

**The NCBL Call for Release of All U. S. Political Prisoners.
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Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela was born in Transkei region of South Africa on July 18, 1918. Mandela was committed to ending racism and apartheid from a young age. A leader in Umkhonto we sizwe, the armed wing of the African National Congress (ANC), Mandela, with Oliver Tambo, formed a law firm that not only provided free or low cost legal services to black South Africans; it was on the cutting edge of the anti-apartheid movement, engaging in various actions to challenge the system of apartheid. Arrested in 1962 and convicted of sabotage among other charges, Nelson Mandela was sentenced to life in prison. He was incarcerated for 27 years, many of those on the isolated Robben Island. The world witnessed his release on February 11, 1990. Mandela received the Nobel Prize for Peace in 1993 in recognition of his role in ending apartheid. He was elected president of South Africa in the first fully representative democratic election held in 1994 and served as president until 1999.

Assata Shakur was born July 16, 1947. Active in the Black Panther Party and the Black Liberation Army, she was targeted by the FBI's Counter Intelligence Program (COINTELPRO). On May 2, 1973, Assata Shakur was one of two passengers in a car driven by political prisoner, Sundiata Acoli. They were stopped on the New Jersey Turnpike by New Jersey police officers and found themselves in a shoot-out with the police. Assata was critically wounded. The other passenger was killed as was a New Jersey officer. She was tried by the state of New Jersey and convicted and sentenced to life in prison. Ms. Shakur was liberated from state prison in 1984 and granted political asylum by the Cuban government. Former New Jersey governor, Christine Todd Whitman, placed a bounty of \$1,000,000 on the capture of Ms. Shakur, dead or alive, which remains to this day.

Gary Tyler was born in July 1958. Originally sentenced to death, he now is serving a life sentence without possibility of parole to comply with the 1976 U.S. Supreme Court's ruling finding Louisiana's death penalty unconstitutional. Gary was convicted in January 1977, at the age of 17, for first degree murder in the death of a 13 year old white boy that occurred when Gary was 16 years old. The murder of the 13 year old took place in a racially charged atmosphere, exacerbated by the Ku Klux Klan, when Louisiana was attempting to desegregate the schools as a result of the Supreme Court ruling in *Brown v. Board of Education*. There are significant problems with Mr. Tyler's conviction. Amnesty International, citing disturbing racial and political factors that occurred during the case, has deemed Gary Tyler a political prisoner.

Join NCBL in honoring the spirit of Mandela on the occasion of his 93rd birthday in calling for the end to the woman-hunt for Assata Shakur and release of Gary Tyler.