IN 2015 CALIFORNIA’S LAW ABIDING CITIZENS AWAKENED TO THEIR PENAL SYSTEM’S ILLEGAL OVERZEALOUS, ARBITRARY USE OF SOLITARY CONFINEMENT AND CRUEL AND UNUSUAL PUNISHMENT

By Xavier Cedra

U.S. Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall understood when the prison gates slam behind an inmate, he does not lose his human quality. His mind does not become closed to ideas, his intellect does not cease to feed on a free and open interchange of ideas, his yearning for self-respect does not end, nor his quest for self-realization conclude. If anything, the need for identity and self-respect are more compelling in the dehumanizing prison environment. It is the role of the First Amendment and this court to protect those previous personal rights by which we satisfy such basic yearning of the human spirit.

The State of California penal system and its citizens of this state have rationalized, legitimized, and channeled through our criminal justice system! It is expressed as police brutality, decades of illegal use of solitary confinement and discriminatory arbitary imposition of the death penalty. If one wishes to know the standards, principles, morals and ethics of its state, all one needs to do is visit inside its prison system. Thus you will find the moral and ethics standards and principles of the people (citizens of that state). Even when judicial dicta reek of personal disapproval of such conditions.

The illegal practice of solitary confinement that was used in California’s penal system from 1989 to 2015 confined over 1,000 inmates, subjecting these men to horrendous and inhumane conditions that created serious mental health and physical disabilities. The serious mental health effects that are attributed to long-term solitary confinement are widely known throughout the medical community.

California penal system, namely Pelican Bay Security Housing Unit, located in Crescent City, California, confined over 150 prisoners within solitary confinement for over a decade or more. Some men were held there in solitary confinement from 1989 until 2015, when the lawsuit Ashker v. California Governor Brown was settled. These men who have endured this unlawful horrendous solitary confinement are constantly confronted with, as one walks these California’s mainlines today. So thanks for coming to visit.

Now since my release from the SHU...I have not involved myself with too much writing, as I once did while in the SHU. It seems that I do not have much, or at least as much, leisure time as I once did while in the SHU. A good portion of my time today, is spent working in the PLA (Prison Industry Authority) and attendance various self-help programs, which consumes many hours of my day. I do though from time to time reach out to our supporters to keep them abreast of what is going on with me today, especially with my programming and challenges with the board, and being found suitable for parole by them. A lot of my time and thinking is centered around preparing for such a reality, but after going on over 40 years of incarceration and almost 20 denials of parole, it does not seem to be getting any easier. Obstacles are constantly thrown before me.

Let me share with you a brief history of my board process since my release from the SHU.

After being in the SHU for some months, I made my unteenth board appearance, whereby I was denied 5 years. At said hearing I was guardedly optimistic that I would probably get a 3 year denial, because I was no longer in the SHU and my prison classification security level had been lowered. In addition to this, when I previously went to my last board hearing, while I was housed in the SHU on indeterminate status, the moratorium on the board, it was decided that I was not suitable for parole.

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On July 3, Judge Wilken issued an order stating in part: “Having considered the papers, the Court GRANTS Plaintiffs’ motion to the extent that Plaintiffs must receive more out-of-cell time than they received in the Pelican Bay SHU. They should receive out-of-cell time consistent with the CDCR’s regulations and practices with respect to Level IV general population inmates, as well as its constitutional obligations.” And: “Defendants are hereby ordered to meet and confer with Plaintiffs’ representatives and their counsel with the goal of presenting a proposed remedial plan for Court approval. The matter is referred to Magistrate Judge Illman to mediate the meeting and confer. Absent agreement, the parties shall present their own respective proposed remedial plans.”

The CDCR's proposed remedial plans will have any substance, and when real changes will finally come for those class members still languishing in conditions of extreme isolation today.

Source: SF Bay View article, Relief Finally Granted to Ashker Class Members, By Kim Rohrbach, Published July 21, 2018 http://sbayview.com/tag/kim-rohrbach/

The SF Bay View is a free newspaper dedicated to the liberation of Black people and all oppressed people throughout the world. To learn more about how you can support the SF Bay View, visit http://sbayview.com.

DO YOU KNOW WHAT REALLY GOES ON BEHIND THE WALLS OF CALIFORNIA PRISONS?

They can’t rely on cell phones to expose prison brutality.
Want to hear the true story?

Learn the truth

Letters and articles of incarcerated community members are denoted with an asterisk.

Join CPF at one of our monthly Liberate The Caged Voices events to learn more

THE FIGHT FOR RESTORATIVE JUSTICE FOR THE INCARERATED PRISON CLASS

*Anonymous

It’s been awhile since I last shared some words with CPF, but as always each of you remain within my prayers and thoughts of well-being, as one strives to move forward within life, with a better life for all, as one of many of one’s life motivations. Besides being constantly pressured with the daily demands at hand, I remain within a positive state of emotional, physical, and mental development, no matter how trying it may be at times in here. So know, that overall I am well.

So I see CPF remains within the fight for restorative justice for the state incarcerated prison class, especially as it applies to the recently released long-term indefinite solitary confinement (Life with the possibility parole) prison class, who are now seeking release from prison to the board of hearings or the courts. Such is a reality that many of us are in dire need of, because just like many of us who were in the fight to abolish solitary confinement and end long-term SHUs for over 30 years, the fight to gain our freedom is a more challenging one, as the power that-be seems to be not receptive to either the positive changes within our lives or not satisfied by our acts of restoring humanity to a place or a people, where there was a little, if any. This is something I and others are constantly confronted with, as one walks...
O
n September 13, 1978, prisoners at Walla Walla (celebrated) Attica Day by holding a sparsely attended memorial talent show in the prison's auditorium. On September 13, 1979, the Washington Court of Appeals upheld the state's decision to execute the men who staged a rally in Olympia to protest overcrowding and other oppressive aspects of Washington's prison system. On September 13, 1980, the annual Attica Day event in Washington state took the form of a conference in Seattle on prison work. This was not then an Attica Day celebration in this state since.

This September 13th marks the 47th anniversary of the Attica uprising. It is a good time for prisoners to stop and think: “What is Attica Day?” There are several plausible reasons. Firstly, it is important for prisoners still working for progress to honor their comrades who have fallen in the struggle for justice. Secondly, it is essential for us on the inside to understand the lessons of Attica, both positive and negative, so that such losses can be minimized in the future. Thirdly, the uprisings at Attica represent a symbol of resistance and the birth of a greater prisoners’ movement during the 1970s.

To appreciate the events at Attica it is first necessary to put them in proper political and historical context. Today many prisoners view justice as something more than a cop’s bullet in the air. In this sense, Attica was six decades of meaningless conflict. That’s because the fact that Atticans were fighting for in proletarian justice, which is an end to the system that perpetuates the destructive cycle that imprisonments represent. They wanted us to see their rebellion as a struggle for a better world where the struggle is all about; fight, learn, fight some more, learn some more, and so on until victory.

One central weakness of Attica stands out above all others: the general lack of outside support. The necessary organizational infrastructure developed by the prison administration to shut the facility down was not in place when the struggle began. People, who were so present, were all wrong. There were both positive and negative aspects to the uprising. To glean the lessons, however, we must examine the negative, in an effort to transform weakness into strength. And if we can figure out what the struggle was all about; fight, learn, fight some more, learn some more, and so on until victory.

The high degree of political consciousness possessed by the Attica rebels is reflected in their demand for transportation to a non-imperialist country. Yet either because of a lack of patience or allowing unfolding events to get ahead of them, they did not take the necessary organizational steps to carry this demand to the boil. With the necessary organization and theory, they could have organized themselves, then other state institutions, developed trained outside support networks, and otherwise set the stage for a long-term mass struggle.

Naturally, it is easier to view past events from the comfort-able perspective of hindsight than it is to actually participate in a complex experience like the uprising at Attica. Nothing said here should be taken to detract from the strong spirit of the comrades who made those terrible sacrifices in D Yard. But since Attica did happen, future generations of prisoners can learn from the experience. The Attica cons were not just there to take their fight to the streets and not without taking the time to build a broad base of support. The state’s response was to ruthlessly smash these budding efforts to resist, a job that was made easier through the exploitation of prisoner weaknesses.

A mentioned earlier, this September 13th marks the 47th year since the massacre at Attica, an anniversary that should be honored by prisoners everywhere. These long years have not been good ones in terms of progress for prisoners. Dozens of prisoners have experienced riots and hostage takings during this period; most of which ended in the loss of prisoner lives (either by their captors or, in the case of New Mexico, at the hands of their fellow prisoners). There is no deeper level of outside support. Prisoners are not organized against domination on a nationwide or international level. And the current degree of political sophistication on the inside is shallow at best and in most cases downright reaction reigns supreme. It doesn’t appear as if this will change any time soon.

What is to be done? Are there any material conditions? If one put the finger on opportunist leadership, they would probably not be far off the mark. But a more important question to ask is where to from here? This writer has not run for president anywhere, and so I neither know nor care. Still, a few general lessons can be drawn from past experience.

First, the advocates of “off the pigs” and “burn it to the ground” should have their perspectives examined in the light of reality. They burned McAlister down in the early 70s, but has that improved the lot of prisoners there? No! The same for New Mexico. Prisoners in those other joints are still overcrowded, degraded, powerless, and no nearer to making forward progress. Similarly, prisoners in California have been killing guards (when they can) and rioting (when they can), yet still no substantial change resulting from it. Instead of acting against low level flunkies or quickly replaced prison property, people should prepare for the long-range struggle that lies ahead.

One area of important work that can be done now is the formation of study groups aimed at deepening our understanding of progressive political theory. The Prison Work Unit recommends that the reader look at books on philosophy of dialectical and historical materialism. Unlike organizing on the inside, studying politics is an area of activity that is somewhat protected by the first amendment. Building such study groups will be an important step forward, which will help us raise the banner of Attica and carry it forward.

From the Archives

BEYOND ATTICA: THE UNTOLD STORY OF WOMEN’S RESISTANCE BEHIND BARS

By Hans Bennett, Prison Focus Issue 34, Spring 2010

When Victoria Law was first introduced to radical politics shortly after becoming familiar with the work of the United Farm Workers, she “discovered groups and literature espousing prison abolition.” “These analyses, coupled with what I found a hundred yards behind the bars, carried me forward.” Writing about issues such as prison overcrowding, Victoria Law explains, carrying the crimson banner of Attica and carry it forward.

“"a major challenge of this movement is to do the work that women have already been doing for centuries. Creating environments for people in prison without bolstering the permanence of the prison system...”

The growing popularity of abolitionist thought can be seen in the expansion of organizations such as Critical Resistance, an organization fighting to end the need for a prison-industrial complex, and the formation of groups working to address issues of crime and victimization without relying on the police or prisons. The end of Resistance Behind Bars, Law quotes Angela Y. Davis, who is a leading activist intellectual of the prison abolitionist movement. In her book Are Prisons Obsolete?, Davis writes that “a major challenge of this movement is to do the work that will create more humane, habitable environments for people in prison without bolstering the permanence of the prison system. How, then, do we accept this challenge? Here are some questions that we can ask ourselves: To what end are prisons being used? Are prisons essential to our political economy? Do they make us safer? Or do they create a system of over-incarceration and under-punishment? Do they cost us more than they save? What are the alternative possibilities? What can we do differently? What can we do to make the world a better place?”

“Women’s Resistance Beyond Attica: The Untold Story of Women’s Resistance Behind Bars” by Hans Bennett, Prison Focus Issue 34, Spring 2010

http://www.alternet.org/story/134747/
LUMPEN: THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF ED MEAD

A Kersplebedeb Publication

More than a memoir, Lumpen: The Autobiography of Ed Mead takes the reader on a tour of America’s underbelly. From Iowa to Connecticut to Venice Beach to Fairbanks, Alaska, Mead introduces you to poor America just trying to get by—and barely making it. When a thirteen-year-old Mead ends up in the Utah State Industrial School, a prison for boys, it is the first step in a story of oppression and revolt that will ultimately lead to the foundation of the George Jackson Brigade, a Seattle-based urban guerrilla group, and to Mead’s re-incarnation as a fully engaged revolutionary, well-placed and prepared to take on both his captors and the predators amongst his fellow prisoners.

Throughout his organization under conditions in solitary confinement, and then with queer prisoners in the legendary Men Against Sexism, followed by his exile from Washington to the dungeons at Marion, Brushy Mountain, and Florence, Ed Mead’s practice stands as a rebuke to the inhumanity and indifference which surround the world’s largest prison system.

As the late Black Liberation Army soldier Saifiyah Buluku observed, “we must at least write our history and point out the truth of what we did—the good, the bad, and the ugly.” Ed Mead has done that here, recounting his life’s story with unflinching honesty, providing a model of personal integrity and revolutionary creativity and determination for us all.

“Lumpen is a page-turning retelling of Ed Mead’s life, from his early days growing up on the frontier of Alaska, to the frontiers of prisoner organizing from inside and later outside prison. The everydayness of his descriptions of how the George Jackson Brigade came to be, to the simple necessity to form Men Against Sexism while behind bars, reminds us that everyday justice can lead us to extraordinary places. In a mostly a historical queer left, this book is a must read.” Ryan Conrad

“There are many who talk the walk. Ed Mead is one who actually walked the walk. In fact, he never stopped walking it, an example of commitment and integrity from which there’s much to be learned. His autobiography should be read by everyone serious about the struggle for liberation.” Ward Churchill

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EDITOR-IN-CHIEF: KIM POLLAK
ASSOCIATE EDITOR: WATANI STINNER

Support California Prison Focus and receive our newsletter: $20 (non-caged) $8 for those inside, and free for those in California SHU or Administrative Segregation. Individuals in ASU must confirm address between issues (approx. every 3 months) SHU folks must confirm address every 4 issues (approx. once a year) Please let us know of address changes and better yet, when you’re released! (And don’t forget to keep in touch with CPF, and to keep getting the paper when you’re out!)
In 2016, and after six years of solitary confinement, I was released from Pelican Bay SHU and transferred to the mainline. Although my time in the SHU was a short stay (compared to many who endured well over a decade), I am not oblivious to those who have endured in the SHU. I know on me, nor do I deny the observations that I’ve made in others who have gone through similar circumstances.

The weight of modern evidence and scientific literature argue on the negative health effects that solitary confinement has on the mind: insomnia, depression, irrational anger, lethargy. (Some of this literature goes back 150 years!) So if we agree that solitary confinement is torture, then those of us who have experienced that torture must also agree that our minds are not the same that one that stepped into that SHU cell. Isolation damages the mind; it causes pain we cannot see. Though a form of torture is illegal under US or international law (or break) an individual or group. Despite the research and scientific evidence on the psychological effects of solitary confinement, CDCR continues to utilize it in order to cause damage and to disrupt the inmate population. Individuals in this same population are the ones who will at one point become members of society and return to their family and friends in the outside world. Depending on the inmate’s characteristics, solitary confinement can completely alter a person’s social behavior, temperament, concentration and ability to cope with stress, thereby diminishing his/her chances of a fruitful existence outside of these walls.

Anybody who has gone through isolation and confinement in the SHU to be mindful of the effects the experience has had on you. When first arriving on the mainline, I felt ill-equipped to deal with certain social interactions, so I chose solitude. It allowed me to utilize the symptoms I was exhibiting, so I confronted them. I found that the most helpful remedy…was a meaningful social interaction: the sharing of ideas and the relationship of such experiences. We must not forget nor deny what we went through, and we must not allow it to happen to anyone else.

