

**"Revolution is  
Never Begun  
Anew"**

*in memory of political  
prisoner Tom Manning*

*This zine is a compilation of statements released by prisoners and outside supporters in memory of Tom Manning, a political prisoner held behind bars for 32 years by the United States government. Tom faced arrest and repression for his role in organizing community programs and prison solidarity on the outside, for carrying out bank robberies, and for being a part of the United Freedom Front, a small guerilla cell that used explosives against economic targets responsible for South African apartheid and colonialism in Latin America. He was charged in 1987 with the murder of a New Jersey State Trooper.*

*Tom continued to struggle against prisons from the inside, and became a prolific artist, eventually putting out a beautiful book of paintings titled **For Love and Liberty**. Up-to-date addresses for the contributors still inside can be found at the end of their pieces; please take the time to write them! A larger list of political prisoners in the US can be found at [nyabc.wordpress.com](http://nyabc.wordpress.com).*

## RAY LUC LEVASSEUR

Tom Manning's death on July 30 has me in the grip of an emotional riptide. I feel like part of me died with him.

Tom was imprisoned at USP-Hazelton, WV at the time of his death. The ostensible cause of death, according to the Federal Bureau of Prisons, was a heart attack.

I received Tom's last letter on July 15. He wrote that he was in dire circumstances, his medical needs treated with deliberate indifference, delays in receiving necessary medication, his body weak from lack of oxygen. Supporters scrambled to get a lawyer in to see him, but death arrived first.

Tom battled the Bureau of Prisons criminal negligence of his medical needs for the past 10 years, beginning when he almost died from an untreated knee infection while at USP-Coleman, FL. As a result of that infection, most of his knee was surgically removed and he was wheelchair bound for the rest of his days.

But he was not through fighting.

When he arrived at FMC-Butner, NC for further medical treatment he was kept in solitary confinement under abysmal conditions for 3 years. Much-needed knee and shoulder surgeries were repeatedly delayed until pressure from Tom's supporters forced the BOP to act. But the surgeries came too late, and combined with the lack of necessary rehab insured that Tom remained in a wheelchair.

Tom always had the warrior spirit, right to his last breath. Many more like him, and the ruling class would tremble. The ache in my heart over his passing will be forever.

In remembrance, I offer words I wrote in 2014 for Tom's book "For Love and Liberty," a collection of his paintings:

"When Tom Manning and I first met 40 years ago, we were 27 years old and veterans of mule jobs, the Viet Nam war, and fighting our way through American prisons. We also harbored an intense hatred of oppression and a burning desire to organize resistance.

As members of a community action group called SCAR, we worked

its 'survival programs' including a community bail fund, prison visitation program, and a radical bookstore. The Red Star North bookstore drew the venom of police – surveillance, harassment, raid and assault.

Tom and I disappeared underground in the midst of this and COINTELPRO revelations. We remained underground for near 10 years, much of it on the FBI's ten most wanted list. We were tagged as 'terrorist' and 'extremely dangerous' because as 'members of a revolutionary group' we used explosives against targets of empire: predators of apartheid South Africa, Puerto Rico's colonialism, and the slaughter in Central America.

We considered our work anti-terrorist. It was a time, you see, when activists were killed, imprisoned, tortured and exiled. 'Winter in America' as Gil Scott-Heron put it, and raging hell in El Salvador. It was a time when the U.S. sub-contracted its terrorism and if you were on the wrong end of it – you died.

Sometimes when we met underground I noticed Tom sketched on scraps of paper. I was impressed with how well he drew. I said to him – man, you got talent, why not do landscapes, portraits, big pictures! His response – no time for that, for our priority was taking down this wretched system that disrespects and destroys life.

The government's mandate is that Tom die in prison, as our comrade Richard Williams did in 2005 after a long period of medical neglect and solitary confinement.

Tom has risen beyond the gulag's attempt to strip his humanity. You can feel the dignity and spirit of resistance in his paintings. He is one of those carrying heavy burdens, be they the 'sans-culottes' of the world, a Haitian health care provider, or a victim of police bullets.

