

!ROCK!

★ Working to Extend Democracy to All ★

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GOVERNOR BROWN TO USE SOME PROP 30 SCHOOL FUNDS FOR PRISONS CONSTRUCTION

By Jim Miller

Finally, there was a measure of good news for schools in California with Proposition 30 creating a budget surplus that had plugged some of the gaping holes that years of budget cuts had made in our state's public education system.

But it didn't take long for Governor Brown to betray us. Indeed, the Courage Campaign has done a great job in recent weeks taking the Governor to task for seeking to raid the Proposition 30 surplus to fund prison expansion.

That's right, you heard it: prison expansion. As the Courage Campaign puts it:

Gov. Brown claims that his hands are tied. He claims a court order mandating him to reduce prison size by 10,000 has forced him to spend billions more in taxpayer dollars over the next 5 years. Don't believe the spin. The Los Angeles Times and Sacramento Bee editorial boards don't; they've ripped apart the Governor's approach.

According to the Brown Administration's own proposals to the court earlier this summer, California can reduce its prisoner population by 10,000 through smart, proven, and most importantly SAFE strategies. Here's the truth: Gov. Brown is afraid. He and our Democratic legislators are terrified of being labeled "soft on crime." We need to convince him there's another way.

And the pressure worked as the Governor and legislative leaders recently got together to craft a "compromise" that might not make the raid of the surplus necessary. As the *Los Angeles Times* reports:

Under the compromise, the state would ask a panel of three federal judges for time to expand rehabilitation programs aimed at reducing the number of inmates who, after serving their time, commit new crimes and return to prison.

If the judges reject an extension, the state will implement Brown's original plan to spend \$315 million this year moving inmates to private prisons, county jails and other facilities. The money for the ex-

tra housing would come from the state's \$1.1-billion reserve.

The price tag is expected to increase to \$415 million for each of the following two years.

But here's the rub: many legal observers don't think the judges are likely to grant the extension as the same story notes, "The judges, for their part, have previously expressed little interest in backing down from their latest deadline." So the bottom line is that even after hearing the cries of outrage from educators, parents, and concerned citizens across the state, the best the Democratic Governor and legislative leaders in Sacramento can come up with is a plan that is still likely to betray the core principle that drove the Proposition 30 campaign, raid the surplus, and push prison spending back ahead of education spending after a very, very brief reversal in the wake of Proposition 30.

And it's all being done in the name of political ass-covering so the Democrats don't appear "weak on crime." Instead they will happily be weak on principle and cowardly in terms of seeking the revenue to adequately fund education and the infrastructure this state will need in order to be competitive the future.

Those of us who were loathe to give up the Millionaires' Tax campaign and merge with the Governor's effort were cynical about serving the greater glory of the Democratic leader rather than a populist campaign to force Sacramento to permanently

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fund education with no wiggle room for exactly this kind of monkey business.

So the next time you hear a Democrat tell you we can't tax oil or make the taxes on top earners in Proposition 30 permanent without a vote of the people, ask her or him if they think the people who voted for Proposition 30 thought they were going to the polls to expand our prison system at the expense of schools.

The politicians are hoping you won't notice, but this one stands as one of the biggest profiles in political cowardice and hypocrisy in a long time. Hundreds of millions of dollars from the Proposition 30 created surplus going to prisons? I guess they think they can just blame the judges when it all goes wrong.

With "friends" like these, we don't need enemies. •

<http://obrag.org/?p=76855>

HELP FOR CON RAPE VICTIMS?

Rape crisis centers rely heavily on funds granted under the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA). But a federal restriction prevents them from using this money to help survivors of prisoner rape. Right now, tell the Justice Department that you support lifting this ban!

Cornelius, who is serving time at a Florida prison, was 19 when he was gang raped by four other inmates. After a transfer to a new facility, Cornelius was raped again and, worse still, he contracted HIV from the assault.

...was 19 when he was gang raped by four other inmates. After a transfer to a new facility, Cornelius was raped again and, worse still, he contracted HIV from the assault.

Cornelius wrote to a local rape crisis center to ask for help. They said their hands were tied by a federal restriction that prohibits the use of VOCA money to help inmates – even if they are victims of sexual abuse.

Because of such abuses the Department of Justice is, finally, recommended a lifting of the VOCA restriction, and is now seeking public comments on the proposed change. •

By Just Detention International

SOLITARY CONFINEMENT CASE SET TO EXPAND

By Paige St. John, LA Times

A federal judge in Oakland, on September 26th, said she is likely to allow a lawsuit alleging that solitary confinement conditions at Pelican Bay State Prison amount to psychological torture, to be expanded from the cases of 10 prisoners to include about 1,100 inmates now held in indefinite isolation.

U.S. District Judge Claudia Wilken expressed concern at a hearing, however, that changes the state has made in how it identifies inmates for isolation means those prisoners won't be included in the pending class-action lawsuit.