ON SOLITARY CONFINEMENT

I’ve been placed in isolation throughout the time I’ve been incarcerated even as a juvenile. Now as a 33 year old man I know where I became antisocial, angry, etc. As a juvenile I was placed in isolation many times and as a 13 year old kid I didn’t think much of it except that I was incarcerated even as a juvenile. As I’ve remained in AD-SEG and/or transitioned from Administrative Segregation (AD-SEG) and the SHU Secure Housing Unit). Unless solitary confinement is a dark and claustrophobic dungeon, in the long run it can turn into a light and shine light to end this decades of being in solitary confinement; And equipping me with the tools to realize, accept, and let this go on for decades. I truly admire and look up to those who have endured and survived this horrendous experience - the knowledge and the wisdom that they taught me.

ON SOLITARY CONFINEMENT

By Alan Gonzalez

I’ve been placed in isolation throughout the time I’ve been incarcerated even as a juvenile. As I’ve remained in AD-SEG and/or transitioned from Administrative Segregation (AD-SEG) and the SHU Secure Housing Unit). Unless solitary confinement is a dark and claustrophobic dungeon, in the long run it can turn into a light and shine light to end this decades of being in solitary confinement; And equipping me with the tools to realize, accept, and let this go on for decades. I truly admire and look up to those who have endured and survived this horrendous experience - the knowledge and the wisdom that they taught me.

SOLITARY CONFINEMENT CAN PUSH A SANE MAN TO HIS BREAKING POINT

Anonymous

I cannot begin to fathom being able to express the entire negative and detrimental effects solitary confinement has had on me. From the pamphlets on solitary confinement my friends shared with me I see the attempt to differentiate solitary confinement from Administrative Segregation (AD-SEG) and the SHU Secure Housing Unit). Unless solitary confinement is a dark and claustrophobic dungeon, in the long run it can turn into a light and shine light to end this decades of being in solitary confinement; And equipping me with the tools to realize, accept, and let this go on for decades. I truly admire and look up to those who have endured and survived this horrendous experience - the knowledge and the wisdom that they taught me.

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Anonymous
Restorative Justice..................................Continued from page 1

I was given a 5-year den. One thing I would have received a more favorable decision, but that’s what happened. The main panel was the opinion that I remained unsuitable for parole for my alleged ongoing gang affiliation, because I refused to depribe and I allegedly lack insight and remorse within my prison committing offense, because I failed to admit guilt in said case. The board told me that I had not changed in decades of incarceration (how is not changing possible), that I still have a criminal mentality because I would not inform on others, and that it appeared that I was trying to retire from the world by living in such a manner that others would think I would be killing them, including den. The board also had rejected a psychiatric report, for the identical reason. In response to said 5-year den, I filed a writ of habeas corpus, which was denied by the court, with a finding that there were no errors in the habeas transcript justifying said den. So I shared this outcome with some of the Bayview staff, P.R.C., PHSS, and others, so that they might have some insight into what is now being confronted.

Now that all of the above said. Let me share with you my current dilemma with the board. Well, as I am sure you already know about the youth offender and elderly parole board program that went into effect in 2016 and 2017. It was my understanding that any inmate who has been cycled to board by July 2017 under the youth offender law, but was denied by the prison officials overseeing the implementation of said hearing for eligible inmates. They claimed they were not required to do so until the panel reviewed the claims that I was found to be heard under said law at my next scheduled parole hearing in 2020. Now, I read said law, and the way I interpreted it, they were required to hear everyone who fell under said law. I could read said law and the advance of parole hearing, which I did and was also denied. Now this last denial is something else. I was denied this advance hearing, even though I was otherwise eligible for parole. The truth is that an 1030 was placed in my prison C-file since my last parole hearing, which they deemed unfavorable for advancement of parole hearing, as it highlighted the prior panel’s concern. What this prior parole panel had stated was that any evidence did not specifically state did they state what this 1030 said. Well as a result of me receiving this denial, I was entitled to a copy of this 1030 and what I received was a statement saying, “Information was discovered through investigation that you are part involved with STG-1 activity including communication between facilities and gang politics. It was discovered that you are (gang) involved.” This 1030 claims this information is considered reliable because, “part of the information was corroborated through investigation, or by information provided by non-confidential sources.” Now it should be noted, since my release from Pelican Bay SHU, I have not once, either directly or indirectly communicated with prisoners that have been involved with any gang politics. One would think if I had and if there was any truth to these allegations, I would have received a CDC 155 disciplinary write-up, charging me with gang activity, which the new CDCR STG disciplinary matrix classifies gang communication as, but instead the CDCR continues their old practice of placing 1030’s (i.e., confidential disclosures), that I was not even aware of, nor made aware of its contents at the time, except that they accused me of, and I was denied parole for such crime without telling on people. They also used two (2) 1030’s, like that, as there is no basis for such an allegation. So I will discuss this at another time.

I introduced to this particular book, Raising Cane, by way of a reference made in another book. The book’s insight and influence for me is that, it is healthy for a man, or a boy, to express himself emotionally, to be open to communicating emotions empowers me to understand the relevance and significance within the purpose of my emotions, and that an emotional vocabulary is crucial for proper expression of my emotions or interpreting those of others.

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But the CDCR is promoting gang activity and being employed by the prison to promote gang activity and that being employed by the prison to promote gang activity. This book advocates that the best gift we as a society, community, and individuals, can give our boys is the space and permission to delve into their emotions and understand how to express them fully.

Now it should be noted, since my release from Pelican Bay prison, certain correctional staff, P.A.R.C., PHSS, and others, so that they might have some insight into what is now being confronted.

Raising Cane: Protecting the Emotional Life of Boys

By J.R.E. at KID

(Raising Cane is by two psychologists who studied the impact of emotional, or lack thereof, intelligence in our boys in America. They argue that we must redefine what is emotionally intelligent and dispel our traditional notions of mas- culinity, if we hope to give our boys what they truly need. They discuss the emotional and social challenges that come with pushing their feelings to the side and failing to teach them what it means to express an emotion. This book advocates that the best gift we as a society, community, and individuals, can give our boys is the space and permission to delve into their emotions and understand how to express them fully.)

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NOTICE: You can find the full article on the CPF website at www.prison.org.

JAILHOUSE LAWYERS SPEAK

Press Release April, 2018

Men and women incarcerated in prisons across the nation declare a nationwide strike in response to the riot in Lee Correctional Institution, a maximum security prison in South Carolina. Seven comrades lost their lives during a senseless uprising that could have been prevented if prison authorities had not fulfilled the demands of strategic development, collecting and circulating reflections, analysis and best practices from prisoner rebels and their supporters. Our support for the current calls comes without hesitation, and should be no surprise, but it is not to the same outcome of causal prison authorities and the reasons we believe this summer will see the stars align behind the rebels. This call can strike a blow like no other to the prison society and the US capitalist system in general. Please on it.

HISTORY AND STRATEGY

The call originated with Jailhouse Lawyer Speak, a national collective of incarcerated people providing legal and political support to prisoners in the United States. As of this writing, incarcerated rebels from 17 states have committed to participating. JALS had considered waiting until the next summer, but after the deadly uprisings at Lee correctional facility in South Carolina that cost seven prisoners’ lives, they decided it was important and urgent to take collective action. Doing so allows imprisoned rebels to refuse the struggle onto degradations, oppression, and torture by the prison system, rather than horizontal violence between those who have been sensationalized by the media and prison authorities.

As of this writing, incarcerated rebels from 17 states have committed to participating.

A CALL FROM THE FIRE INSIDE COLLECTIVE

This August we’re expecting a firestorm of resistance and rebellion to rage through US prisons. Jailhouse Lawyer’s Speak (JLS), The Incarcerated Worker’s Organization Committee (FWOC), and other groups in and out of the country have joined in another call for a national protest from August 21 to September 9, 2018. This will be the third call in as many years for national-level action against prison, and we think it will be the most significant and impactful.

“We want everyone to understand, we believe August 2018 is going to be lit. By that we mean: massive, transformative, world-changing.”

Whether seeking abolition or reform, decarceration or policy change, the struggle against mass incarceration advances most when driven by direct action inside prisons. In recent years the prisoner resistance movement has been shaped by national-level coordination. Massive numbers of currently incarcerated people mobilize in response to these calls, despite communication restrictions and great risk for retaliation. This year, the call is already spreading widely and outside support is poised to rise and meet it. Ignoring or disempowering this call will leave the narrative of the anti-mass incarceration movement in the hands of people other than those most immediately and directly impacted.

The Fire Inside was inspired by the September 9, 2016 nationwide coordinated action to break walls, begin the process of strategic development, collecting and circulating reflections, analysis and best practices from prisoner rebels and their supporters. Our support for the current calls comes without hesitation, and should be no surprise, but it is not to the same outcome of causal prison authorities and the reasons we believe this summer will see the stars align behind the rebels. This call can strike a blow like no other to the prison society and the US capitalist system in general. Please on it.

HISTORY AND STRATEGY

The call originated with Jailhouse Lawyer Speak, a national collective of incarcerated people providing legal and political support to prisoners in the United States. As of this writing, incarcerated rebels from 17 states have committed to participating. JALS had considered waiting until the next summer, but after the deadly uprisings at Lee correctional facility in South Carolina that cost seven prisoners’ lives, they decided it was important and urgent to take collective action. Doing so allows imprisoned rebels to refuse the struggle onto degradations, oppression, and torture by the prison system, rather than horizontal violence between those who have been sensationalized by the media and prison authorities.

As of this writing, incarcerated rebels from 17 states have committed to participating.

An immediate end to racist gang enhancement laws targeting Black and brown humans.

No imprisoned human shall be denied access to rehabilitation programs at their place of detention because of their label as a violent offender.

State prisons must be specifically funded to offer more rehabilitation services.

Pell grants must be reinstated in all US states and territories.

The voting rights of all confined citizens serving prison sentences, pretax detinements, and so-called “ex-felons” must be counted. Representation is demanded. All voices count.

We all agree to spread this strike throughout the prisons of Americas from August 21st to September 9th, 2018. Men and women will strike in the following manner:

WORK STRIKE: Prisoners will not report to assigned jobs. Each place of detention will determine how long its strike will last. Some strike may translate into local list of demands designed to improve conditions and reduce harm within the prison.

SIT-INS: In certain prisons, men and women will engage in peaceful sit – in protests.

BOYCOTTS: All spending should be halted. We ask those outside the walls not to make financial judgments for those inside. Men and women on the inside will inform you if they are participating in this boycott.

HUNGER STRIKES: Men and women shall refuse to eat. We support the call of Free Alabama Movement Campaign to “Redistribute the Pain” 2018.
Corrections: In Prison Focus Issue 55 an incorrect address has been provided in a request for information, by the Prisoner Hunger Strike Solidarity Coalition Parole Committee. Following is the request for information with the correct address:

**HAVE YOU ALREADY GONE BEFORE THE PAROLE BOARD SINCE YOU CAME OUT OF SHU?**

The PHSS Parole Committee would welcome reading your parole hearing transcript and Comprehensive Risk Assessment (CRA). The Committee can obtain the hearing transcript if you provide your name, CDC# and date of hearing.

Send this information and/or your CRA to: PHSS PAROLE COMMITTEE, Box 555, Lancaster, CA 93539. The Committee will use and possibly share this information to advocate for parolees' tactical decisions and participation options. They stated a sit-down protest, which then escalated to hot-wiring a forklift and using it to break into a prison facility the size of two football fields. They stored there the machines they're normally forced to work on. The protest on the prison's walls, and a public statement that said “we are calling on all Gs to join us as one around the Nation on August 21.” More sit-ins. Make peace for this.”

In Angola, California, a construction site turned into a notorious prison in Louisiana, prisoners engaged in a massive strike. Prisoners in Texas have also issued a call for support on Juneteenth (Tuesday June 19) of this year. Requiring prisoners to stay active in their system and build community support for ending mass incarceration, leading up to Juneteenth, a national abolitionist holiday. This call is reminiscent of the Free Africa Movement’s request for widespread demonstrations at McDonalds in March of 2015 or the Millions for Prisoners march in August of 2017. Building and visibly mobilizing outside support is essential to prison-rebels' tactical decisions and participation options. Millions for Prisoners march in August of 2017. Building and visibly mobilizing outside support is essential to prison-rebels' tactical decisions and participation options.

**LESSONS FROM 2016 AND 2017**

Between September 9th 2016 and this year there have been multiple attempts to repeat and escalate protest actions which had limited success for multiple reasons. Most notably, there was and continues to be intense state repression against prison rebels and incarcerated leadership, but the J20 cases, Trumpism, and fighting the Alt-Right additionally overshadowed other struggles. Prisoners expressed frustration over not knowing how long to maintain their strikes and struggled with determining with their own locally relevant demands. In an effort to correct that, the strike organizers have issued national-level demands, as well as a district-level demands. The demands are not actionable items that prison authorities are able to grant, but rather they require deep legislative and cultural changes. We should not think of these as negotiation goals to pursue by state by state with prison authorities, but rather as demands made by prison rebels of the racist American prison system. Their demands include, but are not limited to:

- An immediate end to prison slavery
- Rescind the Prison Litigation Reform Act, allowing imprisoned humans a proper channel to address grievances and rights violations
- End the War on Drugs
- Join Truth in Sentencing Act and the Sentencing Reform Act, allowing for the possibility of parole.
- An immediate end to the racial overcharging, over-sentencing, and parole denials of Black and brown humans.
- An immediate end to the prison’s use of encouragement laws targeting Black and brown humans.

No imprisoned human shall be denied access to rehabilitation programs at their place of detention because of their label as a violent offender.

- State prison must be funded specifically to offer more rehabilitation services.
- Pell grants must be reinstated in US states and territories.
- Voting rights of all confined citizens serving prison sentences, pretrial detainees, and so-called “ex-convicts” must be counted. Representation is demanded. All voices count.
- The call to action has more clarity and direction compared to the ambiguities of September 9th, 2016. The goal is not to hold out and win negotiations with officials, but to last those 19 days and punch the issue to the top of national political consciousness and agenda. ILSA also cite the goal of turning political attention away from prisoners fighting each other, like the deadly riot at Lee correctional in South Carolina, and to use this moment instead to turn interest towards energy to the establishment.**

**LEGAL OBSERVER AFFIDAVITS AFFORD PRISONERS A WAY TO DOCUMENT RIGHTS VIOLATIONS, SEEK PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT**

Paul S. Holdorf, Esq., Supervising Attorney
Prisoners face unique challenges when trying to prove the verity of their claims in civil rights cases, disciplinary proceedings, and other grievance procedures. Prisoners don’t have the ability to photograph or video record incidents themselves. Although prisons are supposed to preserve video evidence when an incident occurs, in practice, they regularly delete them. Before prisoners can take steps to prevent it. Prisoners are often segregated or transferred after an incident, which separates them from witnesses and complicates the exhaustion of remedies. Prisoners frequently report the confiscation of their legal property by correctional officers, or its disappearance, when they are moved to segregation or transferred. People inside commonly report their inability to exhaust remedies in response to official misconduct because of staff refusal to give them the necessary forms, or because the prison rejects completed forms on policy unsupported grounds. These examples establish what most prisoners know all too well: it is difficult to secure evidence and report rights violations from within prison. The Prisoner’s Legal Advocacy Network (PLAN) administered by the National Lawyers Guild’s (NLS) Legal Observer Affidavit Form for Prisoners and Jailhouse Lawyers to help people inside document and report rights violations, corroborate their allegations through witness statements, and send them to PLAN.