Political prisoners do not exist in a vacuum. They emerge from political and social conflicts. The ruling class and media attempt to criminalize, demonize and marginalize these prisoners, because recognition of political prisoners is de facto admission that serious conflicts exist and remain unresolved.

In 2006 an exhibit of Tom Manning's paintings – 'Can't Jail the Spirit' – opened at the University of Southern Maine. Police

organizations throughout the Northeast conducted an intense ‘shut it down’ campaign. The police were particularly disturbed with the characterization of Tom as a ‘political prisoner’ and his painting of Assata Shakur on display. When the police got to the university’s corporate funders, the USM president capitulated and the exhibit was ordered shut down. The exhibit’s supporters then carried Tom’s paintings through the city streets and rallied at Congress Square.

‘There is no speech or language where their voice is not heard,’ reads Psalm 19:3 and the gravestone of Black freedom fighters Jonathan and George Jackson. Voice, through its many forms, articulates vision. Call it subversive art, liberating art, art that challenges the one-dimensional. Tom’s art is a voice among the dispossessed that transcends concrete and razor wire with an affirmation of life.

The paintings of Tom Manning and American Indian Movement activist Leonard Peltier; the creative work of Puerto Rican Independista Oscar Lopez Rivera; the poetry of anti-imperialist Marilyn Buck, which lives on; and the Earth defender poems of Marius Mason; the spoken word of Mumia Abu-Jamal and Mutulu Shakur. They are the voices of our political prisoners, principled and honorable men and women who communicate from isolation and suffering.

We must not let their voices be suppressed. They need to be heard and celebrated by freedom loving people everywhere.”

I extend deep gratitude to all those who provided some measure of support and solidarity to Tom during his 34 years in prison.

With Tom’s passing, Jaan Laaman remains the sole United Freedom Front prisoner. It’s time to bring Jaan home.

**FREE ALL OUR POLITICAL PRISONERS**

## JAAN LAAMAN

*Note: With Tom's death, Jaan remains the last of the Ohio 7/United Freedom Front members behind bars.*

Class war prisoner, Freedom fighter, Man of the People, long held political prisoner, Thomas William Manning, died on July 30, of a heart issue at the federal penitentiary in Hazelton, Kentucky.

Tom—Tommy to his many comrades, family, friends, people that knew him, was a life long Revolutionary Freedom Fighter. From the early 70s, Tom was a public activist and organizer and later, a quite successful armed militant in the anti-imperialist underground. Captured in 1985, he and some of his comrades became known as the “Ohio 7/UFF” (United Freedom Front) defendants.

After many trials Tom was hit with 58 plus 80 year sentences. He was then thrown into some of the worst, harshest prisons in the United States. Being in captivity did not stop Tom from continuing to work and struggle for justice, freedom, Human Rights and the socialist and environmentally sustainable future so many people and our planet so need. Tom struggled against abuses inside prisons and continued to work for the independence struggles in Puerto Rico and Ireland, the Palestinian struggle and the then still ongoing anti-apartheid struggle in South Africa. In fact Tom was very likely one of the two last anti-apartheid activists still in captivity anywhere in the world. Tom of course always continued to support the struggles of poor and working people in this country, the struggles of Black people, Native rights and land struggles, against police abuses and murders of civilians, people of color in particular.

Tom was an artist, and accomplished painter. His artwork truly captures some of Tom's essence: his portrayal of the dignity of working people, children, women, the strength and determination of the revolutionary fighters and leaders, and more. A beautiful book of some of Tom's art was published in 2014 — “For Love and Liberty”.

