, aggravated sexual abuse, child pornography and obstructing justice involving Beverly Heard, a 19-year-old former campaign worker. He has denied the charges.

The trial was recessed until Monday when the prosecution is expected to rest its case. If convicted, Reynolds could

spend up to four years in prison.

Earlier Wednesday, a Chicago banker testified that Reynolds withdrew \$4,500 from his bank account at the time a key witness against him left the state.

In the sexual misconduct trial against the two-term Illinois Democrat, the prosecution alleges he also tried to obstruct the investigation.

### NBA Players Get New Contract

Averting potential disaster, the NBA and the players' union have reached an agreement in principle on a new collective bargaining agreement. The deal was announced just minutes before the union's Tuesday midnight deadline for a pact. If no deal were reached, the NBA Players Association would have begun procedures toward decertifying itself as the official bargaining representative of the players. NBA Commissioner David Stern said that step would have meant the potential loss of the the upcoming season. The rank-and-file union membership still must ratify the deal.

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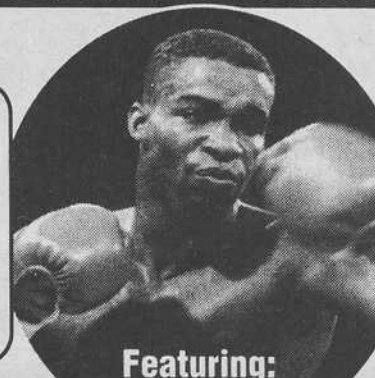
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