

Uhuru 3 found not guilty of being Russian agents

written by Hands Off Uhuru
September 13, 2024



On the morning of September 12th, the jury returned a verdict in the free speech trial of the century, where Chairman Omali Yeshitela, Penny Hess and Jesse Nevel faced bogus charges of working as Russian agents.

The 12 person jury concluded a not guilty verdict on count number two, "failure to

register as a foreign agent,” in other words, working as agents of Russia. This was the big charge that carried an up to ten year prison sentence. The jury contained no black jurors, but to their credit, they saw clearly that African people have agency and sovereignty over their actions.

The government presented 14 witnesses, 12 of them FBI agents, while the defense needed to present no witnesses to prove that the government’s accusation of being Russian agents was fabricated.

The jury returned a guilty verdict on count number one, “conspiring against the U.S. government.” This charge carries a maximum of five years.

The not guilty verdict on the primary charges was a devastating blow to the prosecution whose main objective was to convict on the Russian agent charge. With their lack of evidence and exposed lies, they were unable to convince the jury that Russia was behind the 60 year legacy of anti-colonial struggle led by Chairman Omali Yeshitela. The lawyers are preparing to appeal to ensure all of the baseless accusations are defeated and no prison time is served.

The judge has not set a sentencing date on the conspiracy conviction. Chairman Omali Yeshitela, Penny Hess and Jesse Nevel remain in the community to carry out the Uhuru anti-colonial mission.

After the verdict, Chairman Omali Yeshitela and the Uhuru 3 lawyers spoke with supporters and the press on the steps of the Tampa Federal Courthouse.

Chairman Omali reminded his supporters that “the most important thing is that they were unable to convict us for working for anybody except black people, that’s the most important thing. They could not convict us for working for anybody except black people. They had to say we were not working for the Russians and I am willing to be charged and found guilty of working for black people.

“We are involved in a movement for the liberation of African people and the destruction of a colonial system that oppresses the peoples of the world. That’s what we came here for and so it ain’t over.”

Attorney Mutaqee Akbar, representing Jesse Nevel, was quoted saying, “The fight doesn’t stop here, we will appeal this. As the Chairman says, The Party has always and consistently worked for the liberation of Black people, not Russians, not anybody else; we can’t be bought, we can’t be paid for and we will continue to fight and continue to struggle. That’s been clear and that will continue to happen. Uhuru means freedom!”

Attorney Leonard Goodman, representing Penny Hess, says, “We are not guilty of being Russian agents. And the conspiracy charge was incredibly confusing. I don’t think the jury understood that it required them to find that there was conspiracy to act as Russian agents. As Mutaqee was saying, we are going to appeal and we’re going to fight on.”

Attorney Ade Griffin, representing Omali Yeshitela closed by stating, “It’s been an absolute honor to represent Omali Yeshitela, and the African People’s Socialist Party. I believe in your work and I believe in your cause. I think we did an excellent job on the case. I’m happy with the verdict. I would’ve, obviously, liked it to be not guilty across-the-board, but considering the goals that we were trying to achieve, we won!”



For daily updates and all information about the Hands Off Uhuru Free Speech Trial of the Century go to: <https://handsoffuhuru.org/>