What it is: A copy of this affidavit form is enclosed here. Any prisoner can complete this form to document and report incidents of staff misconduct and rights violations they have personally witnessed, whether it happened to them or to another prisoner.

How to use it: The completed and signed affidavit can be sent to my attention, using legal mail, to protect privilege and lessen the risk of interception and/or retaliation that prisoners are sometimes forced to endure. It is permissible for jailhouse lawyers (JHLs) to inform prisoners of this legal resource and to help prisoners complete the form. However, the legal precedent that protects jailhouse lawyering does not expressly permit JHLs to store other prisoners’ legal documents. Therefore, completed forms should be mailed to PLAN or kept by the person who signs the form. Holding affidavit forms completed by others, or actively encouraging prisoners to complete an affidavit form without your knowledge (used to simply assisting someone who needs help completing the form), could violate prison policy. In addition to leading to disciplinary action, this could also prevent a court from considering the completed affidavit as admissible evidence in any future proceeding. Please note that sending these forms to PLAN does not initiate or imply an attorney-client relationship. Please do not send PLAN documents that you need to have returned to you. Please mail copies of original documents that can be retained by PLAN.

DE-NJ NLG PLAN looks forward to widening support for prisoners and protecting prisoners’ rights through this program.

Prisoners Legal Advocacy Network (PLAN) National Lawyers Guild Delaware-New Jersey Chapter 132 Nassau Street, Room 922 New York, NY 10038
Please complete this form to document and report prison staff misconduct that violated the rights of one or more prisoners. Attach additional pages & copies of directly relevant prison documents (disciplinary reports, etc.) if necessary. This form may be photo copied and shared freely.

Name of person completing this affidavit:

Prison Facility Where The Incident Occurred (Prison, name and state):

Names of prisoners affected:

On what date(s) or during what time period did this incident occur?

Describe what happened as you directly observed or experienced it.

(Associate additional pages if necessary):

Describe where specifically in the facility the incident occurred. Would security cameras have recorded the event(s)?

Did anyone witness the incident? If so, who? (Please note it other witnesses are prisoners or staff).

Please list the name(s) and job title(s) of prison official(s) who you witnessed playing an active role in the incident:

Please also list the name(s) and job title(s) of prison official(s) who you believe to be indirectly responsible for the incident (if any), and why this is your belief (Associate additional pages if necessary):

What harm occurred as a direct result of this incident?

(For example, injuries sustained; wrongful loss of job; removal from general population; loss of good time; facility transfer; prejudicial effect(s); unfavorable court case outcome because of inability to access attorney or the court, etc.)

How did observing/experiencing this incident make you feel? (For example: Powerless? Traumatized? Fearful for your safety?)

What prisoners rights violations occurred as direct results of this incident? (Please check all that apply):

Discrimination (Please specify whether based on race, religion, gender identity, etc.):

- Environmental problems (such as food, drinking water, or mold issues)

- Deprivation of due process in disciplinary proceedings/wrongful loss of good time

- Excessive use of force/physical abuse

- Grievance procedure problems (such as obstructed access to forms or remedies)

- Hygiene/sanitation problems

- Interference with community relations including (non-disciplinary) disruptions to social interactions, telephone, and visitation

- Poor living conditions (including arbitrary security classification changes and ADA accommodation issues)

- Obstructed/limited access to courts, lawyers, legal library, legal mail, legal property, etc.

- Inadequate medical or surgical care (including medication)

- Inadequate mental health care (including medication)

- Property loss (including theft or destruction of non-legal property by prison staff)

- Lack of religious freedom

- Sexual assault/abuse/harassment

- Retaliation/oppression for lawful legal activity

- Other retaliation (Please specify):

- Unjustified segregation from the general population and/or prolonged solitary confinement

- Inhumane working conditions (unfair job loss, slave labor involuntary servitude, unsafe conditions, etc.)

- Other inhumane treatment or rights violations (Please specify):

Check the box one below that describes your confidentiality preferences and consent for disclosure of this legal document.

- I am submitting this affidavit ONLY to PLAN Attorney Paul Holdorf for safekeeping as evidence for possible future proceedings. It may not be disclosed further.

- I grant the Prisoners Legal Advocacy Network permission to share this form with NLG legal response teams who might want to provide support.

PLEASE NOTE: that information from this affidavit may be used for data collection purposes, so that PLAN can keep track of trends in prisoner rights violations. However, any data collected will be separated from your identifying information to protect your privacy and only PLAN attorneys, or individuals working under their direct supervision, will have access to this affidavit.

PURSUANT TO 28 U.S.C. § 1746, I CERTIFY UNDER PENALTY OF PERJURY THAT THE FOREGOING IS TRUE AND CORRECT.

SIGNATURE OF PERSON WHO COMPLETED THIS AFFIDAVIT:

PURSUANT TO 28 U.S.C. § 1746, I CERTIFY UNDER PENALTY OF PERJURY THAT THE FOREGOING IS TRUE AND CORRECT.

SIGNATURE OF PERSON WHO COMPLETED THIS AFFIDAVIT:

EXECUTED ON (DATE THIS AFFIDAVIT WAS SIGNED):

Send completed affidavit with attachments (if any) by way of LEGAL MAIL to: Mr. Paul S. Holdorf, Esq., Prisoners Legal Advocacy Network (PLAN), P.O. Box 5692, Eureka, CA 95502.

The PHYS Coalition’s Committee to End Sleep Deprivation has learned of a number of suicides that have check to where the “security/welfare checks” are ongoing. We are keeping track of these suicides. If you know of anyone who has committed suicide while undergoing these checks, please contact our committee with as much information as you have about the occurrence, in particular the name of the deceased and date of their death.

Mail to: PHYS Committee to End Sleep Deprivation, P.O.Box 5692, Eureka, CA 95502

A crowd gathered outside of the federal court building in Sacramento on May 28, 2018 to support Jorge Rico at the hearing on CDC’s motion to dismiss Rico’s suit, opposing the 1/4 hour “security/welfare checks” that take place in isolations units across the state, contributing to severe sleep deprivation and increased risk of suicide. The magistrate judge, Deborah Barnes, gave every indication she will deny CDC’s motion and will move the case to its next stage. The judge said that Rico’s claim would be viable for damages, but it was “questionable” whether injunctive relief could be sought. For more on this visit: https://prisonterrorhungerstrikesolidarity.wordpress.com

POOR PEOPLE’S CAMPAIGN 2

By Rallie Murray (CPF Activist)

50 years ago, thousands of people set up on the National Mall in Washington, D.C., and stayed for more than six weeks to demand better wages, housing and social services for the poor. The group was part of the Poor People’s Campaign, a coalition organized by Martin Luther King, Jr. In June 2018, the new Poor People’s Campaign marched again on the Capitol with thousands gathering to advocate not only for poor Americans, but also for undocumented immigrants, refugees and incarcerated men and women. The march followed several weeks of coordinated acts of civil disobedience nationwide.

The Poor People’s Campaign has been revived and also reimagined, with a similar spirit and fundamental goals that are tailored to today’s culture and politics. Many of the problems they aim to tackle remain the same but with a broader scope. The rebranded organization settled on five pillars for change: systemic racism especially through criminal justice reform; poverty via living wages and federal tax law reform; environmental degradation through efforts like clean water for all; the war economy; and the nation’s “distorted moral narrative.”

The Campaign’s actions spurred a Capitol Hill hearing on poverty, where members of Congress like Elizabeth Warren and Cory Booker listened to the stories of Campaign organizers and participants. The big rally may now be over, but the new Poor People’s Campaign aims to continue the fight. Their next goal is to launch a voter engagement initiative that will encourage low-income people to “put an end to the distorted moral narrative.”

Self-portrait by Kevin “rashid” Johnson
Letter to the CDCR Office of Inspector General
REGARDING THE USE OF CONFIDENTIAL AND FALSE STATEMENTS

February 12, 2016

CDCR Office of Inspector General
Attn: Legal Staff Unit
1515 “S” Street, Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Legal Staff Unit Supervisor:

I am making the following disclosure to your office as a means to bring much clarification to a manifestly furtive and very bad inmate conduct. I am asking your office to take action towards the other staff and bring some sort of conclusion by the California Department of Corrections Rehabilitation (CDCR) to prohibit this unusually bad and even sadistic inmate conduct from continuing without any real action on the part of staff and knowing that the inmates are increasing in number of ways to do this deleteriously and knowingly manipulate staff into doing or making decisions which violate the safety and security of the state-wide prison system.

For the longest of time in the history of prisons across the country, prison managers have kept an open line for state inmates to inform staff about problems, incidents and circumstances which are ongoing as a natural routine of prison life. Staff have a wide variety of means to do this: they can do crimes with other criminals who have been incarcerated too long, or at all, in the California prisons system. Lawyers absolutely dislike taking cases from inmates which have known the facts for years and years, and often it is like it all at when a family relocates from California to their geographical areas. There’s no doubt whatsoever, that most California inmates have burned far too many bridges with both families and the communities. But this is not that “cynical” letter that sheds light and evidence against all inmates in the system. This letter is meant to provide facts that the inmates are ruining this system to maximum proportions when they resort to falsely telling on other inmates so that they can do something to help the confidential inmate and allow the inmates’ spread of false claims.

Inmates have an abundance of ways to tell on other inmates because they use the system to make sure that they have a receiving service to tell on other inmates; they have to the Facility Program Office and tell a Sergeant or Lieutenant; the write a letter to someone of their trust: Captain, or Warden); and a wide variety of other ways do they do their unsavory, and sneaky ways and means to communicate what they want to do to disclose to staff against another inmate. It is the very few of them, use this open channel with senior prison staff to be protected from oftentimes genuine fears that they have about other inmates, fears about even subordinate staff, who in their limited role are minimally trustworthy.

Through each and every one of them are hosted who, for the most part, use disclosures to staff that are false and deliberately misleading because they want something that only staff can give to them. But before the inmates have even given the information to the staff, they have negotiated two critical things:

1. that their information is to remain confidential by all means; and
2. that they get what they want in exchange for giving this information.

What types of inmates want is:
(a) most often a transfer to another prison;
(b) transfer to another facility in the same prison;
(c) just as often as a means to screw another inmate over any sort of way that such information is given;
(d) to transfer the targeted inmate;
(e) one inmate may want to move to another facility so that he can be on the same facility yard with a lover; or
(f) inmates who buy and use drugs, or gamble owing substantial debts on the yard, “lock it up in the hole” (e.g. ASU) to get away from paying his debts, then must give a confidential statement to prison staff about another inmate so that they don’t place him back on the yard again, where it has to pay his debts.
(g) some inmates sell or rent a cell-phone to another inmate for large sums of money transfer, but when the inmate doesn’t receive payment and can’t get his phone back, he then reports to the prison that the other inmate has a cell-phone, falsely claiming that he saw the phone but didn’t want to buy it, so he reports it to staff instead;
(b) one inmate had a grudge against another inmate and told the guards that the inmate had a knife, resulting in the search of the inmate and discovered there was no knife there, yet they still file a CDCR 128 Chrono and confidential memorandum into the inmate’s Central File; and
(i) many inmates have been reported to have made up stories about another inmate which they did not do, the person who is producing cell-phones or drugs on the yard, so they pick a name out of their head and just claim against anyone, and then the inmate says: “Well, you can’t move me back to the yard, I’ll be dead!” Staff then, diligently transfer the inmate to a prison staff or another category.

The above scenario goes on at every prison in the CDCRs statewide system. Inmates have the general knowledge to make up their false claims and screw over the program of another inmate with as much whimsy as putting on a pair of gym shoes. There is just no accounting or responsibility for these inmates making up these false claims for either personal, financial or many other gains. But one thing is for certain, the disclosed information is always kept confidential, placed in the administrative inmate’s confidential file, (Selective Service) and the accusations falsely made by the other inmate are absolutely rewarded with just what they want. It’s better to hang some feller, than no feller (type of mentality used by inmates who kick an inmate when the other inmate is down).

Many senior staff who hear these claims are cautious about making the documentation of such disclosures, often not even believing the inmate making the statements about another inmate, but the statements are all documented nonetheless, regardless of the impact it has on the other inmate who is falsely accused.

Many inmates who are falsely accused are sometimes placed in the Administrative Segregation Unit (ASU) for months on end. They are referred to the Board of Prison Hearings (BPHs) to be paroled on the basis of what one or more inmates manufacture against the targeted inmate. None of this is right, but inmates do this to other inmates like there’s no tomorrow. They do it because the staff are easy to trick, or are obligated to give the inmate what he wants.

Most of the CDCR 1030s or Confidential Memorandums are not even made available to the targeted inmate. Often staff are forgetful, or conveniently too busy doing other things, or the targeted inmate doesn’t even know about those just and dusty false confidential claims until the inmate goes to the Board of Prison Hearings (hereinafter BPHs) just to be told that he’s failed to be a programmer because there are confidential disclosures saying he’s the cell-phone or dope-man for another inmate.

Inmates are not in prison because they are individuals who can be trusted for what they say or do. The inmate who may have told another inmate where staff actually find a knife, doesn’t justify their claims. The inmate claims a second or third time around. Inmates who tell on other inmates do so because they can rely on two things:

1. that what they claim is taken for a condition of belief and
2. that they claim the inmates either way, goes, risk liability if they don’t.

I know with a certainly that inmates have falsely placed CDCR “confidential” in my Central File. Once, a correctional counselor called me into his office. He point blank asked me if he was hiring me, calling “do you have this conviction in your prison yard?” I told him, “absolutely not!!!” and asked him “why?” He then told me that an inmate submitted a “kite” (written note) to staff claiming that I was selling drugs on the prison grounds. I asked the counselor what he wanted me to do, and he said he never do a thing, and when the counselor told me that he didn’t believe it, he also said, “that’s why I wanted to ask you.” I then him who was it that sent the note in, and he said there was no name on it. I asked him to throw it away because it just wasn’t true, and he said, “I can’t do that, it still has to go into your Central File.”

Today, I feel something that very well ought to be done to stop this type of serious wrongdoing by inmates against inmates. The most as well as all the above, that prison facility “Program Office” senior staff have told inmates that they are not to be placing their “rat notes” in the U.S. Mailbox addressed to staff. In fact, “all of the U.S. Mailboxes” were removed from RJDCF- Facility-C Level IV Yard. Following

the removal of the Mailboxes, the inmates were then, and still do, throwing or dropping their “notes” at the doorway going into the Program Office. Most of the notes that are dropped have no name on them and contain only the confidential circumstances they wish to report to senior staff. Inmates who actually provide their own names to their confidential disclosures (real, false or imagined) will have to do so by the other means discussed above.

I have never been a user or abuser of drugs, alcohol or weapons in prison. I have no history of drug or alcohol use prior to my incarceration. This inmate on inmate abuse should also be stopped. The above scenario goes on at many prisons, is virtually no way whatsoever that I can keep these inmates from doing-me-out the way they have (1) already have done; (2) and knowing as they do that they can do this again. This is why senior prison managers and the BPHs have to look at this type of scenario up close, when they review me for release on parole someday. This is a violation on countless of inmates who have been subjected to these same sort of fabricated claims made by California inmates against California inmates.

I hope your office will look into the above, because it is a costly endeavor for prison staff and inmates to have to go through day after day and at every prison in the California State prison system. Certainly there is another solution to this drama.

