

!ROCK!

★ Working to Extend Democracy to All ★

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GUANTANAMO - PELICAN BAY

"I don't want to die. But I am prepared to die if that is what it takes. I can't take not knowing my destiny anymore."

These are the words of Nabil Hadjarab, one of my cleared clients in Guantanamo Bay. At the start of this week, after some long, painful, and heartfelt conversations, Reprieve and colleagues took his case (and three others) to a US federal judge.

Take his tubes out, we asked. Stop the force-feeding.

If we win, Nabil and my other clients will have a choice: to eat, or to continue to fast in protest.

This may strike you as extreme. It struck me as extreme in the early stages of my talks with these men. I have been visiting

them in Guantanamo for years, and trying (and failing) to extract them from prison for all that time.

For that effort to end in a client's death by starvation is probably the most heartbreaking failure I can imagine.

But just try for a moment, as I did, to step into their shoes.

All the clients who are asking for this are cleared - most under President Bush. For them, each passing day is not time off a determined sentence, a square crossed off a finite calendar: it is one in a potentially endless succession of days.

My clients see no end in sight. They have stopped believing the government's promises of imminent freedom. They have certainly stopped raising their hopes because of rhetorical flourishes from President Barack Obama.

What they are asking, then, is the most basic choice of any human: the dignity to decide what goes in their bodies.

"Is this who we are?" the president asked in a recent speech. Yet we have seen no sign from the White House of the one action within their power likeliest to end the strike: the transfer of cleared people like my clients.

All this is about to get even more troubling, because Ramadan starts in a week. Muslims traditionally fast between sunup and sundown. Will my clients be force-fed in these hours? All Obama's Justice Department would say on Friday was that they would oppose my motion.

I know what my clients would say to Mr. Obama: you can't have it both ways. Like it or not, until you solve this crisis, this - the withered man strapped in a chair - this is America. ●

From: the Huffington Post

SUPPORT THE PELICAN BAY HUNGER STRIKE

In their ongoing plea for justice and humane treatment, the inmates confined in the Security Housing Unit program at Pelican Bay State Prison must continue to use the only peaceful means available that will draw proper attention to their plight, a Hunger Strike. Going through a long term hunger strike involves every aspect of your being, physical, mental and emotional. It requires a very strong will, determination and a true purpose as a driving force. The driving force in this is showing the world what actually goes on within the concentration camps outside the view of those this forced treatment would purportedly serve and bring an end to this cruel and inhumane reality once and for all. Over the years there have been many attempts to gain assistance from the outside community and place these issues within the domain of the courts of law where change can be initiated. This purpose can undo decades of abuse inflicted on inmates through the policies of the State Department of Corrections and the blind eye of the public. A hunger strike sends the message that this is not a mere protest of trivial circumstance with unreasonable demands. This is an extremely serious and sensitive occurrence that must be viewed as such by all concerned. With men who have been caged in concrete and steel sensory deprivation units, without the feel of sunshine, wind or the touch of another human being for decades, this is not a decision to be taken lightly. Most of the

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men confined in this way suffer from one ailment or another as a direct result of that long captivity in modern day dungeons. For these men there is no other way left to them that will gain that most illusive need, the compassionate awareness of the people outside the walls and their willingness to take that very crucial next step, progressive involvement. This, their mind, body and soul felt appeal and plea goes out to people in all walks of life, from Pelican Bay to the world. The Department of Corrections being ever determined to silence the noise that screams the truth of their oppressive practices will stop at nothing to end the strike with their unjust policies maintained. In the states attempt to undermine the meaning and momentum of this hunger strike, several people will be hospitalized will feeding tubes for the strikes duration. Some of these men already suffer from conditions like diabetes and may not survive feeding tubes. The hunger strike has gone from critical to intensely critical because people in positions of power like, Senators, Congress and most importantly Judges are starting to look at the evidence and acknowledge much more than punishment is going on inside California's share of the Prison Industrial Complex. It should not matter who you like or don't like, who you work for or are friends with. The incredible issue is what these captives endure on a daily basis sunk in these holes of depravity. Please don't stand in the doorway when a step or two could unclog the flow of information and materials possibly beneficial to those whom for all intents and purposes are bound and gagged. The folks inside need every aspect of what we are capable of giving and doing. There are so many who have already responded to the call for support and are doing all they can. Your contribution is beyond measure, greatly appreciated by the hunger strikers and an inspiration to all others who would stand against the injustice inflicted on them as a policy. The Black August Organizing Committee continues to stand in full solidarity with the hunger strikers and will always be a voice exposing the pain that not only touches them but the lives of their families and loved ones as well. Continue to resist oppression, continue to grow!!! ●

*Shaka At-thinmin, Chairman
Black August Organizing Committee*

[CDCR admits to thirty thousand not eating! Thousands more not working. Now they are doctoring the numbers.]

