

OHIO 7

ON TRIAL FOR SEDITIOUS CONSPIRACY

DEFEAT



**US
IMPERIALISM**

NO TO APARTHEID

NO TO CIA CONTRAS

CAROL SAUCIER MANNING

I was born on January 3, 1956, the daughter of woolen mill workers in Kezar Falls, Maine. My only formal education was to the 10th grade. I am the mother of three children, ages 16, 8 and 7 years old. It was the mills in which my parents worked that exposed me to the ways of the capitalist system. I saw the workers having to work their hands to the bones, yet barely making enough money to survive, and being subjected to serious health problems because of the poor working conditions.

In 1973, I moved to Portland, Maine and became involved in community and prison work, through an organization named SCAR. I helped open a radical bookstore, Red Star North, which included a free-to-prisoners book program. Because of the work we were involved in, we became targets of police repression. In 1976, I was forced underground, where I remained until my arrest in April 1985. I am now serving a 15-year sentence for bombings that were carried out in support of peoples' struggles in South Africa and Central America.

In May 1986 I was indicted along with 7 others for seditious conspiracy (attempting to overthrow the government by force) and two RICO charges. The government is attempting to criminalize my whole life, yet I am only guilty of being a human being who cares about people everywhere and sees it as my responsibility to struggle against our government, which exploits and murders throughout the world.

TOM MANNING

Boston born and raised—in a large working class family—never enough \$—though my father worked day and night—with sleep in between—his only days off were when he was hurt or some crisis in the family—a longshoreman and a postal clerk—he worked himself to death—trying to get one end to meet the other—he never did make ends meet—that would be a cycle and capitalism is not made that way—he always got the worst end—we know now who got the best end—it took me a long time to figure it out—on the streets—in the military—Cuba—Vietnam—prison and back on the streets—doing community work—the answer became crystal clear—socialism—a system where ends meet—the bosses oppose this system with a vengeance—they attack it with their armies and police—the People must fight for their own system in all ways—one of these being armed clandestine struggle—we have a long way to go—but we are getting there—with more Angolas and Nicaraguas we will get there—struggles in Puerto Rico and Chicago are getting us there—and our own struggle with the government's courts in Springfield, Massachusetts will be one more step closer to a place where

all children will have a sparkle in their eye and a shine on their cheeks and no more fear—

LA LUTA CONTINUA 01373—016MCC/NY

RICHARD CHARLES WILLIAMS

I have 3 beautiful children ages 18, 11, and 8, and am not married. I was born on November 4, 1947 in Beverly, Massachusetts which is a small coastal city 25 miles north of Boston. My mother was a factory worker and seamstress and my father was a machine operator. I have one sister younger than me by 6 years. Just when the draft was getting heavy for Vietnam I turned 18 years old and promptly received my notice. Like most working class kids, white or Black, there was no easy way out of it. Either get drafted, join, or hide. I chose not to go. At 20 years old I was arrested for having marijuana, which in Massachusetts was a felony. Given the choice of 6 months in jail or joining the army, I went to jail in 1967 and became ineligible for the draft.

I continued to have brushes with the law when in 1971 I was arrested for robbery in New Hampshire and received a 7 to 15 year sentence. I was 23 and faced 5 solid years in jail, at the least. I realized at that time that I was going nowhere fast, that I needed to change something—so I started with myself. I became involved with trying to better the prison conditions I was in, which were deplorable. It was 1971, the year George Jackson was murdered, the year of the Attica Rebellion. There was unrest in most prisons because overall the prisons were brutal and inhumane. I was elected chairperson of New England Prisoner Association. Inside, I met with legislators, and participated in food and work strikes and protests for better conditions. I read a lot of history and worked in political study groups. I was locked up, beaten, and shipped out for my activities. I learned through study and my efforts that the struggle was much larger than my then present surroundings. I became a communist.

Upon my release I worked briefly with the Prairie Fire Organizing Committee. I went to work for the New England Free Press—a radical, collective print shop—for almost 2 years. Along with Barbara, Jaan, and Kazi, I was part of The Amandla Concert in Harvard Stadium in 1979. Featuring Bob Marley, Amandla was a benefit concert to provide aid to liberation forces in Southern Africa. My role was as part of a People's Security Force which provided security for the concert. We also did security work for the community—such as house sitting with people who were under attack by racists. We went to Greensboro, North Carolina in 1979 to protest the killings of CWP members a year before by the KKK.

I went underground to join the Armed Clandestine Movement in 1981 and was captured in Cleveland in 1984. *VENCEREMOS!*

BARBARA CURZI-LAAMAN

I was born on November 10, 1957, and am the mother of 2 daughters, 14 and 13 years old, and a six year old son, who I share with my Comrade husband, Jaan Karl Laaman. The youngest of four children, I was raised in an ethnic neighborhood in Boston where my grandparents settled after immigrating to the U.S. from Italy in the early 1920s. My parents worked in factories most of their lives. They taught us that everyone has a right and a responsibility to their community and to themselves to develop to their fullest potential.

As a working class woman and mother, the struggles for decent health care and housing and against racism and pollution have always been part of my life. I saw that good health and education resources are available only to the privileged few. I saw that racism, sexism and class divide poor and working class communities. They fought among themselves for the crumbs, too worn down to go after the real cause of the problem. In the mid-70s, as Boston exploded with racist violence, I joined the Anti-racist Committee. From the community level, my view expanded to include international struggles against all kinds of suffering caused by imperialism.