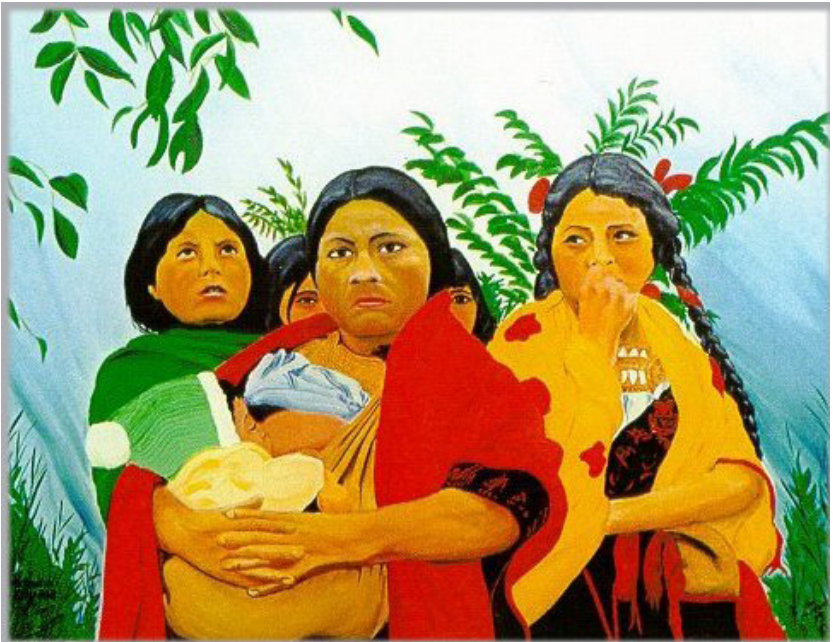
Now Tom is gone. Our comrade, my comrade, who suffered years of medical neglect and medical abuse in the federal prison system, your struggle and suffering is now over brother. But your example,

your words, deeds, even your art, lives on. You truly were a “Boston Irish rebel,” a life long Man of and for the People, a warrior, a person of compassion motivated by hope for the future and love for the common people, a Revolutionary Freedom Fighter.

We miss you and love you comrade... and we will carry on the struggle!

*Write to Jaan at:*

*Jaan Laaman #10372-016  
USP McCreary  
PO Box 3000  
Pine Knot, KY 42635*



*Tom's painting for the cover of the 2007 Certain Days calendar*

## OSO BLANCO

A Revolutionary's Farewell: Rest in Power, Tom Manning

Brothers and Sisters of the Struggles:

I'm sad to learn I've lost a great and true Warrior Brother, Tom Manning, who left this earth only very recently.

He is free now. Dealing with our loss is not getting easier. The only positive way I can deal with the loss of our great comrade is to think of his transition in those terms. Tom is free now, and it is always better to be free.

I did three-and-a-half years with Tom in USP Leavenworth, where he and Leonard Peltier taught me to paint with oils and schooled me on how I'd be treated horribly strictly due to my politically motivated actions that landed me in prison. Tom taught me what to expect from this imperialist empire. I truly loved this Brother Tom Manning, and also his brother Bob Manning who is still with us in New Mexico. Bob always helps me, and stays in touch with me and my mother, Melody.

We must stop wasting time, for these warriors laid the revolutionary foundation that the struggle lives upon today. These people must not be left to rot in the hell holes of this empire. All of you need to get your people out, and be for real, and put your comfort-zone toys away so you can put in the real work it takes to help men and women who have been locked up by the monsters of death and destruction running this empire. Get your asses in fucking gear.

I say this to all in the struggle—every activist, every warrior, every anarchist: be for Super Real and Powerful like Tom Manning and his co-defendants and start getting your actions rocking and rolling. Waste no more time.

*Write to Oso at:*

*Oso Blanco\* #07909-051*

*USP Victorville*

*Post Office Box 3900*

*Adelanto, CA 92301*

*(\*Address envelope to Byron Chubbuck)*





*Tom's portrait of fellow political prisoner Marilyn Buck*

## KOJO BOMANI SABABU

Life is strange all the good things come to a end. Tom was a beautiful person very talented in painting and skillful in articulating matter to be understood politically. I am glad I spent a few moments on this earth with him. George, Huey, Sofia, and Tom all died in August, that is why this month is Black August.

*Write to Kojo at:*

*Grailing Brown #39384-066  
USP Canaan  
P. O. Box 300  
Waymart, PA 18472*



*Tom' with fellow political prisoner Little Feather, et. al.*

**BILL DUNNE**

Tom Manning, Soldier of the Struggle,  
 Comrade,  
 Friend,  
 Brother,  
 Artist,  
 Human,

Mighty tree in the forest who has fallen. The sound reverberates through everyone who aspires to positive practice in service to the struggle he shared.