GUARDS ASK TO BE INCLUDED IN SOLITARY CONFINEMENT LAWSUIT

By Paige St. John, LA Examiner, 6-27-13

The union that represents corrections officers at California prisons seeks to intervene in a federal lawsuit over how long the state may keep inmates locked up in solitary confinement.

A group of 10 inmates, each held a decade or longer in isolation at Pelican Bay State Prison near the Oregon border, contend that the practice of indefinite solitude is cruel and inhuman and violates their constitutional rights. A federal judge is hearing their request to turn the case into a class action.

The California Correctional Peace Officers Assn. this week asked the judge to include it as a party in the lawsuit. The guards union contends that decisions on who is put into Pelican Bay's Security Housing Unit, and how long they are kept there are a matter of security that affects the safety of union members throughout the state prison system.

Prisoners argue that the state uses secret evidence to determine who is a member of a prison gang and therefore must be put in isolation, and that long stretches of such confinement cause severe psychological harm. They urge limits on how long prisoners can be kept under such conditions.

That "eviscerates" the process of deciding whether an inmate presents a security threat, the union argues. Limiting isolation "jeopardizes the security of the institution and CCPOA's membership," and would "lead to increased violence throughout prisons in California," the union stated in its federal court filing this week.

The CCPOA represents nearly 27,400 correctional employees.

In protest of solitary confinement conditions, inmate leaders in Pelican Bay's isolation unit are calling for a statewide hunger strike to begin in two weeks. U.S. District Chief Judge Claudia Wilken in Oakland is currently requiring settlement negotiations between some of those same Pelican Bay inmates and corrections officials over the solitary confinement lawsuit. Wilken has set an August hearing for the class-action motion. ●

Quote Box

"The first human who hurled an insult instead of a stone was the founder of civilization."

Sigmund Freud

"What do I think of Western civilization? I think it would be a very good idea."

Mahatma Gandhi

"Of all injustice, that is the greatest which goes under the name of law; and of all sorts of tyranny the forcing of the letter of the law against the equity, is the most insupportable"

L Estrange

"There is no greater tyranny than that which is perpetrated under the shield of the law and in the name of justice."

Montesquieu, The Spirit of the Laws

"Just look at us. Everything is backwards. Everything is upside down. Doctors destroy health, lawyers destroy justice, universities destroy knowledge, governments destroy freedom, the major media destroy information, and religion destroys spirituality."

Michael Ellner

"It is no measure of health to be well adjusted to a profoundly sick society."

Jiddu Krishnamurti

"The liberties of a people never were, nor ever will be, secure, when the transgressions of their rulers may be concealed from them."

Patrick Henry

"Sunshine is the greatest disinfectant"

Louis D. Brandeis

"In America, the government belongs to the people. Inherent in our system of self-government is the idea that the People have the right to know what our government and government officials are doing and to hold them accountable for their actions"

Citizen Access Project

"Nothing so diminishes democracy as secrecy."

*Ramsey Clark,
Former Attorney General*

TAKEN HOSTAGE: AND MY CAPTORS EXPECT ME TO DO WHAT?

By David Carr #11818281
Snake River Prison, Ontario, OR

We are being held in solitary confinement and the State compels us to reveal personal questions or be held in isolation indefinitely. They call this bi-weekly interrogation “programming” where we’re forced to reveal our most personal information to our captors “the State”, knowing that this information can and will be used against us. They give us “packets” containing personal questions such as “Describe a specific incident where you completely lost control of yourself and lashed out in anger.” I’ll give an example where this question was used...

Entrapment

Daniel Lunsford #11360357 a Native American who is housed next door to me in Oregon’s IMU as I write this. Daniel is fighting an outside case where he was assaulted (punched in the face) by a staff member (CO Harrison) on camera and was forced to defend himself. His “packets” are specifically designed around questions about lashing out in as anger previously mentioned. Many are “multiple choice” answers that give no option for self-defense and leave him exposed for self-incrimination. Yet he is coerced to either answer these questions risking the real possibility of incriminating himself and picking up more time in prison or spend the rest of his lengthy sentence in solitary confinement. This tactic the State is using to interrogate,

is clearly coercion which is a felony crime.

ORS 163.275 Coercion: To unlawfully and knowingly compel and induce an individual to abstain from engaging in conduct to which they have a legal right to engage in. [In this case the 5th Amendment right to remain silent. Under the threat of the indefinite placement in solitary confinement which has clearly been defined as torture by the United Nations in 2011 and is widely known to cause lasting and irreversible psychological injury.]

Just because we are incarcerated does not authorize ODOC to dissolve or obstruct our 5th Amendment right to remain silent yet the State does this under the radar, by implementing an internal rule #055 (IMU) and calling these invasive questions “programming” thereby receiving public funding to commit the crime of coercion which is a felony. Recently I asked the Assistant Superintendent of Snake River Corrections Judy Gilmore if it is “true that if I act in best behavior and never receive a single misconduct yet simply choose not to answer these invasive personal questions will I be kept in solitary confinement forever and for that reason alone.” Her response in writing was “Yes it is true.” She then went on to write “If you refer to rule #055 (IMU) you will see that an inmate must complete assigned programming to be considered for release to general population.”