Many to most of these falsely-targeted inmates are adamantly willing to avail themselves to a polygraph examination to lend some evidence that they are being lied about. But inmates who have made such fabrication against other inmates (at least 92 out of 100) will not be too readily willing to take such a test, claim in fact that they don’t have to take a test, or they don’t remember anymore, but for the most part, test against themselves, after a one year period. One may ask themselves, “Why?” The answer is apparent.

Thank you for your time and review of the above. Respectfully submitted, Anonymous
cc: CDCR Secretary Scott Kernan
Edmund G. Brown, Governor
Anti-Recidivism Coalition
Life Support Alliance
Prison Legal News
Prison Law Office
ACLU of So. California
California Prison Focus
Board of Prison Hearings

NO ENCLOSURES

Editor’s Note: Though letters like these may not get an individual response or immediate action, they are important. If there are enough complaints about one issue, it will be more likely to lead to an investigation and a report such as the one on page 19. You can also read more about submitting complaints to the Office of Inspector General on p. 23. Use this letter as a template to write your own complaints. Letters do not have to be as well written as this one as long as you can get your point across and provide details when you can. Remember “It is our mute acceptance that makes it possible.” So speak up! •

ORANGE COUNTY JAIL HUNGER STRIKE

By Ballie Murray

Beginning on Wednesday, July 20th, people incarcerated at Orange County Jail engaged in a hunger strike to protest their treatment at the jail.

Working with advocates at the Southern California ACLU, the hunger strikers submitted a demand upon a 2017 report released by the ACLU, calling attention to prolonged isolation, lack of access to medical care, excessive use of force, retaliation for filing grievances, and lack of access to grievance forms.

On July 26th, reports say that the first five participants began refusing meals, and by the second day they were joined by somewhere between 145 and 200 others. On day four of the strike, the two lead organizers – Josh Waring and Johnny Martinez – were moved into isolation, but have since been returned to their cells.

The strike was staggered across ten days, with participants engaging for different periods of time, until the final remaining participant began accepting meals again on July 28th. The strike has been put “on hold” by organizers in order to re-strategize and maintain their health for upcoming actions. ACLU will continue working with families of the prisoners, calling attention to the ongoing problems in the jails and demanding independent oversight of the Sheriff’s Department.

PRISON FOCUS
CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION
THE USE AND MISUSE OF
IN CALIFORNIA STATE PRISONS
By Matthew Byrne and Marisa Endicott
California Prison Focus Report

By Matthew Byrne and Marisa Endicott
California Prison Focus Report has chronicled a pervasive pattern of abuses of confidential informants in at least 13 California prisons in direct violation of the Ashker settlement of 2015. Prisoner reports provide a sustained perspective of confidential information, leading to more and longer SHU terms and other forms of punishment, such as the delay or denial of privileges. The misuse of confidential information impacts the ability of people to be recommended for parole, and later if parole is granted, and is used against a person. Therefore, the use of CIs can have grave consequences, including putting people’s welfare, safety and freedom in jeopardy.


Pattern of Abuses, Misuses and Overuse of 103b

“This [the abuse of debriefing and confidential information] is happening long to affect that is a list of individuals.” Anonymous

Our prison-based reporters shared a range of abuses when it comes to the use of CIs. This includes active recruiting of other inmates, improper use in disciplinary reports, the misuse and use of CI reports as a means to retaliate against other prisoners. Some reports indicate that CI reports are not stemming from other prisoners, but from guards, falsifying reports against prisoners. Some reports indicate that CI reports are not even aware of, nor made aware of its contents at the time.

Recruiting, Coercion & Verbal Abuse

The use of CIs and CIs’ benefit from the system in such a way is not only unjust but endangering the lives and well-being of others.

One prisoner reported a correctional officer confiscated his personal property and refused to return it unless he agreed to sign a “confidential debriefing questionnaire,” a normal practice for this CO. When the prisoner refused, the officer threatened to plant a phone on him among other things. The reporter filed a complaint and fortunately has two other CIs who have seen this same pattern.

One prisoner was coerced to become a CI in direct violation of the Ashker settlement agreement. He was informed he was an active Mexican Mafia member and was placed in Ad.-Seg. [Administrative -Segregation] despite the fact that he was no longer affiliated. He was told that in order to be transferred to a sensitive need yard, he would have to debrief. “All I wanted was clear passage to an SNY [Special Needs Yard]’s defender, and no all disciplinary offense, ranging from some of the below: people have called me all kinds of names, people have called me a snitch, people have called me an enemy, and even valid for, as well as to “validate” an STG nexus to any offense. Second, individuals have reported that guards retaliate against them if they refuse to become a confidential informant or they refuse “debriefing,” i.e. report on their peers’ conduct. CIs may have incentive to lie or exaggerate as part of a bargain with a guard, and there is a lack of vetting or corroboration of CI statements before they are used. CIs are often prone to lie, give false information, or give partial information, including putting people’s welfare, safety and freedom in jeopardy.

Use of CIs & Debriefs to Retaliate Against or Silence Prisoners

“Once I was released from Ad-Seg, the courts wrote back saying that my lawsuits have been filed for excessive force by guards. When I was able to obtain phone call with my mother they were saying the guard may have changed, they printed out false paperwork to make me look like a prison rat and had inmates try to kill me, Correctional Officers [names withheld] did this.”

“This is a serious breach of constitutional and legal requirements, systemic abuse when any correctional officer, including a rogue such as [name withheld] who has an open prison record, can falsify false claims, and then when they wrote for me to write complete and accurate information into inmates’ files where staff writes claims against them. I really have a grievance with this when this same confidential information is being used to give inmates RYs, STGs, and to determine who has the best chance for a transfer where no prisoner and the inmate cannot challenge or question any evidence, confidential info.”

Retaliation against Incarcerated Individuals Who Refuse to Debrief

“Bogus violation reports all stemming from me not turning into an informant,” which has led to “mental warfare and harassment and covering up the violation of my rights, and taunting with my mail to the point where they are purposefully taking out letters intended for one person, charging it with outgoing letters intended for the other person.”

“If I was battered by an inmate here at Salinas Valley State Prison, and denied that I was involved, I just plain got into my cell and forced by threats to sign a chrono, I was told if I did not sign, I will be placed in the hole and lose my property.”

“CI retained me in Ad-Seg and told me I have 2 options: the debriefing process, or go back to Pelican bay SHU for the RCPG.”

“Now I’m being told I have to debrief, turn in another autobiography or go to Corcoran State Prison SHU.”

Unreliability of Debriefs and Incentive to Lie or Exaggerate

Informants can be notoriously unreliable sources of information, due to the fact that they may have incentive to lie or exaggerate, either because an officer can offer him something, or threaten him with personal consequences, or for other reasons like personal conflicts and debts and state of mind. Despite this, these statements carry great weight in the prison system. For instance, one person expressed frustration that a CI that says a person is disruptive can lead to disciplinary consequences, even when the accused shows the contrary through his proactive approach and participation in self-help programs. As a result, many people who believe they will be segregated or isolated prison debriefs makes up a smaller portion of the debriefing abuse than that by correctional officers and prison officials.

“When the prison disregards the dangers of relying solely on the use of confidential debriefs to make decisions, without other evidence, the inmate is being sand-bagged because he must be told how the snitch was used, what additional information the snitch was given because it may be eculatory to his case, and what specific things the snitch is claiming was received. Was the snitch negotiations made while he was on drugs/meds, beat up, or while in good health? What is the basis of the claim?”

One prisoner, incarcerated for nearly 25 years, stated “that the majority of the inmates making such ‘confidentially construed’ statements against another inmate only do so because they believe they will not be discovered for doing so, are often found to be deliberately false, confused, misleading and patently vindictive.” Debriefing is incentivized and even coerced by correctional officers, either as part of a deal to have a prisoner transferred to another or to “get off the yard” to avoid being assailed because of an unpaid drug debt.

“CI-inmates have already learned that they can use this information to get transcripts taken away from another inmate for one reason or another, or for no reason whatsoever.”

Confidential informants are confirmed authorities with special privileges, to cover for them, by lying in the shoes of truth, to justify and protect the misconduct of these employees which you happen to be prison officials.”

One prisoner explained that empathy is inherent to the process of 103b’s for two reasons: “staff will place the ‘statements’ into the file of the targeted inmate, thus helping the CI, and learning only the targeted inmate”; and “there is never any real dispute about what a ‘CI’ could corroborate.” The lack of transparency is thus a result of the system’s legitimate chance at freedom. The lack of transparency contributes to the CI’s system’s misuse and exploitation, and because information on debrief specifics seems to be often withheld by informed prisoners, they cannot adequately defend themselves.

Two incarcerated individuals noted that they were mandated to join the Step Down Program as a result of allegations brought forward by a CI (which are clearly an open secret), it appears that prison officials do not include reports from the following prisons: Corcoran State Prison, Pelican Bay State Prison, CCI Tehachapi, Folsom State Prison, Salinas Valley State Prison, CSC Sacramento, USP Atwater, CIM Chino, Palm Hill, Wasco State Prison, Soledad, Correctional Facility – Soledad, Richard J Donovan Correctional Facility at Rock Mountain, and the Deuel Vocational Institute.

Denial or Delay of Rights, Privileges & Parole Based on Potentially Unreliable Information

Confidential reports are often cited during disciplinary hearings, and are used as evidence leading to punishments that include the denial of basic privileges to lengthy stays in solitary confinement, with all of the negative consequences that are accompanied by that, such as loss of good time credit and delay on accessing. Moreover, it seems that unsubstantiated information can hold serious weight in parole decisions, significantly impacting someone’s legitimate chance at freedom. The lack of transparency contributes to the CI’s system’s misuse and exploitation, and because information on debrief specifics seems to be often withheld by informed prisoners, they cannot adequately defend themselves.

A prisoner at RJD detailed how his petition to advance his parole hearing was denied solely on the basis of confidential information claiming he was, “involved in the illegal distribution of drugs.” The report states, “despite the fact that the prisoner had never received a Rules Violation for possession of drugs or cell phones in his 24 years of incarceration. The Board of Parole Hearings admitted that the confidential information was given ‘significant ‘weight in’ the decision.”

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By Jeff Talmadge and Kim Pollak

Three years after a wave of complaints from people inside California’s prisons, physical assault and the inciting of violence by prison guards is a serious, on-going problem. In fact, CPF receives reports of guard assault, battery, and brutality several times a week. The use of excessive force in California prisons is not a new issue to contend with. Although California Department of Correction and Rehabilitation (CDCR) guards are required to undergo training that includes self-protection, physical abuse in California prisons is not a new issue to contend with. In recent years, the use of excessive force by prison guards has been alleged to be widespread, especially for black and brown men, both inside and outside of the jail. Since the widespread use of cell phones and social media, public has finally been exposed to the extent of police brutality towards the population; to break peoples’ spirits, keep them in their place and put them in constant fear of those who live to - see the severity of the cruelty and harm they are causing.

Violence is a way of exercising power over the imprisoned population; to break peoples’ spirits, keep them in their place and put them in constant fear of those who live to see the severity of the cruelty and harm they are causing.

People with psychiatric issues and even those with mental health status (in other words, individuals of whom mental health personnel persuade to be held in custody saying in writing that they were selling other inmates in prison guards, has not changed a bit. Indeed in 2015, California, including some of those mentioned above.

After having been falsely accused of violence against inmates, the prison guards dragged to the gym - stomped and kicked..."Police [are] attacking African Americans..."

Men...inmates report anything, mental health personnel persuade to be held in custody saying in writing that they were selling other inmates. I outlined the process in writing saying: "An End To Hostilities" is an agreement/document that stated that our inactions have allowed prison officials to suppress violence breaks out, triggered by excessive use of force by guards with unfounded justification for putting prisoners on long-term lockdowns, where they may not be let out of their cells for extended periods, even for meals. CDCR claims that it is their policy to deliver health care. CDCR claims that it is their policy to deliver health care. Guards using illegal use of force. The COs always say stop resisting and beat up (the poor inmate) the inmate that they want to hurt."

A while back at CSP Sacramento, correctional officers three away all my property, beat me twice and charged me with battery and found a weapon in my cell which I ended up spending two years in court for. I wrote several extremely well-written 'Inmate Grievances' detailing everything that occurred, naming everyone involved and charged the whole administration that did not intervene with 'deliberate indifference.' I also made some very serious allegations against custody saying in writing that they were selling other inmates in prison guards, has not changed a bit. Indeed in 2015, California, including some of those mentioned above.

"Some mentally ill inmates are afraid to approach the COs because of how their responses are."

"When they went to put me in a holding cell I resisted them by placing my right foot into the back of the cage. They then slammed me into the wall and started kneecapping in my back of my head and on the side of my face, calling me more racial slurs. After they assaulted and battery them they threw me into the holding cell barely conscious. I suffered a battered lip, chipped tooth, cut on my right eyebrow, and a contused wrist and fractured hand."

"With my back facing officers, I was struck with spray, then beaten with an incapacitation device, then with a series of severe stabbings which led to knuckles and bruises on hand/forearms."

These reports make one question the values which CDRC claims to base their policies as listed on their website: service, treatment, (after) correctional rehabilitation, respect, responsibility, trust, and collaboration; or the CDCR goals they list, including workplace excellence, legal compliance, safety, transparency and delivery of health care. CDRC claims that it is their mission to "enhance public safety" and "successfully reintegrate offenders into our communities." But this is clearly propaganda. Most people, professionals and otherwise, would agree that with so many men, women and LGBTQ individuals leaving California prisons with Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome and other anxiety disorders, the public is hardly safer, and in fact the risk to the public is significantly and unnecessarily enhanced.

NOTHING NEW
* Anonymous

"To Hostilities" is an agreement/document that was brought forth to build Peace amongst the Prison Class, which means that strong communication between the groups will have to be used to end any problems that may surface within the prison.

We prisoners had to come to terms with the realization that our inactions have allowed prison officials to suppress violence breaks out, triggered by excessive use of force by guards with unfounded justification for putting prisoners on long-term lockdowns, where they may not be let out of their cells for extended periods, even for meals. CDCR claims that it is their policy to deliver health care. CDCR claims that it is their policy to deliver health care. Guards using illegal use of force. The COs always say stop resisting and beat up (the poor inmate) the inmate that they want to hurt."

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Prisons, no matter what their classification levels, I, II, III or IV, are very dangerous environments. They house mostly young people; those who suffer from drugs and alcoholism. Least we cannot forget those undeveloped minds, who can so easily become rational thinking men and women. Therefore, it's relatively easy to socially engineer prisoners under social tyranny by manipulating their minds, their will and their goals of destruction.

Police officials have total control over all prisoners held in celder and this affords them the power to impose their will upon prisoners as they try to see fit. The prison authority should not be surprised to see that celder is managing prisoners with violence in order to secure their best interest: Higher Pay and Job Security. Peaceful prisoners go against celder agenda, and therefore, violence has to be its trademark.

This explains why celder would want to disturb the current peace achieved by more experienced prisoners who have built solidarity around our “Agreement to End All Hostilities” (AEH). The Agreement has taken on the role of taking responsibility for their role in fueling so much of the violence between prisoners.

The million dollar question for all tax payers is: Why disturb such a Peace?? Case and Point.

1.) It was celder who manipulated the racial violence between prisoners by putting them against one another, family class against group over the other, in respects to Jobs, etc. I been in Calipatria three (3) years, and there have been countless incidents where staff attempted to instigate or agitate violence amongst prisoners, but due to our AEH we take the high ground and do not counter the attacks. Communication, rooted in respect for what is right!!!