What's more, lawyers for the state say they are in the process of moving some existing prisoners out of confinement in Pelican Bay's super-maximum security isolation cells.

"I'm wondering how I would manage a class that has people moving in and out," Wilken said. Nevertheless, she used Thursday's hearing in Oakland to set Nov. 3, 2014, for the trial. Her ruling over whether that trial will be a class action, or remain confined to the few inmates who filed the case, is yet to be decided.

Inmates in Pelican Bay's segregation units spend 22.5 hours a day confined to their cells and, though some have cellmates, are otherwise allowed limited human contact and few activities to occupy their time. They are allowed fewer possessions than other inmates, cannot earn good-time credits toward early release like other inmates and are generally refused parole.

The lawsuit alleges that the sensory deprivation of that confinement, especially for 500 men held in isolation more than a decade, causes irreparable psychological harm. The claims were also at the heart of three statewide prison hunger strikes, including a 60-day protest that ended last month when lawmakers pledged public hearings on the practice.

Only one hearing at the moment is planned, Oct. 9, in Sacramento, said staff for Assembly Public Safety Chairman Tom Ammiano (D-San Francisco). **[Ed's Note: after spending years in fruitless pursuit of justice in the courts, we now move our hopes to the legislature.**

As the reader well knows, both the house and senate passed a bill giving reporters direct access to prisoners, the one areas of government most in need of the light of day. The governor refused to sign that bill. So even if the legislature does something for you, it is Brown (the guy who would let prisoners die rather than meet five very just demands) who ultimately decides.]

Meanwhile, hunger strike leaders who had been moved during the protest have been returned to their old cells at Pelican Bay, said Anne Weills, one of the lawyers representing those prisoners. She met with them two weeks ago, and said several reported health problems related to their fasting, including cardiac trouble. •

A Walk in These SHUs (Part I)

The silence is caustic
It eats at my brain
The voices inside
They scream out in pain
But nothing is said
Not even a word
My reasoning muted
And nothing is heard
What is this asylum
Without padded rooms
All this mental torment
Found in concrete tombs
Maybe one day
Some light will be shed
Perhaps by that time
My mind will be dead...

A Walk in These SHUs (Part II)

The screaming persists
My head rattles on
Awaiting the day
For this life to be gone
Embracing the hatred
A fury instilled
The story line goes
"It's kill or be killed!"
Come take my hand
Sweet Silvery steel
We'll chase down the culprits
And madness they'll feel
Beserker set loose
My passion will yell
Grinding my teeth
As they're put through my hell
Now miss me with such
A façade of Dismay
Surely it's known
They made me this way.

Kevin Stewart, Hostage #T-38864

IVAW STATEMENT OF SUPPORT FOR HS/WS STRIKERS

Statement of Support for the Short Corridor Collective and other prisoners in resistance in California prisons from the Bay Area chapters of Iraq Veterans Against the War and the Civilian Soldier Alliance.

The Iraq Veterans Against the War (IVAW) and the Civilian Soldier Alliance celebrate the resistance demonstrated by California prisoners at the suspension of their third hunger strike organized to protest the cruel, inhumane and tortuous conditions of their solitary confinement. After growing participation since 2011, 30,000 people on the inside joined this strike and many continued for 60 days (Roughly 23% of the entire prison population of CDCR, according to the CDCR website from June 2013). At the close of the strike, led by the Short Corridor Collective, many of the demands of the organizers still have not been met. The struggle continues, and is far from over. IVAW and the Civilian Soldier Alliance honor the resistance by the prisoners and express our continued solidarity.

We see many parallels between the strikers' resistance within the Prison Industrial Complex and our own work of resistance within the Military Industrial Complex. Jeffrey Beard, the Secretary of the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, stated that many of the hunger strikers were only participating in the act of resistance because they were under "extreme pressure to do so from violent prison gangs, which called the strike in attempt to restore their ability to terrorize fellow prisoners, prison staff and communities throughout California."

This particular type of lie about the dedication and purpose behind the personal sacrifices of the resisters is similar to the lies spread by military command against war resisters,

an attempt to discredit resistance as "a few bad apples." Contrary to a claim like Beard's, we know individuals cannot be coerced into resisting a system so oppressive as the military or the prison system, but must act at great risk, with much personal reflection and from values and commitment to justice.

The California prisoners are resisting the tortuous conditions of their imprisonment, and many of us, as veterans of the Global War on Terror, have played a part in the torture of thousands of people. As part of boundless war, the United States military would capture prisoners and turn them over to parties, such as the Iraqi Security Forces or third-party countries, which the United States military knew would torture them.

After learning the truth of our military's role in the torture of prisoners, and sometimes our own personal role in this, we have an intimate connection to the torture happening within our nation's own prisons. The conditions experienced by some of California's prisoners amount to torture. This includes people who are forced to live within Security Housing Units (SHU), with little or no contact with other people for weeks, months, years, even decades. ●

MONEY TALKS, BULLSHIT WALKS

Just real quick to let you know Pelican Bay has been preventing inmates from sending stamps to organizations such as yours. They are using a regulation which states inmates cannot possess money. They rationalize using stamps to pay for a subscription as stamps being money... Therefore it is banned. Anyhow, same time as this I'm asking my family to send bucks please keep me on the mailing list. Thanks for all the support.