Oregon Joins the Fight

DOCs across the country violate our amendments by skirting the law to accomplish their goals and have had next to no consequences or repercussions. We have ALLOWED them to do this by just accepting the actions they take against us. Well everyone I have spoken with about this is ready to create positive change and we all agree the three core demands are worthy of our sacrifice to create lasting meaningful changes. We have committed

to the struggle and are participating in the July 8th HS in surprising numbers. We have stopped turning in our packets together, in accord, as more and more people join us because they realize that they are not alone. DOC will begin to realize they must reassess their current strategy and consider our 3-Core because they ABSOLUTELY depend on us to complete these packets in order to maintain population control in IMU. The July 8th HS will get us outside support. Because our demands are reasonable and this packet strike is the most effective solution to create lasting changes for our brothers and sisters across the state who will be assigned IMU in the future.

*In solidarity
We struggle for change*

Oregon’s 3 Core Demands (Not Negotiable)

A date for release from IMU regardless of participation/completion of packets, not to exceed 90 days beyond the calculated release date if one does complete their packets. Currently we are being held indefinitely per Rule #055 (IMU) which states that an inmate must complete assigned “programming” to be “considered” for release to GP.

Reduce the inadvertent placement of individuals in LONG TERM IMU by implementing a rule that calls for a decision by IPC for the placement of an individual in long term IMU (solitary) within 90 days of initial placement in IMU. This will significantly reduce the number of long term assignments because currently they lead us to believe we are working towards our release to mainline by completing their self help packets “program” only to find out they were waiting for a bed to become open to place us. Chase the carrot, get the stick...

One (1) phone call within 2 weeks of attaining Level 3 and 1 phone call every 3 months if there are no DR’s and inmate remains at Level 3. This phone call must be allowed from a list of 3 numbers approved and must occur no longer than 2 weeks before or after said 90 days.

Special Provisions (Negotiable)

Once an inmate reaches Level 3 he/she should be allowed to purchase shoes from commissary and photo tickets (for reprints only) headphones. ●

Dare to Be

When a new day begins, dare to smile gratefully.
When there is darkness, dare to be the first to shine a light.
When there is injustice, dare to be the first to condemn it.
When something seems difficult, dare to do it anyway.
When life seems to beat you down, dare to fight back.
When there seems to be no hope, dare to find some.
When you’re feeling tired, dare to keep going.
When times are tough, dare to be tougher.
When love hurts you, dare to love again.
When someone is hurting, dare to help them heal.
When another is lost, dare to help them find the way.
When a friend falls, dare to be the first to extend a hand.
When you cross paths with another, dare to make them smile.
When you feel great, dare to help someone else feel great too.
When the day has ended, dare to feel as you’ve done your best.
Dare to be the best you can -
At all times, Dare to be!”

Steve Maraboli, Life, the Truth, and Being Free

LETTERS

[*Note: Names of letter writers will be withheld unless the author of the letter explicitly approves printing of their name.*]

Wasco Demands

To all who are standing in solidarity as one. Last month we sent a letter to the "Rock" news letter from Wasco State Prison/Reception Center, Ad-Seg Unit. (this letter was a copy of our choosing to stand in solidarity with the Pelican Bay short Corridor Rep's), addressed to the Warden there (John Katavich) with additional demands for the institution as a whole, all colors, all sides, as one. I'm/we're not sure if said document was ever received, along with (9) signatures & C.D.V numbers?

As you can now see, CDCR attempted to silence another out spoken voice by transferring me out to Corcoran SHU, only a week after our letter was sent out, via Unit Sergeant... Coincidental? Highly doubtful at best... Needless to say, our captors here still fail to see the Big Picture! Although I'm no longer an inmate at WSP-R/C "ASU", our peaceful protest, which is non-violent, will proceed no matter what prison one is in... Our Hunger Strike/Work Stoppage reach out and touch all mainlines, all levels, Ad-Seg, SHU's, Reception Centers and Camps, alongside with other prisons here in the United States across the nation, both men and women alike.

It is not 'I', one man, who will stand and be counted for! No, it is us, one people, one nation, all sides, who will participate and leave everlasting impression upon the body of CDCR's penal institutions! I am only one with the coalition, for a common purpose, for reform, whose determination is pure and right, for I am a human being with a name and my own unique features.