I knew Tom more through his exemplary practice across decades and his comrades' experience of him then by having had the opportunity to hang out and roll out some practice with him. Except one time: a twelve and a half hour bus ride from the Federal Transit Center at Oklahoma City to the U. S. Penitentiary in Leavenworth, Kansas.

We sat next to each other during the entire trip. Notwithstanding the agents of repression, the chains, and the bars separating us from freedom just a window away, we freed ourselves by making revolution all the way. He was farther along in his understanding of what that meant in theory and practice and showed himself to be all of the above in elucidating that praxis.

I will not forget that trip. Some of Tom Manning will always ride with me as I try to make progress in the struggle. He will help paint the most equitable social reality in which all people will have the greatest possible freedom to develop their full human potential that is our destination.

Tom Manning ! Presente! The future holds promise!

*Write to Bill at:*

*Bill Dunne #10916-086  
 FCI Victorville Medium I  
 Post Office Box 3725  
 Adelanto, California 92301*

## CERTAIN DAYS: FREEDOM FOR POLITICAL PRISONERS CALENDAR

*The Certain Days: Freedom for Political Prisoners Calendar* mourns the loss of political prisoner Tom Manning, a longtime supporter and inspiration to us.

Tom's contributions to Certain Days go right back to the first calendar in 2002 when we printed his portrait of Steven Biko. Tom's art beautifully conveyed the internationalism and solidarity that animated both his own politics and those of the calendar project. His portraits of iconic figures such as Assata Shakur and Yuri Kochiyami paid homage to their leadership, while his paintings of the ordinary people in communities in Haiti, Chiapas and Cambodia highlighted their day-to-day struggles. Tom was extremely generous over the years and took the time to share his art with us even at moments when his health presumably made it quite taxing for him to be involved. He was warm, and funny, and we always looked forward to opening a letter from him. His work has appeared consistently in Certain Days over the last two decades (gracing the cover twice — a feat unmatched by any other artist). We're honoured to have learned so much from our work with Tom, and saddened and angry to lose him too soon due to ongoing medical neglect while he was imprisoned. Rest in Power, Tom!

The Certain Days Collective  
[certaindays.org](http://certaindays.org)



*Tom with fellow political prisoners Leonard Peltier and Oso Blanco*

## NYC ANARCHIST BLACK CROSS

As a collective, New York City Anarchist Black Cross (NYC ABC) is deeply saddened by the death of Tom Manning. Make no mistake—Tom Manning died in prison due to repression, indifference, torture, and neglect, spanning decades, at the hands of the state. It was in the state's interest to heap abuse on Tom, as it does all political prisoners, in an attempt to break him, as well as to send a message to us on the outside. It is our charge to act with the same dedication, principle, and courage that Tom consistently demonstrated as he remained unbroken.

Tom showed us that being selfless does not mean being a martyr. Tom made sacrifice after sacrifice in the name of revolution against imperialism, colonialism, white supremacy, and oppression, but not to draw attention to himself. What Tom gave up was due to the burning in his chest for freedom for all. His example continues to guide NYC ABC as we both organize to support our political prisoners and struggle against the state and capital.

Through his art, Tom was a steady reminder that revolt must include beauty. The least we can do is continue what he started and never let his name be forgotten.



*Tom, working on his cover for the 2007 Certain Days calendar*



*“I say this to all in the struggle—every activist, every warrior, every anarchist: be for Super Real and Powerful like Tom Manning and his co-defendants and start getting your actions rocking and rolling. Waste no more time.”*

*- Oso Blanco*

*“There is no speech or language where their voice is not heard,’ reads Psalm 19:3 and the gravestone of Black freedom fighters Jonathan and George Jackson. Voice, through its many forms, articulates vision. Call it subversive art, liberating art, art that challenges the one-dimensional. Tom’s art is a voice among the dispossessed that transcends concrete and razor wire with an affirmation of life.”*

*- Ray Luc Levasseur*

*“Make no mistake—Tom Manning died in prison due to repression, indifference, torture, and neglect, spanning decades, at the hands of the state... Through his art, Tom was a steady reminder that revolt must include beauty. The least we can do is continue what he started and never let his name be forgotten.”*

*- NYC Anarchist Black Cross*