2.) It was celder who created the debriefing program that put prisoners against prisoners that led to thousands of prison fights. The war against the Media (d) and behind the scenes of celder, it was done by torturing each of these prisoners held in solitary confinement units, that forced many of them into becoming violent.

3.) It was celder who created the indeterminate SHU program that held men and women indefinitely inside of solitary confinement units, through a gang validation program. Celder(a) put them in the crosshairs and removed all the “unfavorable” prisoners off general population, where prisoners where held for decades; the longest up to 44 years.

4.) It was celder who created the Sensitive Needs Yards (SNY) program that took prisoners from all prison yards under “Sneel and clear” and put prisoners against prisoners that led to thousands of prison fights. The war against the Media (d) and behind the scenes of celder, it was done by torturing each of these prisoners held in solitary confinement units, that forced many of them into becoming violent.

5.) It was celder who created the indeterminate SHU program that held men and women indefinitely inside of solitary confinement units, through a gang validation program. Celder(a) put them in the crosshairs and removed all the “unfavorable” prisoners off general population, where prisoners where held for decades; the longest up to 44 years.

6.) It was celder who destroyed the collective bargaining process that has the potential to effectively impacted other programs with rehabilitative potential.

The internal attack came in the form of the claim that police were unable to see inside the cages during count, due to the privacy and decency towels and sheets hung in the cages. The window has the ability to block the view of the toilet, creating a "Security Issue.”

The prison class immediately saw through these tactics and rather than fall for the ploy, merely complied with the police order and quickly put the towels back and window coverings removed, thereby assuring the police could clearly see inside the cages. Since this country is a capital class from the police, as did not spark the response they were hoping for, they tried another tactic.

Now, the police said the towels, sheets and window coverings had to be removed permanently rather than just pulled back. Again, the political and tactical maturity of the prison class prevailed as we merely complied. We understood the true purpose of these ploys. The attempts, however, did not work. The next attempt was to state that the clothes lines would have to come down and clothes could only be cleaned using institutional laundry. The police ignored the fact that there are prisoners who work with chemicals, around food and in other unsanitary conditions. To prevent them from washing their clothes and hanging them to dry creates a health risk, but this made sense as their purpose was and is to sabotage The Agreement.

There was an element of voryseum in these attempts, as completely removing the towels, sheets and window coverings exposes prisoners to the constant, unobstructed view of any police who happen to enter the building.

The police were attempting to orchestrate a situation which could be used as propaganda against The Agreement and give credit to the claim that despite the honoring of the Agreement since 2012 by the prison class, it's a hoax and a plot.

These are politically and financially motivated acts from those who have been opposed to the agreement from the start and are fighting against our counter strategy, an agreement in which we have an advantage on prisoners' health and behavior.

These failures on celder's part, led to deadly consequences for the prisoners. The senseless violence we experienced in the past few years of this Agreement is further proof once again by those who continue to find ways to socially engineer prisoners under Social Tyranny... The claim that they (celder) will be able to determine if prisoners want to go home or not is total nonsense. It is not unreasonable to attribute the same kind of personality and the benefit of a "thin blue line" which ensures that in the state, and has consistently fought to keep prisons as spaces of punishment rather than of rehabilitation, and to force incarcerated people to behave according to their own will upon prisoners as they try to see fit.

One thing that should be added to the discussion on guard violence in California prisons and jails is that the violence is not isolated to within the facilities. According to Valentine, Oehme, and Martin's (2012), “Common police approach to their role as a police officer” (Griffin and Ruiz). Given the overwhelming similarities between the two jobs, it is not unreasonable to attribute the same kind of personality disorder to COs. Philip Zimbardo, the psychologist behind the infamous Stanford Prison Experiment, in which a group of students took on the roles of "guard" and "prisoner," which quickly developed into an abusive nightmare. Zimbardo described the abusive conditions in prisons and jails as part of "The Lucifer Effect" in which a group of people with power over another group of people will exercise that control in increasingly violent and abusive ways the longer such behavior goes unchecked. People who are sympathetic to incarcerated people might join violent acts of physical abuse against those people so that they do not become "outcasts" or suspected of disloyalty among the others.

This culture of violence ultimately influences state politics, as California Correctional Peace Officers Association (CCPOA) is one of the most powerful unions in the state. The Prison Law Office kept to prisons as spaces of punishment rather than of rehabilitation, and to force incarcerated people to behave according to their own interpretation of rules, retaliating against people who speak out against abuses, for allowing these abuses to go unchecked and creating obstacles to the prisoner appears process, CDCr demonstrates that its claim to value "intrinsic", "accessory", "infringement" and "rehabilitation", and that they "conduct [them]selves professionally through fair, honest, and ethical behavior", is just a cunning lie to make the public feel better about what goes on behind bars.

For (free) information regarding IMPROPORPER USE OF FORCE BY CDCR STAFF contact Prison Law Office General Delivery, San Quentin, 94974

Improper and unlawful use of force is a serious concern in California prisons. While California prisons are severely limited resources and cannot provide individual advice or assistance to all of the prisoners who request help. The information available do not cover all of the laws and rules regarding the use of force, and what you might be able to do about violations of those laws. If you are suffering from sexual abuse by staff, note that the Prison Law Office has a separate letter on that topic, available by request.
They are experimenting with people's lives... It's like throwing us to the wolves.

CALIFORNIA PRISONS PHASE OUT 'SENSITIVE NEEDS' YARDS, CRITICS SEE A ROUGH TRANSITION

By Nashelly Chavez
Sacramento Bee, May 27, 2018

The California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation is changing how inmates are housed, saying current separations between general population inmates and those held in sensitive needs yards have been ineffective in eliminating gangs and violence within prison walls.

The agency will instead move toward creating some "non-designated program" facilities, where both groups will be tasked with coexisting. The current system has bred new gangs within the sensitive needs yards, resulting in more violence and a greater chance of general population inmates being put in danger.

"Everyone's safety is being put in jeopardy because of all inmates, Waters said. About two years ago, the department's leaders decided to tackle the growing issue of in-prison gang violence. "They were saying, 'Well it could get ugly.'"

The Sacramento Bee, May 27, 2018

By Nashelly Chavez

"This is not something that we just did in a vacuum," he said.

Waters added that the non-designated program facilities are intended to provide greater access to programs for inmates that demonstrate positive behavior, regardless of SNY or GP designation. CDCR has transitioned some facilities to Programming facilities and NP and are different programming expectations at each.

If referred for transfer to a Non-Designated facility, does an inmate have the opportunity to voice concerns or objections to the committee's recommendation to this type of facility?

Yes, all inmate due-process procedural safeguards related to classification committees apply. However, inmate disagreement with transfer to a program facility will not preclude transfer. What happens if an inmate refuses to be housed on a Non-Designated Programming Facility?

The institution should set programming expectations for Non-Designated Programming yards. Placement in ASU shall not be utilized until there is a clear threat to safety or for program participation.

Do inmates need to waive their SNY or GP status to program on a Non-Designated Programming yard?

No. Transfers into Non-Designated Programming facilities will require an inmate to meet all of CDCR 128-B, General Chrono waiving their SNY or GP designation. The SNY designation will remain in the inmate's file, however they will be housed in a Non Designated Programming Facility.

At Non-Designated Programming facilities, will all inmates be expected to participate in the recreation yard, job assignments, education/vocation assignments, inmate activity groups, religious services etc., alongside all inmates?

Yes, no inmate program shall segregate inmates based on classification or GP/SP housing status. If an inmate was a prior gang member and subsequently housed at an SNY facility, will that inmate be expected to participate in a program on a Non-Designated Programming yard?

Yes, Inmates that have engaged in violent or threatening behavior towards other inmates housed in a Non-Designated Programming facility shall be subject to disciplinary sanctions. Potential transfer of inmates due to engagement in criminal behavior, or behavior security level based on an assessed (DIS) Administrative Determinate, continue to be appropriate per current policy.

How do institutions handle inmates who engage in violent or threatening behavior towards other inmates in a Non-Designated Facility?

Immediate placement in Administrative Segregation if it has resulted in a CVR which may result in a SHU term. Disciplinary sanctions as detailed in Title 15 shall be applied should the inmate meet the criteria of C-Status for those inmates determined to be a Program Failure. Committee review of inmates which engage in documented violent or threatening behavior, refuse to program or are deemed a program failure may be referred to the CSR to C-Status for further override and recommend transfer to a higher security level.

Will inmates currently housed at a Reception Center require a CDCR 128-B6 and/or CDCR 2260 to be completed prior to transfer to a Non-Designated Programming facility?

The CDCR 128-B6 will continue to be completed, as required. Those inmates requesting SNY/GP housing placement. This does not preclude a Non-Designated Programming placement.

Can a Non-Designated inmate go to any yard?

Yes, inmate must be held in a Non-Designated Program Facility can be transferred to any facility that a Classification Committee determines appropriate.

Are there additional committees required to go non-designated?

Consistent with current policy with regard to

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S&I INTEGRATED YARDS

SNY I WALKED AWAY.

I am in SNY. I know that some people see those in SNY in a different light. I'm not a sex offender and neither are the people I switched with. I got here because I got tired of the gang/criminal lifestyle I was living and so I walked away from the gang. As a result the gang tried to kill me/stabbed me. That's how I got to SNY.

That was the best decision in my life, because to me a gang member is a social parasite. I detest the person I was, and regret all those bad decisions I made that got me to the life I was living. Criminal activity is a way of life, for all of that, it resulted in homicide of a human being. I wish that I could take it all back, but I cannot, and that hurts.

That tragedy occurred when I was 22 years old... I'm an old man, over 50 old now. I have not used drugs or alcohol since that night. While incarcerated I've got my GED and completed two vocations. I'm also a certified Paralegal/Legal Assistant. I've also completed many correspondence courses and participated in many self help groups. Anonymous

SOME FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

From an April 2018 CDCR Memo

Why did CDCR implement Non-Designated Programming (NDP)?

- NDP facilities will provide greater access to programs for inmates that demonstrate positive programming regardless of SNY or GP designation.
- CDCR has transitioned some facilities to Programming and NDP are there different programming expectations at each.
- Going forward, Non-Designated and Programming are the same program and are referred to Non-Designated Programming Facilities with the same program expectations.
- If referred for transfer to a Non-Designated facility, does an inmate have the opportunity to voice concerns or objections to the committee's recommendation to this type of facility?
- Yes, all inmate due-process procedural safeguards related to classification committees apply. However, inmate disagreement with transfer to a program facility will not preclude transfer. What happens if an inmate refuses to be housed on a Non-Designated Programming yard?
- No. Transfers into Non-Designated Programming facilities will require an inmate to meet all of CDCR 128-B, General Chrono waiving their SNY or GP designation. The SNY designation will remain in the inmate's file, however they will be housed in a Non Designated Programming Facility.
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- Consistent with current policy with regard to

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Perpetrators and Enablers of Torture in the US

FROM THE ARCHIVES, EXCERPT

By Corey Weinstein, MD, CCHP (and a CPF founder, for which we are grateful!) Full article published in Prison Focus Issue 34, Spring 2010.

"Between 1988 and 1995 CDCr ran a program at the Corcoran SHU called the Integrated Yard Policy. Rival gang members were deliberately mixed together in a new 72-hour exercise yard. The prisoners had to fight, and fight well or be punished by their own gangs. When the fights occurred guards were required to fire first anti-riot guns and then assault rifles at the combattants. Many prisoners were killed and hundreds wounded. The program of beating prisoners down into the concrete with gunfire resulted in bigger stronger gang with new martrys and heroes. Mayhem and violence was added to the prison social system by departmental policy. No CDCr official has ever been held accountable or even assigned responsibility for what was know at Corcoran as the gladiator days. Line staff brought to trial by the US Department of Justice avoided criminal convictions by proving that they were just following orders."

On-Going Issues at CDCr's Correctional Training Facility in Soledad, California

I am still at Corcoran Win Ad Seg. Since the last time I wrote, little has changed. It is still extremely loud day and night with the Guard [1 "welfare" check] system. Recently we have had a couple overtime COs work first watch who have become aggressively louder after being confronted. We continue to use broken and rusted electric hair clippers in a wet crew with barbicide that is beyond contaminated, we still get no criminal records for convictions. The birds pulled pull bars in the cages (which is backed up to the exhaust vents for laundry), and food is still is being underseeded. I and several other inmates are currently working on 60ths but we are being shut down at all levels and some of us have been outright locked... They finally put metal mesh over the windows to stop the birds, however the tiers have bird shit all over... The birds took to building a nest on the tiers. These issues are ongoing and a few of us here at CTF continue to push for change, and we thank you for your help personally been through are truly unimaginable. God Bless You,

Prison Law Office

ATTENTION! INFORMATION NEEDED

The Prison Law Office is aware of the Non-Designated and Designated Yard Moves - they are looking into what is happening. Families and prisoners are very concerned about the safety of their loved ones. The Prison Law Office asks for prisoners and their families to send them the detailed information as to what is happening. Especially if you or your loved one was injured as a result of a forced move.

The PLO is a very small organization with limited resources, and they do not have the means to do extensive research. What you send them must be clear and detailed. Prisoners should send their letters via LEGAL MAIL to: Prison Law Office, General Delivery, San Quentin, CA 94964 Telephone (510) 280-2621 www.prisonlaw.com

Family members/loved ones can send a detailed email showing non-designated and Designated Yard Issue* in the subject line, to: office@prisonlaw.com

CDCr’s Failure and/or Refusal to Provide Progressive, Meaningful and Rehabilitative Programming; and Subjecting Prisoners to Inhumane Prison Conditions

This formal missive is being sent to you in hopes to raising the necessary awareness, and gaining the requisite assistance in resolving the herein presented issues. We, the prison population here at CSP-SATF, have been unjustly subjected to inhumane living conditions. We have been denied most progressive and meaningful rehabilitative programming, as promised by CDCR administrators and CSP-SATF administrators.

We present the following issues: We are denied outside exercise and access to fresh air for a minimum of 10 hours weekly; and such access is denied without first exercising the "least restrictive means" available. We are denied daily programming on average of 3-4 times weekly solely based on "shortage of staff" protocol and practice commonly used within CSP-SATF, and is done without first exercising the “least restrictive means” available.

We are denied our right to visits with our approved visitors twice weekly, solely due to a regulation, policy and practice that denies prisoners Saturday of Sunday visits and holiday visits if their job assignment is not one or both of those days as their RDO. But this is not applied to prisoners who are in Ad-seg, medium, A24, or have weekends as their ROOs. So therefore those prisoners who have no control over their job assignments are only allowed one visit per month and their is no means to overcome such a traumatic job assignment. We are denied our individually earned privileges and rights due to CSP-SATF implementing a policy, practice, and custom of "group punishment" and are doing so without first exercising the “least restrictive means” available.

CSP-SATF administrators are denying us our rights to visits (including non-contact), our earned privileges of monthly canteen, quarterly packages, law library, day room, phone calls, weekly laundry exchange, and daily showers, during "modified program" or "state of emergency" programming; and they do so without first exercising the “least restrictive means” available.

We are denied our right to have bird shit all over... The birds took to building a nest on the tiers. These issues are ongoing and a few of us here at CTF continue to push for change, and we thank you for your help personally been through are truly unimaginable. God Bless You,

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LETTERS, POETRY, ETC...