A. Nonny Moose

[Mark's comment: *If I walk up to some dude selling flower pots on the street and ask him to loan me one of those joints. He will probably tell me to hit the road because "money talks and bullshit walks."*

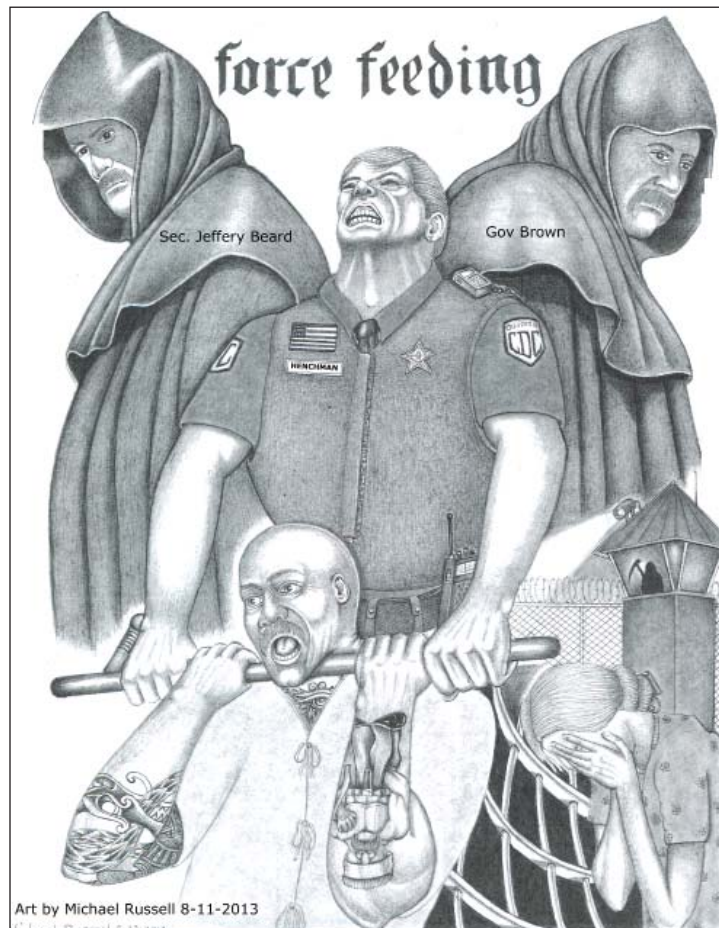
The United States Supreme Court in a case called Citizen United, 2012, ruled that money is free speech protected by the First Amendment which is pretty much what the pot seller is saying.

The court's ruling was directed at big money interest like corporations and non-profits who wanted to donate unlimited amounts of money to newspapers and other forms of media to sell their side of the story in elections. Even though the court ruled in favor of Goliath, now David got the ruling on his side and can say what goes around comes around.

If stamps are money, they must be viewed as free speech protected by the United States Constitution because prisoners want to tell their side of the story.

When times gets hard and Ed and I can't raise money out here we dip in to an emergency fund to help with political demonstrations and such. The \$13,000.00 we first donated has dwindled down to about \$3,500.00. We ask you men and women to keep your ROCK going with your stamps whatever you can send. When times are hard we will dip into that fund until it is gone. COMMUNICATION IS A RIGHT!]

[Ed's Comment: *When you send stamps to Rock you are not paying for a subscription, you are making a donation—you are contributing to free speech.]*



LETTERS

[Note: The last issue had no letters. We're making up for it now. For the current issue only all names of letter writers will be withheld. This is to avoid any charges of facilitating secret communication between prisoners. We are communicating thoughts and ideas.]

The Public's Right to Know

It's been awhile, just got out of ASU, only gone a short time and back on the Mainline in General Population. Been back since August 19, 2013, would've been back sooner, however, my celly and I had to complete the refeeding process, which was 10 days. This was anyone who was hunger striking 30 days plus or more. Myself as well as my celly did 35 days straight in participating in support of the Hunger Strike. It was an honorable experience just to correct CDCR's pure speculation and imagination. I made my own choice to participate (*CDCR made a claim prisoners were coerced to participate*) for a dire change is needed drastically within CDCR's California penal system. Before I get into my purpose of writing you, Ed, I give my shout outs in solidarity to all those who and are still continuing in the Hunger Strike. It has been an honor and a privilege to struggle and sacrifice along side of all of you and prisoners who are suffering and been deprived of life. Just know keep your heads up, and your spirits forever alive, for tomorrow is always a better tomorrow for you and all those who are suffering and who have suffered by the CDCR's regime (de facto to de facto).

