

Trial of “Uhuru 3” begins in Florida as US government accelerates anti-Russia campaign, war drive

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On Tuesday, September 3, the US government put four Americans citizens, all of whom are currently, or were formerly members of the African People’s Socialist Party (APSP) and/or the Uhuru Movement, on trial for “illegally” spreading “pro-Russian propaganda” in order to “cause dissension in the United States and to promote secessionist ideologies.”

The charges against the accused are a blatant attack on democratic rights aimed at discrediting all opposition to US imperialism as the work of Russian influence.

Among those facing charges of conspiracy to defraud the US and for failing to register as “agents” of a foreign government are the “Uhuru 3” which include Omali Yeshitela, 82, chairman of the APSP; Penny J. Hess, chair of the African People’s Solidarity Committee (APCS) and Jesse Nevel, chair of the Uhuru Solidarity Movement (USM).

The APSP and Uhuru movement is based in St. Petersburg, Florida and St. Louis, Missouri. The groups trace their foundations back to the Civil Rights movement of the 1960s and center their political activity on appeals to the US government for redress, such as calling for reparations and “self-determination of African and African people.”

The fourth person facing charges is Augustus C. Romain Jr. also known as Gazi Kodzo. He is a former member of the APSP and has only been charged with conspiracy. Currently, Romain/Kodzo is the leader of the Black Hammer Party, a small fascistic paramilitary organization based in Atlanta. In 2021 the organization announced an “alliance” with the Proud Boys to “defeat the disgusting p*do-loving, welfare economy demonrats and their puppet master, BIG PHARMA

who has been poisoning all of us for too long.”

In a press conference held on Tuesday, the first day of the trial, Mwezi Odom, speaking in support of the defendants, said that the US government was “attempting to shred the First Amendment, the right to free speech, the right to freedom of the press and freedom of association.”

Odom noted that if Yeshitela, 82, was convicted of the charges he faces he could be sent to prison for 15 years, “a life sentence.”

In addition to the four Americans, the US Department of Justice had previously announced charges against three Russian citizens, none of whom are in the United States and will likely ever face trial.

According to the indictment, from 2014-2022, the accused are charged with receiving *nearly* \$10,000 from alleged Russian security agents without registering as “foreign agents.” The accused are alleged to have taken this money to plan protests against the US-NATO war in Ukraine, police violence, “African genocide” and even run for the St. Petersburg City Council in 2017 and 2019 (losing both times).

In a slanderous McCarthyite statement issued on September 3, DNC spokesperson Matt Corridoni accused US Green Party presidential candidate Jill Stein of being a “useful idiot for Russia” and “parroting Kremlin talking points” for supporting the Uhuru 3.

The trial in Florida is just one aspect of the widening anti-democratic campaign being undertaken by capitalist governments around the world in response to growing opposition to their warmongering policies. Within the last several weeks, anti-genocide journalists in the UK, Richard Medhurst and Sarah Wilkinson,

have been interrogated and harassed by police agents for their accurate reporting on the ongoing genocide in Gaza.

Coinciding with the trial, the US government, with the corporate media in tow, has launched a new anti-Russia censorship campaign alleging that several official enemies of US imperialism are engaging in “malign activity” aimed at “sowing discord” ahead of the 2024 election.

On Wednesday, Attorney General Merrick Garland, seated next to FBI Director Christopher Wray, announced a new plan to “counter” alleged attempts by “Russia and Iran, as well as China” to “interfere in our elections and undermine our democracy.”

Garland announced charges against two employees of RT, Konstantin Kalshnikov and Elena Afanasyeva, accusing them of money laundering and failing to register as foreign agents.

“The American people are entitled to know when a foreign power is attempting to exploit our country’s free exchange of ideas in order to send around its own propaganda,” Garland declared.

When a foreign power is advancing US imperialist objectives they are more than free to spread “propaganda.” More than three months ago, the *New York Times* reported that Israel’s Ministry of Diaspora Affairs commissioned a \$2 million operation to carry out an online influence campaign targeting US lawmakers and the American public with “pro-Israel messaging” in order to gin up support for the Gaza genocide and a \$15 billion military package. The Department of Justice has yet to announce any indictments.

In the charges against Kalshnikov and Afanasyeva, the DoJ alleges the pair paid nearly \$10 million to hire a right-wing media company to produce and disseminate “pro-Russian” content. The DoJ accuses the company, which was later identified as Tenet Media, of paying fascist and conservative commentators such as Tim Pool, Benny Johnson and Dave Rubin \$400,000 a month to produce four videos a month that are indistinguishable from their usual right-wing drivel.

Over the last 10 months, Tenet media has produced hundreds of videos, but almost none of them have accumulated more than 10,000 views. YouTube has suspended the Tenet account and deleted all of their

videos.

According to the indictment, almost none of the right-wing social media personalities had any notion that their alleged benefactors were affiliated with the Russian government except Lauren Chen, who founded Tenet, along with her husband, Liam Donovan in 2022.

Chen is a 30-year-old fascist who regularly defends Hitler-lover Nick Fuentes and argues against women having the right to vote. Until this week Chen was the host of *Pseudo-Intellectual with Lauren Chen* on Glenn Beck’s BlazeTV.

In 2022, Chen was hired as a contributor for Turning Point USA, the far-right organization led by Charlie Kirk, himself an ardent supporter of Trump and his failed coup. Seeking to whip up the Christian nationalists ahead of the election, on Wednesday, Kirk and Turning Point hosted Republican vice presidential candidate J.D. Vance at the Generation Church in Mesa, Arizona to spew anti-immigrant and anti-trans bigotry.

The basic purpose of the revival of the anti-Russia campaign is to create the conditions for escalating attacks on democratic rights, while allowing the Democrats to campaign on what is in fact their central issue: the escalation of the US-NATO war against Russia.



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