We Shoot To Kill Boys                           Toby Michael

CDCr does as they please

Please publish my letter as soon as you can. Nothing could be more brilliant than the genuine exposure of blatant arbitration when those from the bottom to the top turn a blind eye to the misconduct of their officials. One of the most difficult civil abuses I have experienced is to look into the eye[s] of officers with without rank and hear them straight lie on me and know that there is no help for me. And they know it. Being a 61 year-old convict with a heart and vision injury as a result of a forced move. The incident and experiences I have seen and mayhem and torture. The need for immediate intervention is high, especially since we have exhausted all administrative avenues, all to no avail.

The mentality of CDCr staff (correctional officers) and the atmosphere that staff create hasn’t changed much, despite the "prison reform movement" calling for such mental and environmental change!!!! Respectfully submitted, Anonymous

Violence and Corruption at California State Prison Sacramento

A while back at CSP Sacramento, correctional officers threw away all my property, beat me twice and charged me with battery and found a weapon in my cell which I ended up spending two years in court for. I wrote several extremely well written letters detailing everything that occurred, naming everyone involved and charging the whole administration that did not intervene with "deliberate indifference". I also made some serious allegations against custody saying in writing that they were selling drugs, leaking documents and participating in organized murder with inmates. I outlined the process in writing saying: Correctional Officers and Admins are engaged in criminal activity and if inmates report anything, mental health personnel persuade the inmate to write everything down, make copies, and give them to specific influential inmates who themselves make copies and send them to prisons up and down the state to have this inmate stabbed and/or blacklisted; given inadequate medical and mental health care. I requested a senate investigation and an internal affairs investigation but because I really couldn’t prove any of it, it was all swept under the rug. I found myself at the center of a fire storm that triggered a significant adverse personnel response and resulted in me being completely excommunicated by the inmate population and all personnel. Things got very scary. I told custody I was suicidal to try to get transferred out... [Now] Correctional Officers at CSP Sacramento are using false pretenses to try to get me transferred back to CSP SAC I don’t even know what to do. Anonymous

Prison Law Office has recently published an information sheet titled: Non-Designated Programming; Prisons and Yards, based mostly on the CDCr memo dated April 26, 2018. In addition, most of the materials you need should be available in your institution law library.
I am broken, but strong. I am human!

Each of us is more than the worst thing we’ve ever done". Bryan Stevenson

Bad news is I am broken, and you are not even sure how to start the conversation. The psychological damage that is being caused by this is immense. The trauma that is being inflicted on our people is something that needs to be addressed. It is not just the immediate victims of these mass shootings that are affected, but also the entire community. The ripple effect of these events is something that cannot be ignored.

I am human, and you are not. The line between the two of us is thin, and it is becoming harder to see. The trauma that is being inflicted on our people is something that needs to be addressed. It is not just the immediate victims of these mass shootings that are affected, but also the entire community. The ripple effect of these events is something that cannot be ignored.

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defeat his capitors while also finding enlightenment within himself. In my heart that is beautiful. We cannot control how people talk to or treat us, but we can direct ourselves to avoid responding negatively to them. And as I said the premise of the D.O.C. is psychological warfare, a war that many of us, if any, mentally understand or equipped to deal with or fight against. My fight is to bring light into the darkness, to uncover the disparities and malignance of the D.O.C. system. D.O.C. and the justice system have institutionalized policies that reduce people to their worst actor and permanently label them criminal, murderer, thief, rapist, drug dealer, felon—identities we cannot change regardless of the circumstances of our crimes or any injury we might make in our lives or for the betterment of humanity. I have a conviction that D.O.C. is nothing more than an intricate machine science that is built and maintained off of the backs of an already oppressed people. Like the reason private prison builders and prison service companies have spent millions of dollars to persuade state and local governments to create new crimes, impose harsher sentences, and keep more people locked up so that they can earn more profits. Privatization of prison health care, prison commerce, and other services has made mass incarceration a money making windfall for the aristocrat and a costly nightmare for the rest of us. Health care, prison commerce, and other services has made mass incarceration a money making windfall for the aristocrat and a costly nightmare for the rest of us. A great man, Bryan Stevenson once said “the opposite of poverty is justice” and “that the true measure of our character is not how we treat the rich, the powerful, the privileged, and respected, but how we treat the poor, the disfavored, the accused, the incarcerated, and the condemned.” With that being said, I believe as a nation we have come a long way, a long way we do have to go. I have a mind and I am told together on the transparent yet divisive issues we face: To not only better ourselves, but to better humanity in general. I am just like you, but different in many ways. I am son, and brother, and friend, and family. I am son, and brother, and father, a grandchild, and uncle, a friend, and family. I am son, and brother, and friend, and family. I am son, and brother, and father, a grandchild, and uncle, a friend, and family. I am broken, but strong. I am human!

ODE TO PACIFIC BAY
“I am housed at Pelican Bay SHU. I must say that this place isn’t “human” at all. The design is something of a strategically, sophisticated, manipulation and orchestral apparatus created with the intent and purpose of psychological torture and mental distortion.”

ODE TO PTSD

By Charles W. Tocker
Inspired by incessant/re lentless PTSD triggers in prison, eliciting knee-jerk mental, emotional, and all too often, vocal reactions
Taps Knocks buzz- whirs
Traps locks curse-words
Fuck my reaction!
Regain neuro traction
Control breathing + placate seething
In through the nose, out through the mouth - that shit’s for the birds; send it south Step away, count to 10, then back to 1 Oh, it’s a lifestyle, my friend; you’re never done Existing yet hoping to live, + to beg that we forgot Or, at least, beg your pardon as I sow my garden Meanwhile, weed + weedin’, cultivating my addled vision of Eden
Alas, forever tortured by but a pindrop
But recall I just used them today, and’ll likely need them again tomorrow
So why you fight your daily struggles and problems
That seem to be overly intense in the course of holding you back and holding you down, to you I say hold your head up and remain strong...
Feel assured in your mind, heart and soul, know that you are not alone. Even when it seems all hope is gone
No matter how many storms may rage their way in and out of your life continue to hold fast and hold on to that mustard seed of faith...
And always keep your ears open to those comforting words coming from a heartwarming voice within telling you to be encouraged and just know you are not alone...
Sometimes life and its test may seem unfair, seem difficult, and seem complicated. Do not give up, nor give in because the first day of your creation, you were called good. In those words alone, you should know you are not alone...
As the firm believer I am now I say to you my friend keep the words of this song in your heart "you are not alone"

Silent Weapons for Quiet Wars

By Raymond Bencomo (Native American ‘Paite’) The silent weapons for quiet wars. The public cannot comprehend this weapon, and therefore cannot believe that they are being attacked and subjugated by a system of psychological warfare. It attacks the vitality, options, and mobility of the individuals of a society by attacking their sources of natural and social energy, and their physical, mental, and emotional strengths and weaknesses.

YOU ARE NOT ALONE

By Lester Brown

A s you fight your daily struggles and problems
That seem to be overly intense in the course of holding you back and holding you down, to you I say hold your head up and remain strong...
Feel assured in your mind, heart and soul, know that you are not alone. Even when it seems all hope is gone stand firm and hold on, for you are not alone...
No matter how many storms may rage their way in and out of your life continue to hold fast and hold on to that mustard seed of faith...
And always keep your ears open to those comforting words coming from a heartwarming voice within telling you to be encouraged and just know you are not alone...
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As the firm believer I am now I say to you my friend keep the words of this song in your heart "you are not alone"

Haykus By Kurt Michaels

San Quentin

Goa sad, wise, cautious eyes. green shoots after a wildfire. life follows all storms. Where I find myself.

ARCHIGAES small, strung pearls, on my wrist.

CRITICAL RESISTANCE

20 Years of Strategy and Struggle, Fighting White Supremacy, Dismantling the Prison Industrial Complex and Building for Liberation
By Kim Pollitt
California Prison Focus’ neighbor and close ally, Critical Resistance (CR), celebrates twenty years struggles and action this year. CR originally came together to organize a huge three-day conference that examined and challenged what we have to come to call the prison industrial complex (PIC). While the conference was a huge success, CR recognized that its work had only begun. Since then they have worked to build an international movement, challenging the idea that imprisonment and policing are solutions for social, political, or economic problems; Or that caging and controlling people makes our communities safe. CR believes that basic necessities such as food, shelter, and freedom are what really make our communities secure, and thus focuses their energies on building healthy, self-determined communities and promoting alternatives to the current system. CR has chapters in Oakland, Los Angeles, New York City and Portland.

Following are some of CR’s more recent campaigns, with accomplishments too numerous to list here, due to PF space limitations:

• Not One More: End Mental Healthcare Not Policing!
• Care Not Cages: Stop LA County Jail Expansion!
• Stop Urban Shield! (The international SWAT team training and weapons expo hosted by Alameda County Sheriff Ahern.)

CR is a great inspiration to anyone who shares a passion for justice and liberation.

When I first moved back to the Bay Area in 2008, I attended CR’s 10th anniversary CR10 conference. It was my first real exposure to the movement for social justice and liberation in the Bay Area. I still remember some of the powerful workshops I attended that opened my eyes to a world that in mine, would never be the same. It was at CR10 that I learned of Restorative Justice. It was at CR10 that I learned of the repugnant reality of the elderly locked up in California prisons. It was at CR10 that I learned of other of the atrocities perpetrated by “our” government, that sent me in the direction that ultimately landed me here, as a member of director and co-founder of Calianna Prison Focus. Now having shared in this labor of love, and having worked at CPF, just next door to Critical Resistance for almost five years, I have grown even more fond of, inspired by and in admiration of our friends and allies next door. Though California Prison Focus may be relocating soon, Critical Resistance will always hold a special place in the collective heart of CPFs.

AMENDING THE 13TH AMENDMENT

Also in the State of Virginia!!

T he state of Virginia is as we all know the birth place of slavery in the United States of America. From the very beginning of it, it was only black slaves suffering the hard labor and inhumane treatment with the punishment of death and starvation for all who wouldn’t work or stand up against the unfair treatment! Now we are in a new age with a new form of slavery and it’s EVERYONE not just the Blacks!

With the constitutions and the 13th amendment everyone can become a slave in the united states of America. The government has turned on everyone, of ALL colors, to make money. And the prison system keeps the money coming. The state of Virginia and its justice system are the gateway of enforcing the 13th amendment and its prisons tens of thousands of dollars every year with cheap labor and inmates, working 10 to 12 hours every day for pennies by the hour.

Prisons are no longer about rehabilitation it’s all about the economy no matter what state you are living in, in this country called the land of the free!!

Now to embrace what your PRISON FOCUS in the State of Virginia, we could really use this kind of focus of the State’s Prison system to show what’s happening behind the prison gates in Virginia!
Liberate The Caged Voices

The event was an amazing show of force of what people’s resistance looks like outside the concentration camps. I was delighted to attend and hear the strong voices erupting from those tombs, in many ways the imprisoned comrades were there standing with us...

I hope to continue to bring our perspective to the people, a Lumen perspective rising outside those kkkamps. The people outside who form California Prison Focus have spent much time and effort to harvest our caged voices, voices which have defied all efforts from the state and repression hashed out by the oppressor nation.

National oppression is very real, those cages reflect that, yet publications like Prison Focus offer support for our struggles, technical and ideological support where we learn how to resist. Resist in the kkkourts, in the kamps and within ourselves.

We need more comrades to come out here and join the movement that is transforming the kamps and liberating the mind. Continue onward my caged sisters and brothers!

Victory!

After waiting with bated breath, we can finally release a sigh of relief and welcome Wesley Clutchette home. Our beloved community member, unjustly incarcerated for over 30 years, with a case so egregious it was sent to the United Nations Special Procedures Division, is home but now faces the carceral restrictions of parole. He is out, but not yet free.

I had the pleasure of meeting Wesley (John) shortly after his release. He graced CPF’s Community Celebration For Human Rights And Dignity event and found himself reunited with old comrades and embraced by grateful supporters. Witnessing that seemed to put the past out of view and the future into bright light, at least from this perspective: Wesley Clutchette is home. With a newly discovered name—turns out Wesley is his real birth name—he navigates his way through a world denied him for over 30 years. Remarkably, Wesley remains the positive, steadfast, and engaging person I imagine he’s always been.

Thanks to the commendable investigative work of Legal Scholar Angela A. Allen-Bell and her students and the countless supporters and advocates who headed her call to contact Governor Brown, Mr. Clutchette received final approval from the Governor to grant the Parole Board’s recommendation for release—a decision that should’ve been granted in 2006.

Wesley Clutchette, we welcome you home! And the community is better for it! From Nube on behalf of CPF—

Drop LWOP

On August 6th, members of Californians United for a Responsible Budget (CURB) and California Coalition for Women Prisoners (CCWP) will visit the capitol to present Governor Brown with their request for him to commute every Life Without the Possibility of Parole (LWOP) sentence in the state of California to parole-eligible sentences. There will also be a Rally & Speak Out.

Over 5000 people are serving LWOP sentences in California. People of color are disproportionately sentenced to LWOP and of the nearly 200 people serving LWOP in CA’s womens prisons, the overwhelming majority are survivors of abuse, including intimate partner battering, childhood abuse, sexual violence, and sex trafficking. You can learn about their stories through A Living Chance – the digital story project that helped start the DROP LWOP Campaign. LWOP denies that people have the capacity to change, grow and be rehabilitated.

As Governor Brown nears the end of his term, he has granted an unprecedented number of commutations for people serving LWOP sentences. Commuting a sentence does not guarantee release from prison, but it does guarantee that each person will have the right to see the Parole Board in their lifetime, rather than being sentenced to spend the rest of their lives in prison under a “living death penalty.”

Over 110 organizations, including California Prison Focus have thus far signed a letter supporting the request to Governor Brown. To learn all about and/or join the statewide campaign to DROP LWOP visit https://droplwop.wordpress.com/

Organizations can sign the letter at: https://droplwop.wordpress.com/letter-to-governor-brown/

Notes on the Caged Resistance At the Community Celebration for Human Rights and Dignity

Message from Jose Villarreal

The event was an amazing show of force of what people’s resistance looks like outside the concentration camps. I was delighted to attend and hear the strong voices erupting from those tombs, in many ways the imprisoned comrades were there standing with us...

I hope to continue to bring our perspective to the people, a Lumen perspective rising outside those kkkamps. The people outside who form California Prison Focus have spent much time and effort to harvest our caged voices, voices which have defied all efforts from the state and repression hashed out by the oppressor nation.

National oppression is very real, those cages reflect that, yet publications like Prison Focus offer support for our struggles, technical and ideological support where we learn how to resist. Resist in the kkkourts, in the kamps and within ourselves.

We need more comrades to come out here and join the movement that is transforming the kamps and liberating the mind. Continue onward my caged sisters and brothers!

Jose Villarreal and Dolores Canales, in front of the Prisoner Hunger Strike Solidarity Coalition’s model BHU cell. “Stepping in there was a little unsettling you know...” said Jose, who spent over a decade in solitary confinement, in a cell that size.

Teddy Herrera, Jose Villarreal, Bato and Raymond Aguilar

CFF sends Lumumba a huge, warm welcome home. We are thrilled to have the opportunity to get to know -in person- our correspondents from inside, now coming home. Lumumba himself, is a long time friend of CPF. We hope Lumumba feels welcomed and at home with CPF, as he transitions back into life outside the walls, and long after he’s settled.

We learned at the Community Celebration For Human Rights And Dignity that Lumumba is a powerful speaker, driver, it seems, by experience, passion and a commitment to the struggle for justice and to make the world a better place. He seems to have hit the ground running. So, Lumumba, welcome to the race! And welcome home!

Victory!

