

Chicago Alliance Against Racist & Political Repression (CAARPR)
1325 S. Wabash Ave. Suite 105, Chicago, Illinois 60605
www.naarpr.org

Press Statement

Monday March 13, 2017

For information contact:

Frank Chapman 312-513-3795 email: fchapman@naarpr.org

Release all torture victims in the wake of the exoneration of the Marquette Park 4, only the latest of scores of such victims of torture by Chicago Police and false confessions

The release of Lashawn Ezell, Larod Styles, Charles Johnson, and Troshawn McCoy three weeks ago, after 22 years in prison for a crime they did not commit, is a victory in the struggle for justice for victims of the crimes of Chicago Police Officers, corrupt prosecutors, and judges who turn a blind eye toward police crimes. Their release follows decades of struggle by their families and by dedicated attorneys who believed in their innocence. Johnson and Styles had been given natural life sentences.

Newly elected Cook County State's Attorney Kim Foxx dropped the charges against the four, known as the "Marquette Park 4", and ordered them released from prison three weeks ago. Two of the men had been granted new trials by the Illinois Appellate Court in 2013 after it was discovered that the prosecution in their 1995 trial had withheld fingerprint evidence that exonerated them. Outgoing SA Anita Alvarez had declined to drop the charges against the men, in spite of the new evidence.

All had falsely confessed as teenagers to participating in a double murder of the owners of a South Side used car lot after being questioned by CPD Officers Kenneth Boudreau, James Halloran, and James O'Brien. All three officers have been implicated in dozens of cases tainted by false confessions extracted through torture. All of their victims have been Black or Latino.

The Chicago Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression applauded the decision of Foxx to drop the charges against these men and encouraged her to continue the work of her special unit examining wrongful convictions, especially those based on false confessions. However, the Alliance also has called for the immediate release of all victims of police torture. "These men should not spend another day in prison," Frank Chapman, Field Organizer of the Alliance, declared. "Every one of the more than 100 men who have alleged they falsely confessed under torture by known torturers should be released, at least on recognizance bonds while the SA decides whether to continue cases against them."

"But even this is just a first step", Chapman declared. "In addition, these known torturers and their prosecutorial aiders and abettors should be indicted and prosecuted for their on-going conspiracy to violate the civil rights of their victims. We would like to remind the SA Foxx and the U. S. Justice Department that the statute of limitations on the crime of torture cannot start to run until the victims of the crimes are free and fully compensated for the loss of decades of their lives behind bars," Chapman said.

Lastly, Chapman called on the City Council to pass the proposed ordinance that is before it establishing an [all-elected Civilian Police Accountability Council](#) (CPAC). The ordinance was introduced into the Council last summer by eight Aldermen, but so far there has been no action on it despite tens of thousands of signed postcards that have flooded the offices of aldermen demanding its passage.

"The passage of CPAC will be a great strike for freedom," Chapman stated. "It will end the current situation in which CPD officers can stop and frisk, arrest, and even murder people just because they are Black or Latino, because it will put the power to fire these officers and refer them for prosecution into the hands of the people."