It's only right that *Rock* readers in and outside the communities across the state of California and any national state that is experiencing the same sufferings, and oppression upon human life. It is not only our constitutional right of freedom of speech, as well as the public's right to be aware and the realization of how their tax payers' dollars are is conducted toward torturous chambers. The evidence is accumulated over a 30 years span. CDCR's errors lack specific reasons of fabricated charges as well as lack of factual evidence to support their actions. Most important there conduct is unethical. Reform is needed, it has been proven and indeed factual that CDCR's policy has failed. It means their main policy is to divide and conquer, destroy lives,

to [restrict] all active yards, to house all active prisoners in torture chambers. So you see it is vital for reform for a broken down system. I am pretty damn sure if the public would be aware of their tax dollars are funding the torture chambers of human beings. This is the reason why CDCR's not wanting to allow the Media in California prisons. They continue to lie and cover up their evil deeds. Denying medical attention of those Hunger Strikers is their act of retaliating with a vengeance.

We as a society, a class all as one must then inquire; what is the sole purpose? As a class we repeat the past. Our present is at hand. But we must ask ourselves; how will we live our future? We all possess the power of reasoning and thinking. If CDCR has conducted this way for 30 years, what will the next 30 years be? How as a society will we choose to live if reform or change is not implemented today? The realization of what exists is its need for a dire reform of CDCR's policies. We have then given an outline account of what is needed. We must give a more thorough account of it later on, in writings that are specifically concerned with it of how we chose to live now and in our future of all general populations, ASU's, SHU's. Reform and change begins with us [prisoners and free citizens] as one society, one common purpose one goal is to change what is broken.

On Criticism

How are you? Well, extend my heartfelt gratitude to all who beat the drum & [pave] in the interest of all prisoners held in solidarity confinement... It is obvious that the brother who had the criticism was unable to constructively criticize the mediation & all loyal supporters. This a real contribution that the people have made in/out of prisons. I personally been there from the beginning. My cell is one of the New Afrikan Rep's Sitawa' and he & the other three Rep's & myself all been working endlessly toward trying to win support for this cause & we started with two small organizations CPF/LPSC and neither had the man power nor finance to push such a movement but they never wavered and they put their own agenda aside to contribute their undivided attention to our cause. They did this selflessly and they worked their asses off doing whatever they could to build on our struggle. People who blindly criticize our team I know have failed to take time to investigate the facts before they start

bumping off at the guys. Hell, I remember when we first got at Carol Strickman LPSC her commitment is exclusively for womyn & she promised us 90 days and she had to go back to prior convictions and she still with us after almost 2 ½ years counting. Brother Ed, you know how I am about people not putting their name on articles but at the same time every prisoner have a right to have his name on his opinion and his first amendment right . So, put those names on it, Brother. Those of us who understand that this is a protracted where prisoners have the responsibility to carry this struggle & the people on the streets are added plus, you feel me??

You was very clear in your constructive criticism to all the Brothers & I am going to put a piece together to instruct the importance of what you was saying in respects to that 30,000 because that was crucial especially in respects to each one bringing a family member along for the cause that in itself will magnify our cause movement, you dig? I am feeling your rhetoric, Brother. Now if the Legislators dupe us then

It is truly going to be an uphill battle, you dig? But [one] we are willing to meet because after 58 days we ended our peaceful protest and I did every single day along with 90 plus other individuals who were transferred out of PBPS with me for high risk medical treatment our 20 Rep's ... agreed to another tentative deal where there is no real concrete agreement but we will see what become of what they did agree to one thing we do know that we have a solid 100 men who are willing to sacrifice their lives for our cause and I am one of them. Because there is no life in these modern day [tombstones], Brother. Every man and women will die and is up to him or her. And I'd rather be dead then, than to spend the rest of my life in one of these tombstones buried alive, you dig? So, it is not about our supporters, it is about each prisoner and how committed is he or she serious about getting out of these tombstones. That's it!! I thought I'll drop in and inform you as to the service you put in which is priceless.

[*Ed's Note: Mark and I welcome criticism from readers. We only ask that it be constructive and done from within a comradely context. We do not welcome anyone blowing smoke up our asses. We don't do this work for the praise or ego strokes.*]

LETTERS

Wages Are Due Us

This the first time I have written you and I probably never would have because I know you are a busy soldier on the front-line of the struggle. But I just read the Volume 2, Number 9 September 2013 issue of *Rock*. And when I read your response to the prisoner who wrote you criticizing the work of all the outside support effort, I felt the need to respond. That individual by no means reflects the 29,999 rest of us!

I just want to tell you as well as all other true hearted supporters that we truly appreciate all the time and hard work you do and not complain about! All the frustration you endure and blood, sweat, and tears you never complain! We all know it's not an easy task we've undertaken but we have! And without all of you and each and every single one of you it would be that much more difficult for us to achieve our goals!!!