It's in our nature to socialize and speak to other people and we should be able to do so without fear of retaliation from correctional guards and so called gang investigators, who are on stand-by to slap and label an individual as a "Gang-Associate/Member" ... Just to keep one chained down to the SHU indefinitely, under torturous conditions. Our voices WILL BE HEARD, recognized and acknowledged this time around, not just cut off mid-sentence, silenced and chalk-up like the usual norm in these concrete/stainless steel environments in which we're forced to call home. The

struggle maintains as such and probably will always be so, if we continue to hold our tongue and stand as on-lookers while the oppressor downcast us with ball and chain, ignorance and blindness. We must not summit and accept defeat... Then we give back all the power to those dictating our lives.

We've all lost one thing or another to the failure of CDCR's false images of "rehabilitation".. For me, they sabotaged my marriage and turned my own family against me! For their mistakes I am held responsible and deemed just a statistic, unchangeable man, an animal, heartless and unaware of his own actions. So not only am I paying my depth to society with years of my life; I've had to watch those I loved slowly fade away into nothingness and become distant strangers. A sad reality, but an all too common story for us behind these walls of isolation, thanks to smear campaigns and security breaches by guards, bored and in need of entertainment. We're tired of all these lies and pretty pictures, no more illusions and playing the bad guys. We will deface CDCR and Correctional Institutions across the world as a unit/as one and show the people once and for all who the monsters really are.

Please print my name and information also no one here in my section receives the Rock newsletter. If possible please send us a free copy and we figure out how to properly subscribe, Thank you

Always In Solidarity!

William Nicholas Glass #T.31358
CSP-Corcoran/4B.4L. #45R
P. O. Box #3481
Corcoran, CA

[We did get the Wasco demands and your letter. Both were circulated widely to supporters on the outside.]

Our Shine Will Illuminate

Beautify a thing is considered both more virtuous and more honorable. Moreover, the speaking human being himself equals the non-speaking, yet his speech adds even more to him. Some may say that the silent person might keep himself safe (from sin and contention) by observing silence and refraining from speech. But such can also be gained by a speaker who says good things, who, by way of his or her good speech, will also earn divine reward for the good they have uttered not to mention the admiration and appreciation of good people.

A group of scholars debated the merits of speech versus silence. Some concurred that silence is definitely better than speech. But to this, others replied that utterance, or speech, is not only superior to silence but better than it. "Silence stays only with its observer while good speech serves and benefits innumerable listeners." One scholar said, "a knowledgeable man who stays quiet is like unto another knowledgeable man who speaks. My hope is that the speaker with knowledge is of higher rank than the silent one on the day of judgment, for his speech benefited people while the other has benefited none but himself."

"Silence is the sleeping of the mind and speech is its awakening. Each state complements the other," meaning that both speech and silence can save a good purpose, depending on the situation.

To see an unjust and to turn one's head from it and keep it from moving, only allows that unjust to round the bend to where it finally lands on your door step. Human beings, were given a voice to better humanity, for the collective. Modern life presents a fundamental harshness, especially behind these walls, and impatience with being human. This intolerant atmosphere toward anything human has broken our spirits and shattered our confidence. Which is why many, inside and out, play it safe and stay silent. A race without hope (human race), mankind has lost what is so central to its well-being, in this life and the next.

However, I firmly believe that if, "once", we get our shit together in here, our shine will illuminate society. Yeah, believe it. We, prisoners, dictate from within, the attitudes, the untrust, the hate, the violence, that is seen in the outside world today. Now, before you shout me down, allow me to give you an example of my overstanding. One can't help but be effected, after living behind these walls for many of years going through the trials of warfare between the groups. "Race riots." You know well the hate and disdain that, or those encounters leave within us. Now, here comes our woman up to visit, we pollute her with our ordeal, she adapts our attitudes and takes this back home with her. She passes the pollution on to her friends, kids, peers, they pass it on, man you got a wild fire now. And that's just one person, one contact. Now multiply it.

Do you see in schools, junior high, elementary schools, man they have “race riots” that would put some I’ve seen inside to shame. Man they really go at it. This end hostilities agreement is a worthwhile effort that needs to be given its full push and support by all, inside and out. We prisoners in unison equals power. We can better humanity from right behind these walls. I believe everything happens in seasons, you can’t rush it, it just has to take its course. Support July 8th, keep the respect in place and learn to overstand one another. It’s a challenge, but what I know about challenge and strife, it brings and builds character in the people who prevail through it.

Forward to a better day!

*Kenneth Antonio Sexton
Tehachapi SHU*

Unionize!

Sincerely I hope this letter will find you and yours in the very best of the health and in a positive state of mind. As for myself, well I’m coping with being in the “belly of the beat and with our oppressors” as best I can. In your “newsletter” and your efforts to keep prisoners informed is appreciated. Its importance can’t be stressed enough! However, once again I write you to inform you that once again that the cops have disapproved your “June 2013” News Letter, by alleging its contraband. Be in such haste to disallow your newsletter, that they don’t even complete the CDCR 1819 form. I send you these CDCR 1819 forms on the mere fact that you may be able to use them as exhibits in your litigation against the CDCR.

