

Free the Uhuru 3! Don't let the U.S. government criminalize international solidarity

written by Cheryl LaBash
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The Uhuru 3, comrades and supporters on the steps of the federal courthouse in

Tampa, Fla., where the historic trial of the Uhuru 3 is being held. Photo: HandsOffUhuru.org

Tampa, Fla., Sept. 5 - This morning the U.S. government will continue presenting their “evidence” which may conclude the prosecution portion of the trial as early as Monday.

The U.S. government is attempting to criminalize international solidarity but has come up against a solid and growing wall of support for the Uhuru 3 when their federal trial opened Sept. 3 here in Tampa. Collectively known as the Uhuru 3 — Omali Yeshitela, Chairman of the African People’s Socialist Party, Penny Hess, Chair of the African People’s Solidarity Committee, and Jesse Nevel, Chair of the Uhuru Solidarity Movement — are falsely accused of being pawns of a foreign government. And, of course, that foreign government would need to be Russia to justify spending so much on the investigation and what, at the outset, looked like a lengthy trial.

The proverbial election interference elephant in the room is undoubtedly AIPAC and “Israel” that get a free pass. Not to mention the holier-than-thou U.S. government interventions on every continent, “color” revolutions like the one preceding the war in Ukraine.

What an indictment of the U.S. government that it would even suggest that an African freedom organization with a 50-year history would need a foreign power to instruct them to fight for reparations.

But, as Yeshitela was quoted in the New York Times this week, “We’re just a vehicle that’s being used to assault free speech.” And — as the Black Alliance for Peace included in their support statement — association, information, and political dissent. The Times article’s condescending attitude to the historic struggle for Black and African self-determination and dignity focused instead on what it described as a “low tech” approach for gaining “influence” in the U.S. - solidarity.

An hour before the trial began on Tuesday, Sept. 3, Green Party presidential candidate Jill Stein, former New York City Councilperson Charles Barron, Jaqueline Luqman representing Black Alliance for Peace chair Ajamu Baraka arrived later, Benjamin Prado from Union del Barrio, Pam Africa, the heart of the movement to Free Mumia, and others spoke at the press conference across the street from the Federal Court in downtown Tampa.

Sister Pam declared, “We are not coming here looking for justice, we are coming here to expose injustice. This is not something they thought out very well. They’ve given our brother, the Uhuru organization, each and every last freedom fighter out here, an international platform to expose exactly what these people do and the extent to which they do it.”

Rev. Edward Pinkney and Mrs. Dorothy Pinkney traveled from Michigan. Pinkney is a long-time community organizer who has led resistance in Benton Harbor, Michigan, a predominantly African-American community, to a government subservient to the Benton Harbor-based Whirlpool corporation. He suffered unjust imprisonment by a vindictive and racist capitalist power structure until a relentless international solidarity movement prevailed.

Many solidarity movements are watching this trial carefully. Nesbit Crutchfield from the Venceremos Brigade and this writer who is a Co-chair of the National Network on Cuba represented the Cuba solidarity movement in the U.S.

Everyone who can come to Tampa next week, do come. Volunteer to help the campaign and follow HandsOffUhuru.org. Watch the daily livestream from 8 a.m. – 1



p.m. Eastern at
facebook.com/handsoffuhuru.

youtube.com/UhuruTV or

