

Who is the UFF?

Tom Manning and Jaan Laaman are political prisoners imprisoned for their involvement in actions carried out by the United Freedom Front (UFF) and the Sam Melville-Jonathan Jackson Unit (SM-JJ).

In 1985-86, members of these groups were tried and convicted for conspiracy and bombing of unoccupied military and corporate facilities. For a decade these guerrilla units targeted governments and corporations who engaged in criminal activities in South Africa and Central America. Rather than verbally support the resistance movements in foreign lands, the UFF/SM-JJ Unit brought the war home to those who sponsored and facilitated these bloody wars against humanity.

Sentences for the UFF/SM-JJ Unit prisoners ranged from 45 to 53 years in prison. The two remaining UFF prisoners have lengthy histories of political activism in various groups including Southern Students Organizing Committee, Students for a Democratic Society, Vietnam Veterans Against the War, SCAR, and AMANDLA! They are fathers and have worked in factories, agriculture, and construction. They have been confined in some of the worst maximum-security prisons including the government's infamous Administrative Maximum (ADX) in Florence, Colorado.

While the intellectual architects and butchers of South Africa's apartheid system go free, the UFF prisoners who resisted this crime against humanity are forgotten. While those who profited political and eco-

"Revolution is never begun anew, only continued where others left off." - Tom Manning

nomically from bloody wars against the people of Central America go about business as usual, the UFF prisoners remain caged.

Convicted at a government-orchestrated political trial is not the same as being guilty of a crime. It's the position of the UFF prisoners that they exercised their responsibilities under international law in actively opposing human rights violations perpetuated, aided and abetted by the U.S. government and corporate greed.

Such responsibilities are outlined in the Nuremberg Principles, which came into being following the defeat of Nazi Germany. These principles state that "crimes against humanity"- the subjugation, persecution, and murder of innocent people - requires citizens to take whatever actions are necessary to prevent or stop these crimes.

The government tried to silence these resisters and refuses to recognize them as political prisoners, for to do so would be an admission of its own criminal acts. Only through the commitment and work of many people will political prisoners be able to complete the "long walk to freedom" as Nelson Mandela and others have. The first step is at the grassroots - educating people to the existence of these prisoners and why they're imprisoned.

Shortly after the attacks in New York in 2001, many of the political prisoners in the U.S., including members of the UFF, were immediately placed in isolation. Prisoners had little, if any, contact with family members, lawyers and/or support groups. No other reason besides political beliefs, can explain the isolation of these prisoners.

Many people fought and died resisting decades of racist apartheid in South Africa. During these same years, hundreds and thousands were killed in El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Guatemala during the struggles for land, bread and freedom. One cold

fact of the matter is that the US government and American corporations provided extensive support to the mass killers who ruled these countries for the benefit of the racist and wealthy elite.

These battles are not over. The American political government has sentenced political prisoners to death by incarceration. They have been sentenced to death by isolation and a lack of adequate medical treatment. Confined in US prisons today are political prisoners who actively resisted this government's crimes against humanity and war crimes. They will remain there until their final breath unless we, as people of conscience, unite to free them.

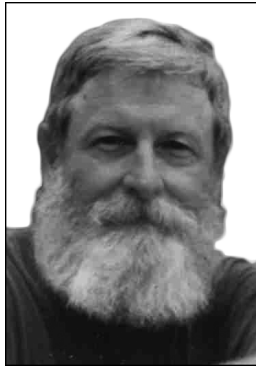
During a March, 1998 trip to South Africa, US President Clinton publicly admitted that the US had been "complicit" in its support of the racist apartheid system during its bloody years. He added that now is the time to "honor" those who resisted apartheid. But where is the honor and amnesty for those anti-racist fighters currently held in US prisons who resisted apartheid? There is none, and will be none, until we the people demand justice.



Richard and Tom Remembered



Richard



Tom

On December 7, 2005, after 26 years of imprisonment, Richard Williams passed away in Butner Federal Prison. Richard was one of the last remaining UFF prisoners.

Richard's death was directly related to the 15 months of isolation following 9/11. The isolation and inhumane treatment ultimately broke his health. Despite such conditions, Richard's spirit and determination remained strong to his very last breath.

On July 30, 2019, Tom Manning died behind the walls of USP Hazelton, in West Virginia. Tom suffered medical abuse at the hands of the Bureau of Prisons (BOP), including mismanagement of pain relief and rehabilitation following joint replacement surgery, ultimately succumbing to a heart attack. Make no mistake—the state killed Tom Manning, perhaps not in a hail of bullets, but the responsibility lays no less at their feet.

Richard and Tom will always be remembered not only for their commitment to those who suffer under repressive systems, but also for their endless love and devotion to those who had the pleasure to call them comrades. Words cannot convey the loss this world has endured with each of their passings. Few could compare to their dedication to the human spirit.

Free Jaan

Write to Jaan:

Jaan Karl Laaman #10372-016

USP McCreary

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Local groups supporting Tom & Jaan:

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facebook.com/nycabc

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New York City Jericho Movement

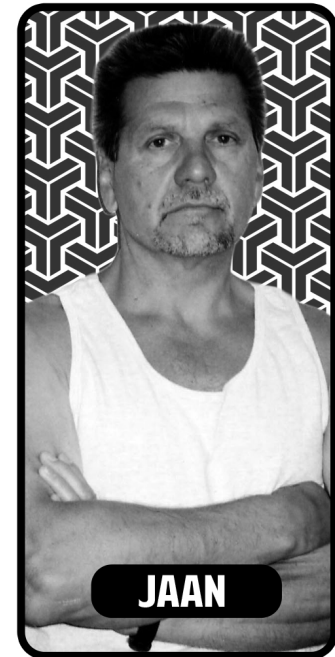
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United Freedom Front Political Prisoners



Jaan Laaman