You have under taken our cause not because you had to but because you believe in it. And because you know as well as I that if we don't do it no one will do it for us. For us the knowing you never have to feel the need to defend the work you all do out there!

Long live Billy "Guero" Sell!! A true Soldado!

It just goes to demonstrate the small minded and shortsightedness of some that we the knowing (inside and out) strive to overcome. This is a long fight that I hope never ends: although I wish this phase H/S would die. But that the overall consciousness that has been awakened don't fade out. This is but a springboard to us, the underclass men, by the more experienced and knowledgeable. They have shown us the path along with what is possible when everyone is willing to put their own back into it.

I am relatively new to this. I've been doing this only 14 years. But I have heard the way the convicts during the past had more by way of productive programming. And due to current events we see a glimpse of that old convict spirit that would keep the oppressor's foot at bay when it came to what we had coming. When the administration tried to take something everyone would rise up, not as this group or that group, this view or that view but as true convicts because they all fully understand that if they allowed the administration to do it then it was only a matter of time before they made that SOP. So they put an end to

that right there and then.

That is the same type of mind-set that must be cultivated now amongst "all" prisoners and convicts no matter what yard you are on. All the way to those at the fire camps.

I will use the example of some of the slave wages that some jobs have. They pay those at fire camps at most \$5.00 a day when out actually risking their lives out fighting fire. WHAT THE HELL IS THAT, when they are working right alongside others making ten times that for doing the same job. But because he has been sentenced by some judge his life is worth less?!?! Where is the equal justice in that? As we have seen change is very much possible if we are will to pick our heads up and look around and take notice that in the overall picture we convicts are getting screwed. If and only "if" we "all" decide to change the way they pay "us" for the work "we" do for them can that happen. I ask you this, if we don't cook and clean then who else will? If they try to hire outside people they pay them \$15.00 per hour plus healthcare, etc., etc. So why should they not pay us a fair wage for what we do for them? I mean they charge us like we make \$15.00 per hour, with their 55% restitution. Then the California court system issues us astronomical restitution fines in some cases upwards of \$250,000.00. That's our reality.

So, who is going to make them change this? Good luck waiting for them to do it on their own. I understand what some if not most are not willing to step up. You scared that someone else will snake your job. And that is why it will take "all" of us to see the bigger picture. Only we can raise our standard of living. And that's why we have those MAC Reps on the yard ain't it? Well tell them to get to work or get out the way and get one who actually wants what's better for you. We must see that no matter what job or service we do for them is worth a fair wage. And I'm not talking about an extra state tray of food or a shower every night. Every job should be a pay number. Would you work on the streets for a sandwich? Didn't think so! So why do it now? Get paid!!!! It will be rough for a minute but when the smoke clears the slave wages will be higher and those menial jobs the state took for granted will pay numbers. But most importantly, those tasks will have a dignified place and that position will have been recognized as having worth.

Long live Billy "Guero" Sell!! A true Soldado!

Criticism To Nameless Author Comments by *Rock's* new Co-Editor, Mark Cook

I would like to say that I am happy that the four principal H.S. Reps at PBSP decided to suspend the H.S. I participated in the H.S. myself but I quickly realized that CDCR would not mediate or change their positions under pressure of prisoner H.S. After all, as my medical doctor told me during H.S.: "You are all only hurting yourselves. Custody doesn't give a rat's ass if you starve yourselves. They are covered legally. All they have to do is keep offering you food. [Editor comment: Custody has nothing to do with mediation or change. Wake up, hot damn it! The doctor is pissed because of the extra work!]

I realized that CDCR may well prefer the men in PBSP short corridor to starve themselves to death. I'm sure CDCR believes those four men are at the root of the problem. If they were dead I'm sure CDCR would not miss them. *Editor comment: [The California H/S not only got local and stateside support, they got world wide support. The short corridor strategy was well thought out---the most support they could get from all prisoners and an outside folk was a peaceful protest. Their strategy lays the ground work for the next phase which will include peaceful protest if CDCR does not correct the abuses.]*

In 2013 the only thing prisoncrats care about is money---slave, filled cells, etc., etc. While the legislative hearings promised by assembly member Ammiano and Habcock are positive development, keep in mind that Governor Brown would still have to sign any legislation that comes from the lawmakers. Based on him and Beard's conduct during H.S., I'm not too hopeful about legislative hearing for H.S. What I am hopeful for is that prisoner who came together for peaceful protest---H.S. ---30,000---will continue to be united and peacefully continue to push for major reforms in CDCR. Of one thing I am 100% certain. If 30,000 prisoners had come together as they did for H.S. to boycott canteen for a few months, Mr. Beard would've came running to the table to negotiate. None of us would have to starve ourselves like we did. Not that I have any regrets about H.S. My only regret is that we didn't use smarter strategies. *Editor comment: [The H.S. was a proxy boycott on the canteen and could have been in support of the H.S. for those prisoners who did not want to do the full H.S. The short corridor strategy was solid and it was up*

to other prisoners to build on it with a canteen boycott.]