I don’t even know if such a thing is feasible! But I’m a lifer whom has been incarcerated since 1984 – it seems to me if feasible the prisoners across the state of California need to “unionize.” One, to bind us to act and move as one! Two, if every prisoner paid a quarterly fee to fund our struggles and etc., the prisoners can be an effective tool against CDCR.

If the majority of prisoners be willing to unionize and pay a quarterly fee for lawyers and etc., to an organization on someone such as yourself, who truly cares about our plight – that will be most powerful and beautiful. His long as CDCR got the prisoner classes divided – they have to worries. However, if the prisoners should ever find a way to bind the majority to be one and act as one, it will be a bless day for all prisoners.

Myron K. Watts, AKA Sujoo Ajamee

CDCR PUNISHES HUNGER STRIKERS, BROWN GOES ON VACATION

At least 14 prisoners being held in the Security Housing Unit (SHU) at California’s notorious Pelican Bay State Prison were forcibly removed from their cells and placed in more punitive isolation late last week, according to lawyers who visited their clients on Tuesday.

“They have been singled out for their participation in the ongoing California prisoner hunger strike and targeted because they are outspoken prisoner activists,” according to Kamau Walton of the Prisoner Hunger Strike Solidarity Coalition. The 14 were placed in Administrative Segregation last Thursday.

Prison officials, also confiscated legal material from the prisoners, including attorney-client protected documents relating to a highly publicized federal class action lawsuit against the state of California. The lawsuit contends solitary confinement is a violation of prisoners’ 8th Amendment rights against cruel and unusual punishment, as well as their rights to due process.

The California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) continues to lowball strike participation numbers – on the 10th day of the strike thousands are still participating throughout the California prison system, with at least 30,000 participating last week. Prisoners continue to call on the CDCR to negotiate over their demands.

“This is a clear attack against a non-violent protest,” says Anne Weills, attorney for several hunger strikers. “It is pathetic that in response to prisoners’ calls for basic human and civil rights, the CDCR responds by violating those rights.” Weills also notes that all 14 prisoners retaliated against had signed onto last summer’s Agreement to End Hostilities Among Racial Groups—a document issued from the Pelican Bay SHU, urging prisoners to resolve conflicts peacefully amongst themselves and to work to end wider violence in the prison system. The CDCR has refused to distribute the Agreement among prisoners.

In a statement issued this morning, strike representatives said, “on July 11, 2013, we were placed in Administrative Segregation (Ad-Seg), where we are subjected to more torturous conditions than in the SHU. Despite this diabolical act on the part of the CDCR intended to break our resolve and hasten our deaths, we remain strong and united! We are 100% committed to our

cause and will end our peaceful action when the CDCR signs a legally binding agreement meeting our demands.”

Governor Jerry Brown has been completely silent on the strike that has gained international news attention. He remains mired in multiple scandals in the California prison system. Brown will be taking a European vacation, visiting among other places, Dachau concentration camp in Germany. Family members and loved ones of the strikers are outraged. ●

*Prisoner Hunger Strike
Solidarity Coalition*

SHORT CORRIDOR REPS MOVED

Greetings, solidarity, love and respect to all our loved ones and supporters.

We want to provide a brief update on our collective struggle to end the torture of long-term solitary confinement. As expected, the CDCR has responded to the resumption of our peaceful protest by retaliating against 14 of us here at Pelican Bay, subjecting us to similar escalation as in 2011.

Hunger Strike Rally Corcoran ‘Stop the Torture’ 071313 by Urszula

On July 13, hundreds of people from across the state rallied at Corcoran State Prison to demonstrate to the prisoners inside and the public outside, whose tax dollars are paying for torture, their unwavering solidarity and support – even in 103-degree heat.

Specifically, on July 11, 2013, we were placed in Administrative Segregation (Ad-Seg), where we are subjected to more torturous conditions than in the SHU. Despite this diabolical act on the part of the CDCR intended to break our resolve and hasten our deaths, we remain strong and united!

We are 100 percent committed to our cause and will end our peaceful action when CDCR signs a legally binding agreement to our demands.

Please join us in our struggle to stop CDCR from trying to destroy our lives and the lives of our families.

We can only win our demands with your support! ●

In Solidarity,

*PBSP-SHU Short Corridor
Representatives*

EDITORIAL 2-8

At this point the mailing list is at 500 plus readers. 355 of those subscribers are in California, primarily SHU prisoners, and the rest of them are in Washington and Oregon prisons. This means we have a lot of new readers from the 100 we started out with. So you old timers bear with me while I orientate these newbies on how things work.

First of all, this paper ain't free. There's no such thing as a free lunch. The *Rock* newsletter is not produced by a group and we don't have an office. This rag is put together by me. I have some help with the mailings from another ex-con named Mark Cook. I'm 71 and Mark is 76 years old, both of us are state raised, and our only income is social security. Between Mark and me we've done about 80 years behind bars.