After waiting with bated breath, we can finally release a sigh of relief and welcome Wesley (John) Clutchette home. Our beloved community member, unjustly incarcerated for over 30 years, with a case so egregious it was sent to the United Nations Special Procedures Division, is home but now faces the carceral restrictions of parole. He is out, but not yet free.

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Thanks to the commendable investigative work of Legal Scholar Angela A. Allen-Bell and her students and the countless supporters and advocates who headed her call to contact Governor Brown, Mr. Clutchette received final approval from the Governor to grant the Parole Board’s recommendation for release—a decision that should’ve been granted in 2006. Wesley Clutchette, we welcome you home! And the community is better for it! From Nube on behalf of CPF—

If you know who’s the genius behind this, please let us know so we can properly thank and credit the artist. We love it!
Garbage bin we’re using to transport it and we chalk it up to life. This is my life, and I preserve the right to revoke it at my absolute discretion. The absurd fucked-up brutality of it all. I laugh too hard. That allows my shoulders to relax so I am able to laugh at the sharpness of my own words. The truth is painful. The sedation, self-medication account, is empty now.

And kissing the wrong— but oh so right— woman in dark woods on July 27, 2018.

Cameron, new friend of CPF, a few days after Director of California Prison Focus (CPF) and Cara Stiner decided to take the leap and let me include my story in their publication. The most harrowing of misstated “facts” was that when my Blood Brother was killed, the crime scene was left undisturbed. Some family members of the victim were so angry at the cops who thrust their cards into my palm. Some family members were so angry at the cops who thrust their cards into my palm.

The only hard copy of a newspaper that I saw was Model Murders Tourist. On the front page it read: Model Murders Tourist. On the front page.

Mr. Mara was Australian, news of my case hit the streets of Sydney. I could see the news coverage on the TV. As the TV was tuned to a news channel, I could see the news coverage on the TV. As the TV was tuned to a news channel.

I did not choose to come back to this country (with the added certainty of spending the rest of my life in prison). I share this brief part of my story with you because it’s now the new norm. I share this brief part of my story with you because it’s now the new norm.

It’s like being underneath the world, in a wet darkness, expecting the light and oxygen and sunshine to give me some relief. I need just one quenching, gasping, saving breath. I hang on for that saving breath. My lungs try to expand on their own, my heart beats out of time, my lungs try to expand on their own.

The summer slips in calmly and without announcement. The summer slips in calmly and without announcement.

We leave, parole, transpack, ACP, CIW, fire camp, Folsom, the names above are crammed into the bathroom as Carmella leans in to touch the tip of the rollie to the spark. It’s passed to me and I lean back against these painted white bricks, and exhale like it’s the first time I’ve been in one of these places. And that’s how it’s always been. "Like at looking smoking like she’s on the streets!" The girl whose been down 13 years laughs at me, motioning me to hurry. I inhale deeper, and quicker, instantly feeling the headrush. We quickly pass the burning tobacco wrapped in the paper that tamper-proofed the package until we started using the package itself. The local police station took in the packaging and the part that one can I feel it in the cigarette, in the way I lean the way, I exhale the way, I ash.

These old familiar actions return me.

695: Trolling the med line. Broken through the bars and out of pen ink straws. Getting high and using big words. Meeting Johnny Ramone’s ex-wife. Or was she? Walking the track with people you never imagined. 18 years old in all of their child-bearing years for supporting the clinic. Short, opioid-deprived, and in need of a fix. The clinic short on money.

I’m afraid of opening old wounds with my gouged up psyche, but perhaps knowing my own truth and love from the people who have stood with me through this whole journey is enough. I don’t need to hide behind the mask of a fake name anymore.

I have no idea how to introduce myself. Give me 5 minutes to talk and I already did something, so I may beg for your help with this one.

Sincerely, Cara Cameron

Cara decided to take the leap and let me include her full name, and the email message above. Thank you for sharing your story.

Following is the piece shared with listeners at Liberated the Caged Voices.

762: Sick

“Like dope sick? Or sick sick?” The baby-faced inmate with the 4:15 count. She tells me about fraud and her obsession with the $5 bill. The $5 bill. We’ve been sidetracked by the demands of daily prison life.

They are currently separating children from their parents and playing ping-pong with DACA recipients. They are currently separating children from their parents and playing ping-pong with DACA recipients.

I did not choose to come back to this country (with the added certainty of spending the rest of my life in prison). I did not choose to come back to this country (with the added certainty of spending the rest of my life in prison). I did not choose to come back to this country (with the added certainty of spending the rest of my life in prison).

It is certainly no secret that the TRUMP administration has demonized, detained and deported thousands of those it claims to be “threatening our national security.” It is certainly no secret that the TRUMP administration has demonized, detained and deported thousands of those it claims to be “threatening our national security.”

We leave, parole, transpack, ACP, CIW, fire camp, Folsom, Cameron, new friend of CPF, a few days after Director of California Prison Focus (CPF) and Cara Stiner decided to take the leap and let me include my story in their publication.

In 1994, because of a military coup, economic suppression, and a civil war in the country I had fled, I feared for the safety and welfare of my wife and children and volunteered to go back to prison in exchange for safe passage for my family to this country. However, once I was back in prison, the U.S. government reneged on our agreement, and my family was abandoned in South America and I was left to continue serving another 21 years at San Quentin. My children were separated from me for more than a decade.

I did not choose to come back to this country (with the added certainty of spending the rest of my life in prison). I did not choose to come back to this country (with the added certainty of spending the rest of my life in prison). I did not choose to come back to this country (with the added certainty of spending the rest of my life in prison).
ICE: ISSUES AND DEFANCE
Trump’s “No Tolerance Policy” has left thousands of immigrants in atrocious detention centers along the U.S. border. Among the poor living conditions, families are also being separated.

By Annie Rouse Ramos Published on June 1, 2018 at www.nbcnews.com

Thirty-seven immigrants, all currently detained in Otay Mesa Detention Center in San Diego California, wrote a letter demanding the conditions at the center. Many of the 37 detainees who participated in the letter were members of the migrant caravan made up of Central Americans who arrived at the US border earlier this month seeking asylum.

“We come flying to this country, not because we want to, but because we come looking for help (asylum),” the letter reads, “in our roads we are tortured, exploited and discriminated.”

The letter was initially handwritten by detainees and given to members from the immigration rights group, Pueblo Sin Fronteras, who posted the letter online Thursday.

Bryan Claros, 20, from El Salvador, is one of the detainees in Otay Mesa who co-wrote the letter and traveled in the migrant caravan. NBC News spoke to Claros over the phone Thursday.

“The conditions here are awful,” said Claros, who has spent a month in detention since reaching the US border. Claros describes the food in the center tasting like it has gone bad and not nearly enough, so most everyone is hungry all the time.

“There are too many people inside here,” Claros said. “The showers, the bathrooms, the beds, there are people everywhere.”

One of his biggest concerns is getting stuck in the detention center, waiting for the process of seeking asylum to play out.

“There are people here who have been waiting for years,” Claros said.

Claros traveled in the migrant caravan with his younger brother, Luis, and their stepfather, Andres Rodriguez. While his family has remained together in detention, Claros mentioned one father from the migrant caravan who was separated from his 10 year old son.

“They told him they sent his son to a shelter,” said Claros, “but he never saw him from what they told him.” He added, “I don’t know if he was alive” or not.

Claros said he has been asking anyone he can about seeing a judge to discuss his asylum claim but he still hasn’t seen one.

The immigrants, all men, are in custody of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) at Otay Mesa, run by CoreCivic, a private prison company formerly known as Corrections Corporation of America (CCA).

They claim in the letter that while in detention, they’ve been misabused and abused and lack medical attention.

“We demand the CCA treat us like the humans that we are.”

The letter states they also ask for medical attention, according to the letter, they are not treated and immigration officials ignore their injuries.

The detainees also claim they received previously used razor blades, leaving them susceptible to the spread of infection.

“Several of the issues described in this letter have been addressed in response to previous complaints” an ICE spokesperson wrote to detainees, but that if they refuse to work, officials threaten to report them to judges and damage their asylum cases.

“All allegations of detainee forced into labor have been addressed,” and ICE spokesperson wrote to NBC News in an email.

“I don’t protest the conditions of immigrants at the border. Groups in cities across America have embarked on hunger strikes to abolish ICE and bring justice to immigrants.”

Demand of the hunger strike include: abolish ICE, respect detainees work or face sanctions, remind the US government of the duty to safeguard the right to detainees earning $1.50 for every six hours of work.

RESISTANCE

By Andry Barone (CPF Activist)

There have been acts of resistance surging up against the government concerning the treatment of immigrants at the border. Groups in cities across America have embarked on hunger strikes to abolish ICE and bring justice to immigrants.

Demands of the hunger strike include: abolish ICE, respect detainees work or face sanctions, remind the US government of the duty to safeguard the right to detainees earning $1.50 for every six hours of work.

Barone, a native of the Dominican Republic, was separated at the border, bring justice for Earl McNeil, say no to Muslim Ban and reject campaign contributions from private prisons.

Marco Amoral, one of the strikers, commented “There is no way to negotiate with ICE. They are against the human rights of every person who has something to say, not only in the United States, but globally.”

INdIgENous ASyLUM SEEkERS ARE FACING LANGUAGE BARRIERS AT THE bORDER

Trump’s executive order regarding family separations at the border makes no special provisions for Indigenous people.

By Candace Berth/ Truthout 30.06.2018 EXCERPTS
For full article go to www.truthout.org

From Boardings Schools to Border Separations

The US in particular has a long history of stripping Indigenous peoples of their language, culture and assimilating them, and that legacy continues to today. As Truthout has detailed, Native children in the US were systematically taken from their parents and placed in boarding schools under Article VII of the Fort Laramie Treaty of 1868 for more than a century, until the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) was passed in 1978.

Despite the fact that the law established requirements for child welfare agencies and state courts in their work with Native children, the US’s system of cultural oppression simply morphed again, this time in the form of the child welfare system. Repeated violations of the ICWA led the Bureau of Indian Affairs to draft new guidelines to strengthen the law in 2015, for instance.

The separation of Indigenous children from their parents at the border only adds to and accelerates the state’s cultural erasure of Native populations, as children taken into custody under the ‘Removal of Health and Human Services’ (HHS) Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) have been sent to often white, potentially abusive foster homes hundreds of miles from their parents.

According to the ORR directive, the HHS maintains a Language Access Plan, Truthout was unable to find such a plan specifically for HHS’s ORR component.

Separations of Indigenous children happened routinely even before the Trump administration enacted its “zero-tolerance” policy, potentially because Indigenous-language speaking children taken into custody, to what extent the office uses similar language and procedure. for that other, the office has any special procedures for Indigenous children. While the HHS maintains a Language Access Plan, Truthout was unable to find such a plan specifically for HHS’s ORR component.

According to the ACLU, the US currently spends $1.84 billion annually detaining immigrants.

According to Pew Research Hispanic Trends approximately 18,000 of the US are currently detained in dozens of facilities across 15 states while they await immigration proceedings for their parents or asylum proceedings if they arrived in the U.S. without their parents.

According to a Pew Research Hispanic Trends Project unauthorized immigrants make up 5.2% percent of the U.S. labor force.

A 2011 study by the Institute for Taxation and Economic Policy found that undocumented immigrants paid $11.2 billion in state and local taxes in 2010.

In 2013, Stephen Goss, chief actuary for the Social Security Administration, stated that undocumented workers contribute about $13.5 billion a year to Social Security through payroll taxes. They only take out $1 billion (very few undocumented workers are eligible to receive benefits).

According to the New York Times, out of 11 million unauthorized immigrants 2.7% of them have been convicted of a crime, and 8.6 million undocumented immigrants paid $11.2 billion in state and local taxes in 2010.

In 2018, the American Civil Liberties Union has submitted a class action lawsuit in social recognition what it represents- sending a signal that ICE doesn’t do what it is intended to do.

Rep. Mark Pocan said. “Even ICE agents recognize that ICE doesn’t do what it is intended to do.”

The reality, however, is that if we deport a substantial number of undocumented families, there would be a tremendous labor shortage.

The Department of Labor reports that of the 2.5 million farm workers in the US, over half (53 percent) are illegal immigrants. Growers and labor recruiters that there are labor shortages.

According to the ACLU 83% of people deported from the US were not given a hearing before a judge.
El ciudadano panameño estuvo recluido en régimen de asilo durante 19 días en el Centro de Detención Stewart en la ciudad de Georgia, según Project South. Shasbani dijo que su muerte “debería haber servido como una última llamada de atención y resultado en el cierre inmediato de esta sucursal.”

La oficina del Inspector General no proporcionó las fechas de las inspecciones y no respondió a múltiples solicitudes de comentarios.

Los funcionarios eligieron a una instalación, en Laredo, Texas, por su tratamiento a los inmigrantes y dijeron que la gravedad de los problemas en los otros centros de detención variaba.

En las cuatro instalaciones, el organismo de control de seguridad nacional dijo que las cocinitas tenían “productos para moho”, y los detenidos estaban expuestos a enfermedades mortales. En algunas instalaciones, los inmigrantes con antecedentes penales fueron alojados con otros reclusos que no eran detenidos. Según informes a veces no hablaban intérpretes para comunicarse con los detenidos, y algunos miembros del personal no podían tomar las quejas de los detenidos.

En el centro de Stewart, el personal a veces interrumpía o demoraba las oraciones musulmanas. En Santa Ana, los agentes realizaron un registro exhaustivo de todos los detenidos, uno dijo que todos se enteraron de una lesión en la rodilla. Dos detenidos, uno en la cárcel del condado de Hudson en Nueva Jersey y otro en la cárcel de la ciudad de Santa Ana en California, murieron mientras estaban internados.

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El Inspector General emitió un informe por separado en el que dijo que, después de visitar el centro de detención de Theo Lacy en California en noviembre de 2016, que detallaba hallazgos similares sobre el manejo de alimentos y otros asuntos que, según dijo, requerían atención inmediata. (Traducción El Tiempo Latino/El Planeta Media)

**CONCERNS ABOUT ICE DETAINEE TREATMENT AND CARE AT DETENTION FACILITIES**

Office of the Inspector General Report

Published by the Department of Homeland Security on December 11, 2017.

(See full report at http://www.ice.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/assets/2017-12/DO-18-32-Dec-17.pdf)

**Background**

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) apprehends, detains, and removes aliens who are in the United States illegally. The Enforcement Operations (ERO) places apprehended aliens who require custodial supervision in detention facilities. ICE uses the following types of detention facilities for adults:

- **Contract detention facilities** – owned and operated exclusively to ICE detention.
- **Federal prisons** – operated by the Federal Bureau of Prisons.
- **State prisons** – owned and operated by state governments.
- **Private prisons** – privately owned and operated by ICE and contract employees; dedicated exclusively to ICE detention.
- **Direct detention facilities** – owned and operated by private companies under contract with ICE; dedicated exclusively to ICE detention.

The **Dedicated Intergovernmental Service Agreement (IGSA)** facilities – state and local facilities operating under an agreement with ICE; hold only ICE detainees.

- **Non-dedicated IGSA facilities** – state and local facilities operating under an agreement with ICE; also serve AFSC detainees in addition to other confined populations (i.e., inmates), either together or separately.

**EN CUATRO INSTALACIONES, EL ORGANISMO DE CONTROL DE SEGURIDAD NACIONAL DIJO QUE LAS COCINAS TENÍAN “PRODUCTOS PARA MOHO”. LOS DETENIDOS ESPERARON LARGO TIEMPO PARA RECIBIR ATENCIÓN MÉDICA**

Por Maria Sacchetti, December 19, 2017

A

El ciudadano panameño estuvo recluido en régimen de asilo durante 19 días en el Centro de Detención Stewart en la ciudad de Georgia, según Project South. Shasbani dijo que su muerte “debería haber servido como una última llamada de atención y resultado en el cierre inmediato de esta sucursal.”