Take the double cellings for example. It is critical that CDCR place two prisoner in a cell. It's the warehousing of prisoners. If I own a warehouse and am not allowed to stack boxes on top of each other, eventually I'll either be forced to get another warehouse or I'll be forced to keep less boxes. Same thing with prisoners. From what I've read in Bay View and other H.S. supporting publications such as; PHSS news, the men at Corcoran who participated in single cell protest were only prisoner who negotiated with wardens. Why do you think that was? Because that type of protest, unlike H.S. posed a threat to the establishment--CDCR. It would have directly hurt them in the pockets. *Editor comment: This paragraph makes absolutely no sense!*

Now take CCR title 15 Section 3090 as well as Penal Code Section 5005. "Inmate Canteen Establishment." Ed Mead once said: "You contribute to your own oppression." Imagine the millions of dollars that prisoners spend each month in prison canteens across the state. In my opinion, I believe we should stop contributing to our own oppression and boycott canteen for a few months or a year. See how long it takes for CDCR to feel the loss in profits. I can hear CDCR now telling the media: "the gangs are pressuring prisoners to not buy our canteen." (LOL) *[Editor comment: Governor Brown is not thinking in Millions of dollars. That is peanuts to him. He's asking for billions to build more prisons. Brown is gambling that he will get more political campaign support by being tough on crime/prisoners than improving prison conditions. He wants the conservative support from both the republicans and Democrats and that is what this resistance on his part is all about. That is the spin Dr. Beard is interjecting with his bad mouthing prisoners.]*

I hope that the men in PBSP short corridor who are respected and supported in the peaceful causes to bring major positive reforms to CDCR will read this and ask for support changing strategies. Let us stop spending money in CDCR canteens and see what happens. What have we got to lose, 54 days with no food, 8 hour bus rides to CSP-SAC, 115's for participation in mass H.S., stays in ASO with freezing air blowing out of vents? You get the picture. We don't got nothing to lose.

How about CDCR? Do they got something to lose? Canteen jobs, millions in

profits, pressure from labor unions, etc., etc. All I'm saying is I know CDCR is one big money making torture machine and I disagree that H.S. is our means of peaceful protest. Not spending our loved ones hard earned dollars on prison canteen is also an excellent means of peaceful protest.

I guarantee anyone reading this that if a large scale canteen boycott of prison canteen took place. Ol' Dr. Beard and Governor Brown would be ling up to see "how we could resolve our grievances. Think about that! *[Editor comments: the PBPS short corridor and reps have carefully and miraculously put forth a strategy requiring session of all hostilities, peaceful protest and personal sacrifice to lead the way. They have gained the respect of people around the world. These comments are written with the deepest respect for all the Hunger Strike participants along with constructive criticism for the nameless author of this letter. LONG LIVE THE SPIRIT OF BILLY SELL!!]*

The Struggle Continues And On I March

And so it began, July 8th 2013. The third of a continual hunger strike calling for change. It is now, as I spew these ramblings out, day 49. Tuff, ruff, and hungry days of refusing trays. How far I can continue I can't say. I only mention this first so before I'm judged on the rest of my writing it can be known—okay, this guy may be a little loopy. (LOL)

The while HS has been quite an experience. As of today, I've been force moved seven times. During these moves I've run across men from both sides of the SHU (Bay) C&D, long corridor and short corridor, ASUs, and even another prison (SAC). One thing I've seen during these moves has been consistent in every person I've met partaking in the HS: Good strong individuals who go out of their way to insure those around them are as comfortable as can be. I'm talking about every and all. At first I thought it might be "Pod" thing or a block thing, maybe even a SHU or prison thing. But no, that's not it. Each man is seeking change. Seeking a better life and a better future. These are the same men CDCR claims are "the worst of the worst" and if released from these SHUs we'll run rampant. I know this is a lie and I've seen it firsthand. Prison yards (mainline yards)

have *always* been violent places. So violent and scary to some that they have around a third of the prison population tucked away on these soft, SNY and/or PC yards.

What CDCR never mentions is that the number of assaults, weapons charges, drugs, etc. had not changed as a result of their building all of the SHUs, ASUs to house all the prisoners they claimed to be members of gangs or someone they for whatever reason deemed to be a threat. I dream of change, and it is not only my dream. Over 30,000 prisoners just like me shared that same dream. To the extent violence has gone down at all is due to the Agreement to End Hostilities.

The fact is that the CDCR's isolation cells cruel and inhuman. It needs to end. None of the five core demands are extreme or unreasonable. Why can't CDCR and the governor see that? Why has HS-related death, countless numbers of supporters pleas, requests, petitions, marches and prayers gone unanswered, rejected, and ignored? How long must this go on? How many must be hurt. How much damage must I sustain. Is not my 30 pound weight loss enough? I guess I'll see (we'll all see) and I'll continue as long as I can give. This is my view to date, after 49 days of struggle.

