

Protest to Seek Justice for Police Torture in Chicago

Written by Robert ID2608

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The Campaign to End the Death Penalty, the Justice Coalition of Greater Chicago, family members of victims of police torture and former Death Row inmates will rally to demand full disclosure of torture under former Chicago police Commander Jon Burge, and criminal indictments against the officers responsible. The protest rally will be held Friday, May 12, 2006, 10 a.m. at the Cook County Courthouse, 2600 S. California

Activists, together with family members of inmates who say they were coerced into false confessions plan to rally Friday to demand justice for victims of police torture under former Commander Jon Burge. The rally outside the courthouse will take place just prior to a hearing where Judge Paul Biebel will weigh arguments on a motion to suppress the names of police officers implicated in torture from the report of a Special Prosecutor appointed more than four years ago to investigate Burge's torture ring. Activists plan to display the names of police officers implicated in torture cases Friday and say that nothing less than full disclosure and criminal prosecution by Special Prosecutors Edward Egan and Robert Boyle is acceptable.

"The attempt by police officers to cover up their crimes has gone on long enough. We need the report to come out, we need the names of torturers released and we need criminal prosecutions," said Julien Ball, an organizer for the Campaign to End the Death Penalty (CEDP) in Chicago.

"Torture is happening in our very own back yard. For years, Jon Burge systematically tortured African American men in police stations on the South Side of Chicago. You don't have to believe me. The Office of Professional Standards (OPS) the Chicago police's own investigatory agency found that physical abuse did occur and that it was systematic. Yet many of Burge's victims remain behind bars. Without a doubt, they deserve new trials. My question is, why isn't Jon Burge doing time?" said Alice Kim, National Organizer of the CEDP.

Burge, who was fired from the Chicago Police Department in 1993, and his detectives have been dogged by over 130 allegations of torture using techniques such as electroshock, Russian roulette and suffocation to extract false confessions from as many as 135 African American men on the South Side of Chicago while in police custody. Some of the torture victims, known as the Death Row 10, were sentenced to death, while many others still are serving long prison terms.

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Madison Hopley, one of the Death Row 10, was pardoned based on innocence by former Governor Ryan in 2003. "I spent 13 years on Death Row because of corrupt and racist police officers. I just hope the Special Prosecutor does the right thing," he said.

Visit The Campaign to End the Death Penalty web site - <http://www.nodeathpenalty.org>