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According to ICE, the PBNDs establish consistent conditions of confinement, program operations, and management expectations within ICE’s detention system. Among other things, they aim to ensure a clean and sanitary environment, environmental health and safety, including cleanliness, sanitation, security, admission into facilities, classification, searches of detainees, segregation (Special Management Units), and the disciplinary system. The PBNDs also contain standards for detainees care, including food service, medical care, and personal hygiene; activities; and religious practices, telephone access (e.g., to families, legal representatives, and embassies), visitation (e.g., by legal representatives, family members, and embassies), grievances and procedures. The PBNDs and 2011 PBNDs have consistent requirements in the areas in which we identified issues. All ICE detainees are held in civil, not criminal, custody, which is different from state and local governments. ICE requires facilities to adequately train their detainees administratively to process and prepare them for deportation. Some detainees held at ICE detention facilities have been convicted of crimes, served their prison sentences, and have been transferred to the facility awaiting deportation by ICE or an immigration court hearing. Other detainees have violated immigration laws and are in detention pending resolution of their cases. Prior to detention, ICE reviews each detainee’s criminal record and assigns a risk level of high, medium, high/medium, low, or low. ICE bases its risk levels on the severity of past criminal charges and convictions. ICE ERO has 24 Field Offices responsible for reviewing and processing detainees in detention facilities in their assigned geographic area. ICE ERO oversees the confinement of detainees in nearly 250 detention facilities that it manages in conjunction with private contractors or state or local governments, as previously noted. We reviewed files and documents.

When choosing the facilities to visit, we used our professional judgement and identified those of particular concern based on prior visits, reports from the Office of the General Counsel, Hotline complaints, reports from non-governmental organizations, and open source reporting. We made unannounced visits to six facilities: Hudson County Jail (mixed gender), Otero County Processing Center (male-only), Santa Ana City Jail (mixed gender), Stewart Detention Center (male-only), and Theo Lacy Facility (male-only). The Laredo Processing Center, serving Central Texas, and Stewart Detention Center are dedicated IGSAs; Hudson County Jail, Santa Ana City Jail, and Theo Lacy are non-dedicated IGSAs facilities.

At each facility, we examined the medical units, medical modular housing (for detainees requiring more medical attention), kitchen, including food preparation, food storage, and equipment cleaning areas; intake and processing areas; Special Management Units (isolated areas); secure medical units; and detainees and individual cells. We also analyzed grievance procedures and evaluated staff-detainee communication practices. We interviewed detainees, ICE staff, and facility management staff at each facility. We followed up on issues by reviewing files and documents.

Results of Inspection
Our inspections of five detention facilities raised concerns about the treatment and care of ICE detainees at four facilities. Although the Laredo Processing Center modeled quality operations, during our inspections, we identified significant issues at the four other facilities. Overall, the problems we identified undermine the protection of detainees’ rights and the provision of a safe and healthy environment. Although the climate and detention conditions varied among the facilities and not every problem was present at all of them, our findings of both systemic and isolated problems are the result of our review of documents revealed several issues. Upon entering some facilities, detainees were housed incorrectly based on their criminal history. We observed potentially unsafe and grievance procedures and did not thoroughly document resolution of cases we reviewed involved administrative segregation, but may also have non-violent felony charges and convictions, which are considered low risk. Facilities are to use these classifications to ensure that detainees are housed with others of similar background and criminal history and that high-risk low-risk detainees are separated. However, because criminal background information was not always available when the detainees arrived at the Stewart Detention Center, facility staff there had misclassified some detainees with high-risk criminal convictions and subsequently housed them with low-risk detainees. Staff at Stewart admitted they assigned some detainees to housing without having received criminal history reports.

We also reviewed reports at the Stewart Detention Center of inadequate staffing at intake. As a result, according to ICE records, some detainees were being processed while being segregated in detainees files as required. This raises two concerns. First, according to the 2011 PBNDs, staff are not to routinely subject detainees to strip searches unless there is “reasonable suspicion” based on “specific and articulable facts that would lead a reasonable person to conclude that a detainee is in possession of contraband.” Second, without documentation, there is no way to ascertain whether these searches were justified or whether they were conducted in violation of the PBNDs.

Language Barriers Hamper Communication and Understanding
Although the PBNDs specify that language assistance be provided, many detainees we interviewed did not fully understand the basic rights and responsibilities of the facilities we visited. The ensuing lack of communication and understanding creates barriers between facility staff and detainees. Consequently, this may cause confusion about facility staff’s expectations and risks for detainees.

At some facilities, we found problems that had been elevated and investigated by ICE, but this was not always the case. Staff at the Stewart Detention Center also reported that staff sometimes did not respond when contacted through written requests. Detainees are supposed to have access to telephones and be able to make telephone calls, thereby facilitating communication and understanding. Without an effective, compliant grievance process and access to ICE and other channels, facility risk escalating or ignoring problems, which may lead to a failure to protect detainees’ rights.

Improper Treatment of Detainees by Detention Facility Staff
We received a sample of grievances that were available at the facilities we visited. At the Stewart Detention Center, we found an inconsistent and insufficiently documented grievance process. Many serious complaints from the sample at this facility included only cursory and uninformative explanations of the resolution. For one particularly troubling allegation of misconduct by facility staff, there was no clear documentation it had been investigated, only a note that it would be investigated. We were later able to verify that this allegation had been elevated and investigated by ICE, but this was not explained in the documentation of the facility staff.

According to the PBNDs, detainees may also seek help from ICE officials at facilities to resolve their complaints, but some detainees we interviewed reported that ICE personnel were not available to address their questions or concerns because ICE did not staff the facilities.

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executive powers and based on a legitimate national security review. But the court avoided passing judgment on whether the presidential proclamation was motivated by animus toward Muslims stemming from the Plaintiffs' arguments. However, Trump's campaign calls to ban Muslims. For now, the nation's highest court has spoken — and stratified many Yemenis in Djibouti...

For full article see: https://theintercept.com/2018/07/17/yemen-trump-ban/

Although refugees are exempt, their arrivals have been delayed since the March 6th proclamation banning immigrants from seven countries – including Yemen, Yemeni-born individuals in the U.S. lives in the U.S. in 2016, according to census data. Most often came alone to explore the great unknown, and some of them established themselves. But this pattern was shattered when a ban war began in Yemen in early 2015.

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Potentially, we observed several problems with food handling and safety at four facilities, some of which did not comply with the PBNDS for food operations and could endanger detainees. We observed raw, uncooked, defrosted, and moldy produce and other food in kitchen refrigerators, as well as food past its expiration date. We also found expired fried food, including meat, and thawing meat without refrigeration. Some food was labeled thaw on or before the date by which it must be used. Finally, at one facility, we observed food service workers not wearing required gloves to handle food.

Concern Treatment and care of detainees at facilities can be challenging. For example, personnel at one facility reported staffing shortages, and, according to officials, it can be difficult for remote facilities to provide medical care to detainees. Nevertheless, complying with the PBNDS and establishing an environment that protects the health, safety, and health of detainees are crucial to detention. ICE could mitigate and resolve many of these issues through increased engagement and interaction with the facilities and their operations.

HER 13-YEAR-OLD SON IS IN AMERICA. SHE IS STRANDED IN DJIBOUTI.

WHAT CAN A YEMENI MOTHER DO?

Malcky Mooney, July 17, 2018, EXCERPTS

For full article see: https://theintercept.com/2018/07/17/us-travel-ban-yemen-djibouti/

President Donald Trump's travel ban puts an ocean between Maleka Alafif and her 13-year-old son, Daoud. He received a visa to join his U.S. citizen father, but she was rejected under the president's proclamation barring immigrants from seven countries – five of the most populous nations, including the U.S.

Alafif had been living in Yemen's capital, Sanaa, for years before she was granted a waiver to travel. There, she worked as a cleaner, and later as a teacher. She had three children, but only one was born in Yemen: Daoud.

Hundreds, if not thousands, of Yemeni-Americans who fled a three-year war at home have been stranded in Djibouti because of the travel ban, which has virtually halted immigration to Yemen – blocking business, vising with family members, and even receiving reunification visas for family members. Although refugees are exempt, their arrivals have been delayed since the March 6th proclamation after the nation's highest court rejected his campaign calls to ban Muslims. For now, the nation's highest court has spoken – and stratified many Yemenis in Djibouti...

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Hundreds, if not thousands, of Yemeni-Americans who fled a three-year war at home have been stranded in Djibouti because of the travel ban, which has virtually halted immigration to Yemen – blocking business, vising with family members, and even receiving reunification visas for family members. Although refugees are exempt, their arrivals have been delayed since the March 6th proclamation after the nation's highest court rejected his campaign calls to ban Muslims. For now, the nation's highest court has spoken – and stratified many Yemenis in Djibouti...

For full article see: https://theintercept.com/2018/07/17/yemen-trump-ban/

Although refugees are exempt, their arrivals have been delayed since the March 6th proclamation banning immigrants from seven countries – including Yemen, Yemeni-born individuals in the U.S. lives in the U.S. in 2016, according to census data. Most often came alone to explore the great unknown, and some of them established themselves. But this pattern was shattered when a ban war began in Yemen in early 2015.

For After Hours rebels rose up and ousted the government, a Saudi-led coalition began a bombing campaign funded and armed by Western powers, including the United States.

After Hours rebel leaders rose up and ousted the government, a Saudi-led coalition began a bombing campaign funded and armed by Western powers, including the United States.
ACUERDO PARA PONER FIN A ENEMISTADES
Agosto 12, 2012

A Quien Corresponda y Todo Prisionero en California: Saludos de parte de todos los Representantes de la Huelga de Hambre del Corredor Corto PBSP-SHU. Por este medio, estamos presentando este Acuerdo Mutuo de parte de todos los grupos raciales que se encuentran aquí en el PBSP-SHU (Hoyo). En este documento, han llegado a un acuerdo mutuo acerca de los siguientes puntos:

- Si de verdad queremos llevar a cabo cambios sustanciales y significativos al sistema de CDCR, de una manera beneficosa para todo individuo serio, que nunca han sido quebrantado por las tácticas de tortura destinadas a convertirlos a ser soplones estatales via interrogatorios, que ahora es el tiempo en que juntos podamos aprovechar este momento, y poner un fin a los más de 20 a 30 años de enemistades entre nuestros grupos raciales.

- Por lo tanto, comenzando el 10 de Octubre, 2012, los acuerdos mutuos entre nuestros grupos raciales están en el HOYO/SHU, Ad-Seg, la Población General, y Cárcel de Condado, oficialmente terminaron. Esto indica que, de esta fecha y adelante, toda enemistad entre grupos raciales tiene que terminar... y si asuntos personales se presentan entre individuos, todos tenemos que hacer todo lo posible por agotar los medios diplomáticos para resolver disputas; no debemos permitir que los asuntos personales e individuales se conviertan en problemas raciales!

- También queremos advertirles a aquellos en la población que IGI en continuar a mandand Informantes encubiertos al Patio de Necesidades Sensitivas (SNY) entre los prisioneros serios de la PG, prisioneros con órdenes del IGI a ser alertando, y abusar, con el fin de perturbar y destruir el entendimiento mutuo de nuestros grupos colectivos sobre los temas deseados para nuestras causas mutuas [es decir, obligar a CDCR a abrir las líneas principales a la GP, y regresar a un sistema rehabilitador de programas significativos / privilegios, inclusive visitas conjuntas para los sentenciados a vida, etc. via actividades de protesta pacífica / no cooperación e.g., huelgas de hambre, no hacer guardia, etc.]. Todos deben seguir consentiendo y vigilantes a tales tácticas, y rehusar permitir que tales soplones de IGI ocasionen caos y reanuden enemistades entre nuestros grupos raciales. No podemos seguir permitiendo que los viejos enemistades de départ participen en nuestras tácticas de dividir y conquistar de los IGI, ISU, OSC, y SSU’s!!!

Para concluir, debemos mantenernos fuertes a nuestro antecedentes. En este pacto, debemos en verdad, en firme, y en confianza nuestro tiempo, atención, y energia sobre causas pacíficas/no cooperación e.g., huelgas de hambre, no trabajar, etc. etc.

The True Plight of California’s State Prisoner’s Level #4

Greetings and salutations. I sincerely hope my artwork find the pages of your wonderful informative newspaper. I’m still here in this dead in prison. With no programs. It’s real prison feelings going on 23 1/2 years, from the SHU for so many years to this ugly prison without programs...”

Michael Russell
California Prison Focus is a grassroots organization working to END SOLITARY CONFINEMENT and other forms of torture and abuse in California prisons, while challenging oppression everywhere.

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ABOUT CALIFORNIA PRISON FOCUS

Prison Focus is a publication of California Prison Focus. We are a small, community-based organization that works with and on behalf of California prisoners. We investigate and expose human rights abuses within California prisons, through prison visits and correspondence, and widespread dissemination of our quarterly prison reports. We provide incarcerated men, women and the LGBTQ population, with resources on how to advocate for themselves. We send this quarterly newsletters to imprisoned people nationwide, and provide it for free, to individuals in solitary confinement. Central to our work is education, self-advocacy and empowerment, community building, public protest, coalition building, letter-writing and civic involvement. We act in solidarity with our brothers and sisters both inside and outside of America's prison walls, with a focus on getting out the voices that are seldom heard..

NOTICE OF CONFIDENTIALITY

California Prison Focus treats all incoming mail as confidential. We respect your privacy and understand that there are risks for you involved. Therefore we will keep what you tell us anonymous unless you give us permission to use your name. Unless you direct us otherwise, we will share what you tell us anonymously in order to educate the public about conditions here and to support advocacy for prisoners. We rely on you to tell us if you want us to treat your information differently (for example, to use it with your name, or not to share it with anyone).

Subscriptions

subscribe to Prison Focus and receive four issues (published every 3 or 4 months) $20 for non-caged community members and $8 for those behind the prison walls. Prison Focus is free to those in California SHU and ASU. Help us keep our records current. Let us know if your address changes. Individuals in SHU must confirm their address once a year.

Note: We rely entirely on donations in order to keep the paper free for those who are not able to contribute in dollars and cents. Every dollar and stamp counts.

NOTE: Despite wanting to expand our readership, CPF does not have the capacity to receive and process lengthy reports that are not related to the use of solitary confinement within California's maximum security prisons. Californians, please keep reports to a reasonable length. We appreciate concise letters with details when reporting incidents, conditions, general neglect, etc.

The self-advocacy resources we provide are generally California specific. We encourage non-Californians to write to local prisoner advocacy groups for state-specific resources.

DONATIONS

Thank you to all of those who have supported CPF making yet another issue of Prison Focus possible. We would like to send a special thank you to RESIST, a grassroots foundation that supports many grassroots organizations, including CPF. And thank you to all of our individual donors, from both inside and outside the prison walls. Thank you for helping us keep on keeping on!

BECOME A CPF ACTIVIST

CPF is a collective of volunteer activists. We are 100% volunteer. Check our website for additional information and to get involved, or email us at cpfvol@gmail.com.

PRISONER CONTRIBUTIONS: For those who are not able to contribute monetarily (and even those of you that can) sharing your art and stories is a great way you can contribute to CPF’s outreach efforts. We aim to get out your voices.