PBSP's Psych Ward

I'm currently in PSU-SHU, Psychiatric Services Unit at Pelican Bay State Prison. I was placed on Involuntary Medication, which they legally can do, but they gave me medication which gave me bad side effects, such as tremors, nausea. It effected my motor skills and equilibrium, causing speech impediment, and despite 25 medical requests, 10 psych-tech medication referrals, the doctors tortured me on these medications for 5 months, despite all my complaints. I not once saw the psychiatrist. Once outside my routine monthly visits I begged to get off. I filed an administrative appeal and am finished with that process.

I also have been beaten, and excessive and unnecessary force, I've endured. I have filed a 42 U.S.C. Section 1983 Civil Rights lawsuit on these issues, and it is a fact that I have very restricted access to the prison law library.

I've been left to suffer with scabies, left untreated for 3 weeks.

I really could use some help. The atrocities I have endured in PSU, and in prison in general, are the worst case scenarios. Just getting toilet paper can be an issue. If you encourage legal advocacy maybe

IN IT TO WIN IT

you can help. There is a proper way to file a motion for a lawyer, and I could use the form as a template.

Behold The Green Swine

I was amazed in a sort of desolate manner to have read the woman in chowchilla's words in the last issue of Prison Focus [the author asked that this letter be printed in Rock as well], and so easily related to her description of the women around here with some of the men on H.D.S.P.'s C yard. They too, apparently, would rather go with (CDCR) flow, in fear of losing out on canteen or privileges, than stand up for their rights! Would this be the new generation she spoke of, or also the "broken men" and "broken women" CDCR creates?

The short corridor warned us about "under covers" or "SNY plants" who would try to thwart the solidarity needed in this common effort. An article was written on HDSP's C yard regarding conditions and advocating support for the July 8th HS/WS. An influential member of a white prisoner group caught wind of the document and vehemently objected to the article being published, as he claimed "it makes us look like we're just getting punked over here, like a bunch of bitches." Yet he could not deny the veracity of the article as every word was true.

Now how about some thought provocation: What happens when a racial group on HDSP's C yard gets pushed up on by the swine (CDCR staff) on our side, about one of their people "causing problems" (i.e., urging prisoners to file 602s, demanding answers and resolves, requesting copies of the Inmate Welfare Fund Report, refusing to withdraw appeals, advocating the participation in peaceful protest, etc.). Then on the other side you have a member of this notorious group crying about this same individual's propagation of the then upcoming July 8th HS/WS, and telling this person to be mute. Well, they have him taken off the yard under the guise of adhering to the "End of Hostilities Agreement."

The "End of Hostilities Agreement" clearly calls for prisoners to use diplomatic resolve, not to begin targeting each other with weapons in order to ensure prisoners who bring attention to CDCR's abuses are taken off the yard. What is it that motivates prisoners to strive so hard to silence those who advocate for the betterment of prison conditions? Who is really pulling the strings to incite such absurdities? Behold the Green Swine. C yard was the only

facility at HDSP where active/GP inmates did not raise a finger in support of the July 8th HS/WS. If a finger was raised it was the middle one!

[Ed's Note: Here's the problem. The administration's first line of defense has always been the more influential prisoners. They give these collaborators, let's call them what they are, perks of one sort or another. If there is any disruption this could cause a loss of their perks, be they drugs, legitimacy in the eye of their captors, etc.]

At the Arizona Penitentiary at Florence the AB ran the coke shack from which they derived considerable income. When my friends and I, we called ourselves the Committee to Safeguard Prisoner Rights, started organizing for constructive change, it was these prisoners who tried to prevent us from moving forward.

I've had the same experience with different groups at other prisons. The solution is to do things that benefit prisoners as a whole, and in the process you develop legitimacy. There is a tipping point that once reached prevents this reactionary element from opposing you lest they be exposed for the lackeys they are. In fact, they were forced to join us once we had won the support of the population—a process that took us two years.]

Stamps

We here at Corcoran SHU 4B-3L want to send our regards to all who pushed it to the max. They say talk is cheap, 30,000 plus is music. But let's not forget that was only a third of the California convicts. Progress takes patience and constant regrouping and always with a step forward. 30,000 plus is a solid step forward.

I'm as anxious as everyone else to see what is next in our struggle. We want to thank our families, our supporters, and their families for their understanding and patience through this phase of our peaceful struggle. And lastly, enclosed are 25 stamps from all of us here is 3L. We will do our best to send our share every month, as everyone else should do as well.

Nobody Forced Me

The CDCR wants the public to believe that somehow the courageous men in Pelican Bay short corridor forced tens of thousands of us to stand up and speak out about the abuses we've had to endure at the hands of the state. Nobody forced me to do shit. I am thankful for the short corridor men who chose to stand up and thus removed the scales from my eyes. I don't need anyone to tell me or force me to expose the corruption and abuse coming via CDCR. Nobody is forcing me or us to stand up. As if somehow we should enjoy and continue enduring this torture in silence.

