



DETECTIVES' ENDOWMENT ASSOCIATION, INC.

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Dr. Heidi Macpherson
Office of the President
SUNY at Brockport
350 New Campus Drive
Brockport, New York 14420

March 16, 2022

Dear Ms. Macpherson:

We are writing to express our outrage at SUNY Brockport's decision to host murderer Anthony Bottom for a discussion that your school is billing as "an intellectual conversation on his time with the Black Panthers and serving nearly 50 years as a political prisoner."

On May 21, 1971, two NYPD Officers, Waverly Jones and Joseph Piagentini, were answering a radio call at the Colonial Park Houses in the confines of the 32nd Precinct in Manhattan. The Officers did not know that the radio call was a "set-up" and that the caller was trying to lure the Officers to their deaths.

The Officers were indeed ambushed and murdered by two self-proclaimed "revolutionaries" and members of the "Black Liberation Army," Herman Bell and Anthony Bottom. Their barrage of bullets blew Officer Jones' head apart and he died immediately at the scene. Officer Piagentini, shot 22 times in the back (including with his own and Jones' service revolvers, which the perpetrators stole), pleaded for his life for the sake of his wife and children. But, the killers were unrepentant and kept shooting. Piagentini died on his way to the hospital.

Officer Waverly Jones was 32 years old, and had been on the police force for five years. He was survived by a wife and three children. Officer Joseph Piagentini was 27 and had also served in the Police Department for five years. He was survived by a wife and two daughters.



Bottom was arrested on August 27, 1971, when he and BLA cohorts tried to assassinate a San Francisco Police Sergeant. Along with his cohort Herman Bell, Bottom eventually stood trial in New York for the murders of Jones and Piagentini. They were each sentenced to 25 years to life, the maximum penalty allowed by New York State law at that time.

Causing much emotional turmoil and anguish for the friends, families, and colleagues of the two slain Police Officers, after a certain length of time, every two years these perpetrators sought parole. In what was a horrible travesty of justice for every Police Officer in this country, Bell was paroled in April of 2018. Bottom was paroled on October 7, 2020. They were tried, convicted, and sentenced as **killers** and that's what they remained. They were *not* and have *never been* "political prisoners."

According to a March 14, 2018 article in the *New York Times*, Herman Bell told the New York State Parole Board: "There was nothing political about the act It was murder and horribly wrong."

While we cannot fathom why SUNY Brockport would invite a convicted murderer to address students, we will not sit by idly while the school bills Anthony Bottom as a "political prisoner." While the world is exploding in war, that is a disgraceful insult — not only to the more than 500,000, hard-working law enforcement Officers in the United States, but to real political prisoners incarcerated in places like Russia, Belarus, China, Sudan, and elsewhere throughout the globe. Your University faculty and administrators should be ashamed of themselves, putting on this pathetic display of historical fiction and revisionism. And by the way, Anthony Bottom and Herman Bell committed their heinous, criminal acts as members of the Black Liberation Army, a violent, underground group known for bombings and robberies: not as members of the Black Panther Party, as your brief bio of Bottom erroneously implies.

Ms. Macpherson, as the labor union of 18,000 active and retired Detectives of the NYPD, we are thoroughly disgusted by your lack of common sense and historical knowledge in trying to pass off a 1971 cold-

blooded murderer in 2022 as a “political prisoner.” The BLA was a violent militia group linked to the murders of at least ten Police Officers, bombings, and at least 70 acts of wanton, criminal destruction. No college or university should be propping up Anthony Bottom for any other purpose except as an example of what happens when a young person turns toward mindless violence and crime, and then 50 years later tries to lie about it. I am,

Cordially yours,



Paul DiGiacomo
President

PDG/sfk