I started doing time in the Utah State Industrial School for Boys in Ogden, Utah at the age of 13. Mark got his start in the Green Hill prison for children in Chehalis, Washington. (Incidentally, Mark and I were protesting in support of striking prisoners at Green Hill on July 8th). We both became politically conscious during the late 1960s and have been political activists since then. We were both a part of the George Jackson Brigade, whose first public act was to bust into the headquarters of the Washington department of corrections in the state capitol, Olympia, where a powerful bomb was placed under the director's desk.

The device went off at one o'clock in the morning, nobody was hurt but structural damage was done to the five story building. A communiqué was issued saying the bombing was in support of prisoners being brutalized in the segregation unit of the Washington State Penitentiary. The brutalization stopped!

We financed ourselves by robbing banks, we called it expropriation. The GJB did a lot of bombings (including the FBI office in Tacoma) and robbed a lot of banks. I was captured during one such robbery, in which a comrade was killed and another wounded after a shoot-out with police. I served 18 years. Mark was subsequently convicted of shooting a cop while successfully freeing a comrade from police custody. He served 24 years. We are both socialists.

In addition to being the publisher of the *Rock* newsletter, for the past 14 years I've been an editor of the *Prison Focus* newspaper. Before that I've put out a long list of publications aimed at prisoners, includ-

ing starting *Prison Legal News*. I am not tooting my own horn; rather just letting you know I've been here for the long haul.

I'm not going to ask you to bomb anyone, or start a prisoners union or anything like that. All I'm asking you to do is to materially support this newsletter. So far this publication has not cost me a single red cent to produce and distribute because California prisoners have kicked down all of the stamps and money needed to keep it going.

Today the *Rock* is expanding into Oregon and Washington states. It is time for you newer readers, no matter where you are, to do your fair share. Take up collections of stamps on your tier and send them to me. Sell subscriptions to prisoners you think might benefit from news written from the perspective of the convicted class. Subscriptions are \$15 a year or 30 stamps. Get your people on the streets to subscribe too. This is going to be a long and difficult struggle. It is time to start building the base. This newsletter can be a part of the scaffolding that will help build the structure we will need in order to win.

Some of my Washington State readers, are at the prison in Monroe. As it happens, I spent my last ten years of confinement at that facility. While I was there the prison remained single celled in spite of efforts by prisoner-collaborators working hand-in-glove with the administration to get us double celled. Monroe was the only single celled prison in the state.

When the collaborators would try to sell us out I would type up papers exposing them for the traitors they were. And if that did not work I would get the entire prison to not eat (except for the six Jehovah Witnesses), or would do some other unified but peaceful action. Thanks to me, and nobody can deny this, we had personally owned computers and printers in our cells. It was the best prison in the state. When I was released, however, double celling was introduced and the computer program was discontinued. A lot of other stuff was lost too.

Which brings us to today and the sorry ass collaborators that call the shots at Monroe. Prisoners at that prison were given the opportunity to join with convicts in California, they were asked to go on a one day peaceful work strike in solidarity with other striking prisoners up and down the West Coast—only one day! They responded by saying "solidarity is not enough for us to jeopardize our privileges." Shame on you Monroe! Shame, shame, shame!

If workers and union organizers back in the 1930s had that attitude there would be no eight hour day, no Saturdays off, or paid vacations, child labor would still be exploited, etc.

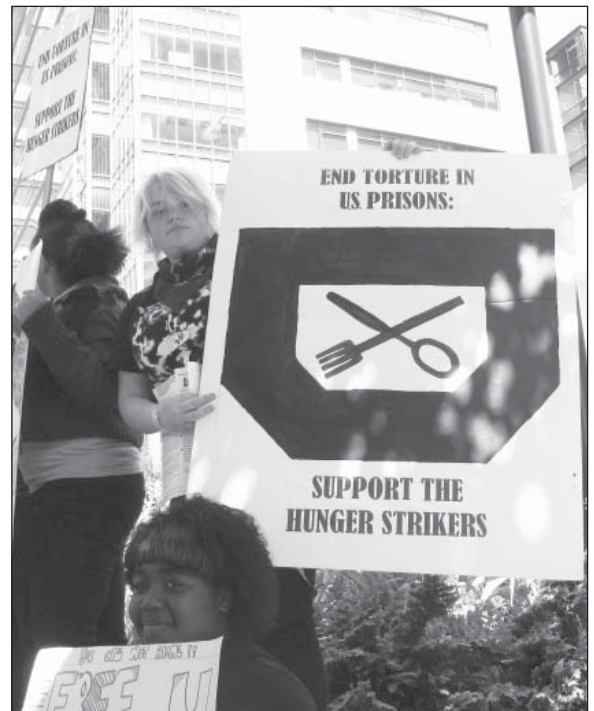
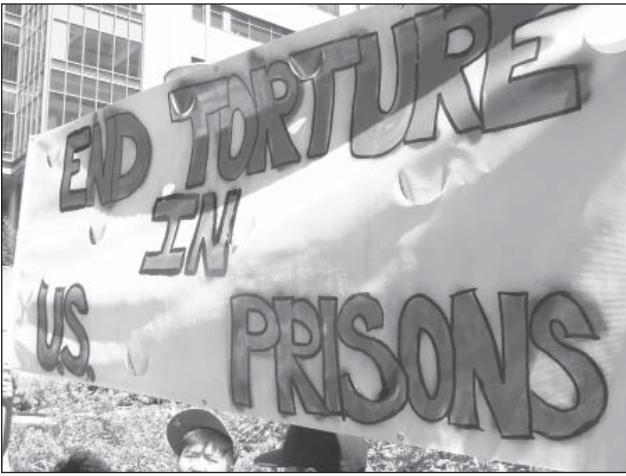
Harriet Tubman was an African-American abolitionist and humanitarian during the American Civil War. She once said, "I freed a thousand slaves; I could have freed a thousand more if only they knew they were slaves." The collaborators at Monroe might want to ponder their status as slaves the next time they get to feeling they have nothing to complain about.

