

U.S. Senate Rejects Obama Nominee over Legal Defense of Mumia Abu-Jamal



Washington, March 10 (RHC)-- A group of U.S. Senate Democrats has broken ranks with President Barack Obama to block a key nominee. In a 52-to-47 vote, the Senate rejected the nomination of Debo Adegbile to head the Department of Justice's Civil Rights Division. Adegbile is a widely respected lawyer who has argued before the Supreme Court on voting rights issues.

The confirmation fight on Capitol Hill focused almost solely on his role in the legal defense of imprisoned Black Panther Mumia Abu-Jamal, who was convicted of killing a Philadelphia police officer. Adegbile was part of a team of lawyers at the NAACP Legal Defense Fund who successfully argued the trial judge's jury instructions violated Abu-Jamal's rights.

Seven Democrats joined with Republicans to defeat Adegbile's bid. In a statement, President Obama called the vote "a travesty based on wildly unfair character attacks against a good and qualified public servant."



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