



NATIONAL FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLICE®

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NATIONAL PRESIDENT

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March 30, 2000

Robert H. Devine
President
Antioch College
795 Livermore Street
Yellow Springs, OH 45387

Dear President Devine,

It is my understanding that Antioch College has invited a murderer to address the students at their graduation exercises on April 29, 2000. I am writing this letter on behalf of the 285,000 members of the Fraternal Order of Police and the families of slain officers to demand that you rescind your invitation to Mumia Abu-Jamal, who is currently on death row for killing 26-year-old Philadelphia police officer Danny Faulkner in 1981.

To extend such an invitation demonstrates an utter disregard for the family of Danny Faulkner and the families of other police officers who are gunned down while serving their communities. In a time when we are searching for a solution to gun violence in our schools, Antioch College is playing host to a man who shot and killed a police officer.

A college commencement ceremony should be conducted to honor the achievements of the graduates, not for some misguided recognition of a convicted killer. Invited speakers should be persons who exemplify honor, integrity and ethics, not the hate-filled rants of a killer. By inviting Abu-Jamal to participate, even though his remarks are recorded, you help portray him as something other than what he is—a murderer. Is this the type of role model you want for your students? For Antioch College?

I understand that the topic on which this killer will speak is the "true meaning of revolution." His view of revolution is racist and violent; it embraces hatred and murder. Many who support this killer are equally repugnant in their racist views and violent acts, or are you unaware that a group calling itself "Freedom for Mumia Abu-Jamal" claimed responsibility for the bombing of three American buildings in Zurich last Thanksgiving? It amazes me that an institution of higher learning would give a platform to a murderer preaching violence as a means to an end.

Earlier this month, two Antioch students were shot to death in Costa Rica. I find it incredible that you would choose someone to address your graduating class who has been convicted of a similar crime. Like the killing of Danny Faulkner, the murder of the two students is a tragedy, but perhaps the graduation speaker would not think so if the motive of the murder was revolution.

Your lack of respect and sensitivity for the Faulkner family, the murdered students and other survivors of deadly crimes is deplorable, and your implicit support of violence and murder as legitimate political expression is despicable. The Fraternal Order of Police intends to make a very public case against your decision to salute this killer unless you make it clear that he is no longer welcome to address the graduates of Antioch College.

Please call me if you want to discuss this further.

Sincerely,

Gilbert G. Gallegos
National President