You are all slaves of the state, a status legitimized by the Thirteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which abolished slavery for all except for those convicted of a crime. You are held in conditions of dependency and irresponsibility, disenfranchised from the basic rights of citizenship such as the right to vote, and you will not protest even one day! And here I'm not talking about all Monroe prisoners; there are those who fought hard in favor of the strike, all power to them. Here I am talking to the older generation of ass kissers and traitors who would rather be comfortable slaves than empowered human beings. They disgust me.

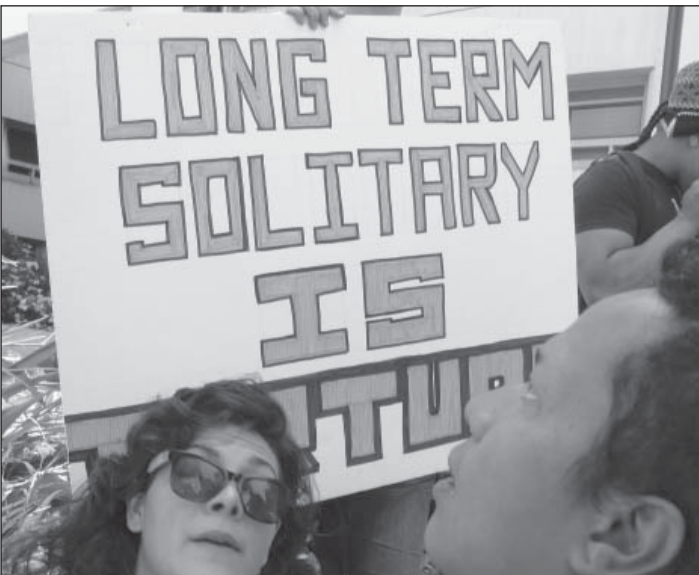
These collaborators need to be exposed for what they are. Type up your exposés and post them in the urinal on the yard and other areas only prisoners have access to. Start class struggle on the inside by exposing right opportunists and collaborators. The only way forward is through struggle, and prisoners who stand in the way of that struggle must be swept aside. We must build a national prisoners' movement, and each reader in each prison must take personal responsibility for non-violently building that movement. Like they say: If not you, who? If not now, When?

Power is not something that is handed down to you on some sort of silver platter. It is, rather, something that must be struggled for. And in the process of that struggle you learn how you wield that power—you learn how to develop the responsibility that comes with power. To change your conditions of existence you need only exercise responsibility, to take responsibility, and from that will come power. Frederick Douglas noted that "Power concedes nothing without demand. It never has and it never will." It is time to make that demand. California prisoners lead. Now peacefully Follow. ●

Ed Mead



Some of the photos from the July 8th demonstration in support of the hunger and work strikes in Seattle, Washington.



PUBLIC SAFETY CHAIR TOM AMMIANO: 'I JOIN THE PROTESTERS'

Sacramento – Assembly member Tom Ammiano, chair of the Assembly Public Safety Committee, released the following statement regarding the hunger strike of up to 30,000 California State Prison inmates in support of prisoners in the so-called Short Corridor at Pelican Bay State Prison.

“Having visited Pelican Bay early this year, and having held a second hearing in February regarding conditions there, I continue to be concerned about the policies being used to segregate prisoners who are deemed – often on weak public grounds – to be gang leaders.

“I don’t think officials of the CDCR have justified the extremely long isolation sentences given to some of these prisoners, nor some of the arbitrary rules – such as those limiting personal photographs. The conditions are extreme and do not correspond to the sentences given to these prisoners under our judicial system.

“When they reviewed cases after pressure from an earlier hunger strike, even CDCR officials cleared hundreds of prisoners of participating in gang activities. On the other hand, some advocates and family members are claiming that CDCR has broadened their use of solitary confinement.