I have been in prison for three and a half years after living clandestinely with my husband and children for two and a half years. The government has threatened me with 265 years of sentences for being part of the underground anti-imperialist movement. After one trial, I received a 15-year-sentence for conspiracy and for actions carried out by the United Freedom Front opposing US government support for apartheid in South Africa and their war on the people of Central America.

I am presently on trial for the exact same activities, now described in three conspiracy charges, including Seditious Conspiracy, which could add 60 more years of prison time to my life.

I became and will remain committed to building a just society in this country, free of racial and economic oppression. Whatever my conditions, I'll keep bright my vision and never stop working until we've built that better day.

JAAN LAAMAN

Born March 21, 1948, I am a 40 year old father of 3, sharing 2 daughters—14 and 13—and a 6 year old son with my comrade-wife, Barbara. I am Estonian, having immigrated to the U.S. with my family when I was 3 years old. Raised in a tight-knit blue collar family, I did most of my growing up in Boston and Buffalo. From inner city alleyways and schoolyards to the steel mills and warehouses where I worked, I came to understand the realities of U.S. capitalism. I became politically active in the mid-60's, around the Vietnam War. In addition to labor

and community organizing, I was a full-time SDS activist and participated in various capacities—in the student, anti-war and anti-imperialist movements. Much of my work has gone into fighting against racism and apartheid and in support of National Liberation and Socialist movements.

About 1970 I came to understand that armed resistance was a necessary part of any struggle committed to the defeat of imperialism, and I have been part of the guerrilla/underground/armed movement since then. From 1972 to 1978 I was imprisoned for bombing Nixon's re-election headquarters and the police station in Manchester, New Hampshire. After my release, I did public anti-apartheid and anti-Klan organizing in New England. Then I again went totally underground and worked as a full-time guerrilla. Since being captured in November of 1984, and having been through several political trials (all of us have some sentences—I have 98 years), my comrades and I are now being charged with seditious conspiracy for being members of the United Freedom Front and/or the Sam Melville Jonathan Jackson Unit (both organizations have claimed many armed actions).

Although I am again in captivity with all its limitations and heartaches, especially concerning the children, I understand this is but another front in our struggle.

AMANDLA!!!

FREEDOM IS A CONSTANT STRUGGLE

PATRICIA GROS LEVASSEUR

I am Patricia Gros Levasseur, one of eight children raised in a small town of the eastern shore of Maryland. My father was in the Army for a number of years and my mother worked at factory and office jobs. The main contradiction I found in my life growing up was the obvious racism and the disparity between Blacks and whites, rich and poor. I remember vividly trying to make sense out of the blind hate which many white people felt towards Black people—struggling against the immovable position of race and economic oppression.

As a white working class woman, I realized it was my duty to work and organize against racism and sexism, the oppression of the people; we must refuse to tolerate this government's policies throughout the world in the name of the American people.

When I look back over my life and the sum total of my experiences so far, I'm struck by the reality of the charges of Sedition and RICO. I know my life has not been criminal or corrupt. Now the government is saying that we are seditious; that we conspired to put down and overthrow by use of force the government of the United States. I find great irony in these charges—charges serious enough to threaten the rest

of my life. I ask these questions: wasn't it white europeans who came to this country and put down, destroyed and overthrew by use of force whole nations of Native American peoples, virtually wiping out an entire civilization? Wasn't it our ancestors who stole and enslaved African people? Isn't it our country that has a long history of going outside its borders to determine what form of government people of other countries should have? What is it when high-ranking government officials can lie to the people of this country and for their own profit and ideology sell arms and drugs and solicit funds to finance the overthrow of Nicaragua? Is that Racketeering? Is that a Corrupt Organization? Is that Seditious?

Eight of us are charged with conspiracy to overthrow the U.S. government by use of force and we never had any Redeye missiles; we had no tanks, no helicopters, and no hundred million dollars. It is our belief that it is the people of a country who decide to throw off an unjust and corrupt government. It is the people of a country who decide what to build; it always has been and it always will be.

RAYMOND LUC LEVASSEUR

I was born in Sanford, Maine on October 10, 1946. My people are of French Canadian background. My father was born in Quebec and emigrated here with his family. They came looking for work in textile mills and shoe factories. My mother has continued to work these non-union mills for as long as I can remember. I followed in my family's footsteps, working in mills and factories as well as in construction, loading docks, logging, and farm work.

In 1965 I joined the army and in 1967 I was sent to Vietnam where I was deeply affected by the devastation of the war on the Vietnamese people.

In 1968 I began my first political activism with the Southern Student Organizing Committee (SSOC) in Tennessee. Our work centered on anti-war and student organizing, supporting the Black Liberation Struggle and labor union work.

Police repression ensued. I was set up and took a bust for sale of \$7 worth of marijuana and was sentenced to 5 years in the Tennessee State prison. I did almost all my time in segregation units and in squalid conditions.

I was released in 1971 and became a state organizer for Vietnam Veterans against the War (VVAW). In 1973 I left VVAW and began working with prisoners, ex-prisoners and their families. I became an organizer with a community-based group called SCAR. Much of our work centered around "survival programs" such as a community bail fund, alternative paper, prisoners union, welfare rights, martial arts program, jobs, shelter, support for Third World struggles and political prisoners. I was also in-

volved with the formation of the Red Star North bookstore/collective which operated a free-books-to-prisoners program.

In 1974 I went underground because of my commitment to building a revolutionary movement that can defend its own existence and because police repression had reached intolerable levels.

Pat and I have three daughters—Carmen 12, Simone 10, and Rosa 8.