“That it took so long to make any changes to policy at Pelican Bay is symptomatic of a system that is slow to reform. We have seen that with CDCR failing to make medical improvements, except under court order, and with its more recent hesitation to move prisoners exposed to deadly valley fever.

“I join the protesters in urging prison officials to make more progress in establishing fair and humane policies in the prisons paid for by California taxpayers. We should not be the focus of international human rights concerns, like those expressed by Amnesty International.” ●

[Contact Assemblyman Tom Ammiano via Assembly Public Safety Committee, 1020 N Street (LOB), Room 111, Sacramento, CA 95814, phone (916) 319-3744, fax (916) 319-3745.]

Source: S.F. Bayview

STATEMENT OF SOLIDARITY FROM INCARCERATED WOMEN ACROSS MASSACHUSETTS

As Prisoners across the country prepare to strike, our hearts and thoughts are with them. As incarcerated women we know first-hand many of the abuses the strikers face on a daily basis—as well as many of the repercussions they may face in retaliation for the action against these abuse.

As incarcerated mothers we experience lack of access to healthy food, lack of respect, autonomy and access to health care, lack of access to children and are regularly set up by the system to fail.

As incarcerated women we know first-hand many of the abuses the strikers face on a daily basis

As we stand in solidarity with striking prisoners, we ask you to stand in solidarity with us. Not just on July 8th—but every day of the year. To be in solidarity with us, we need folks from outside to come inside! Being behind the wall is hard and we need support while we are here, so when we get out we can be leaders. We need allies to be here both inside and out, to support us in creating space and community, to come together and be leaders. We need to be leaders because we are the experts.

We are here. We need folks to listen from their heart and be by our side when we are ready to speak, to strike and to stand out. We need allies to rally in support of policies inside and out so we can survive while we are here and thrive when we get out. We need allies to help us break down the wall between men and women inside—to help us bridge the gap and support our families through the realities of the criminal system.

Because of our experience, we are the experts on these issues and we ask that all allies, reformers, abolitionists, lawyers, legislators and our families work together, come together around the realities – not rhetoric – and help us move mountains and break down the walls in a supportive and sustainable ways physically, spiritually, politically and personally. ●

www.theprisonbirthproject.org

TO PROTEST IS A RIGHT

*By Kevin Cooper, Death Row at San
Quentin State Prison - July 8, 2013*

Frederick Douglass once said, “It’s easier to build strong children, than it is to repair broken men.”

The same can be said for women, as they are included in the oppression that has been going on since the beginning of human beings oppressing each other.

Throughout the history of this world, at one time or another, certain people from every generation have had to fight for their equality, their civil rights, and most importantly, their human rights!

Without these historical and current day struggles, it’s safe to say that more people would be oppressed than currently are. But of those who are being oppressed, they are tired of it! All over this planet, poor and oppressed people are standing up, and speaking out, and fighting back in every way that they can, even non-violently, to gain what was theirs at birth: their human rights.

Many have been broken, but many more have not, and won’t be, because they understand that this ongoing struggle for their human rights is bigger, much bigger, than them as individuals. It’s about our collective humanity!

One thing is for certain, and history is our best teacher in this. If there is no struggle, there will be no change! The fight for one’s human rights is not always easy, but it’s necessary. Especially when it comes to people who have been targeted by the system.

To do, or say, nothing is to suffer in silence while you’re treated like a non-human; a stereotype, a piece of trash. In America, we have in this so-called democracy the right to protest for our rights, and it’s a right that must be used to change the system.

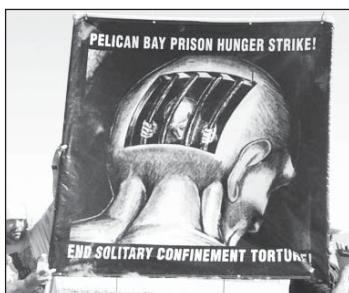
Because not only is protesting a right, it’s your constitutional right. Which is so very important for all of us to remember, because the oppressors don’t seem to follow the constitution when it comes to us, the oppressed!

So no matter where you are, if you’re being repressed, undressed, suppressed, regressed, depressed and outright oppressed by the powers that be - it’s in your best interests to PROTEST! ●

CORCORAN DEMO

Four hundred people made their way to California's Central Valley from all around the state. Organized by Prison Hunger Strike Solidarity they came to show solidarity with the hunger strikers, to protest the treatment of at least five thousand prisoners now held in solitary in the state's prisons, and to rally against the prison-industrial complex that has every interest in keeping them inside ... and adding to their numbers.

When they got there they found a gods-forsaken facility baking in temperatures variously recorded up to 103 degrees. ●



From all races and all regions, Californians come together to support the hunger strikers and those on work strike.

Photos taken by various participants of the Corcoran demonstration in support of the strikers.



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