The reps deserve to be recognized for their historic achievements. The end of hostilities agreement has brought peace in a way that no government ever could, and instead of rewarding them for this achievement the state exposed its ugly head and punished these and thousands of other prisoners for wanting peace instead of violence. With this CDCR once again shows it's true colors.

Enclosed are 20 postage stamps as a donation, so you can continue with your work. It ain't much but I hope it helps. •



EDITORIAL 2-11

Money: To finish the October mailing of *Rock* I had to buy 100 forever stamps. It is one week until this issue gets mailed, and so far I have only received about 100 stamps. To mail out this issue we will need at least 500 stamps. At 46 cents a stamp that will come to \$230. In printing the October issue I used two cartridges of laser printer toner (\$153 each) and about six reams of paper (at \$5 each). All of that comes to a whopping \$566.

If this newsletter is to survive it will only be with your material support. If I don't get that support the *Rock* will fold. As I mentioned in my last editorial, only about half of our readers have contributed, leaving others to carry the financial burden of those who cannot or will not pay for this service to prisoners. Accordingly, if you have not given, or if you have already contributed but can afford more, now would be a great time to make a contribution of either stamps or money. Before I fold this newsletter, however, I'll first try to cut expenses by removing those who have not contributed from the mailing list. I won't take that step without giving everyone fair warning.

Mail: First of all, a lot of prisoners have been moved to different facilities during the hunger strike. As a result newsletters are being returned to me marked something to the effect of "Not at this address" or "Return to Sender." Those who suffered transfers and their first class mail (which this publication is) has not been forwarded should let me know your new addresses.

Because of the volume of mail I receive it is not possible for me to answer every letter, but I can comment here on some of the issues being raised by prisoners. Right now there seems to be two trends, both of which suggest ideas on how we can fight your battle for you out here in minimum custody. These suggestions range from doing various demonstrations to boycotting companies that sell prison made goods. I've said this many times and I'll say it again. We are here to support your struggle, not to fight it for you.

We have not forgotten the five core demands. As I write this people are holding fasts outside Governor Brown's condo demanding that he implement those demands. Others continue doing different kinds of prisoner support work. That said, this is your struggle and one you must wage there on the inside. We can amplify the voice of your struggle, but to do that there must be

some sort of peaceful struggle taking place on the inside.

Another theme contained in some of these letters from prisoners (explaining why we out here should be fighting this fight for you) is that general population prisoners have too much to lose in terms of their jobs and the fear of being incarcerated to take the steps necessary to win this contest of wills.

The point these prisoners miss, and the point my Quote Box has constantly made, is that the struggle for progressive change requires sacrifice. This lesson has been learned by the hunger strikers, who have poured their very bodies and their health into this conflict. While those currently leading this struggle take the time to recover and develop the next phase of this contest, I would suggest those people who are qualified use this lull to plow the fields and plant the seeds for the next harvest.

The Ideal: Prisoners, as *Rock* readers well know by now, are held in conditions of constitutionally sanctioned slavery, deprived of the basic rights of citizenship such as the right to vote. The ideal would be to eliminate slavery once for all and to grant the rights of citizenship to all Americans. Prisoners/slaves possessing any consciousness at all would throw their entire selves into the realization of this ideal. If not, then there must be something wrong with either the ideal or the prisoner.

In the situation as it exists within the California prison system today the goal continues to be implementation of the five core demands. This is something three massive and history-making prisoner hunger strikes have failed to achieve. The first of these hunger strikes kicked off with six thousand and six hundred participants. The second one peaked at slightly fewer than twelve thousand prisoners on strike. And the third hunger strike started with over thirty thousand participants, including thousands on work strike. These are CDCR's numbers, and they are of historical significance, yet they were not enough to overcome CDCR's intransigence or to win the very reasonable five core demands. More, it seems, is needed.

What does that "more" consist of? Well, dialectics teach us that everything in nature is in a constant state of change. Prisoners are not immune from this process of perpetual change. Everything is either growing or in a state of decline and decay, and this also includes political struggles and movements. I think we can safely deduce

from the above numbers that the prisoners' movement in California is growing larger and more powerful, that it is changing into, or in the process of becoming, a strong political movement.

Yet there are many contradictions, some antagonistic, like between the keepers and the kept or the rich and the poor, and some non-antagonistic, like the contradiction among various groups of prisoners. Non-antagonistic are resolved through discussion, criticism self-criticism, and through other peaceful solutions. So while our movement for constructive change is growing, there are internal contradictions that must be resolved. For example, a prisoner writes that there was a recent riot between whites and Mexicans at his facility. So there are two opposites at work here—the pull back to the old ways of prisoner-on-prisoner violence (cannibalism), or the peaceful struggle to bring about a more just and rational world. Which will win? Well, of course, the one you feed.

Right now this peaceful movement for progressive change is a mile wide but only an inch deep. The task is to deepen this struggle, while at the same time making it even wider. How is this to be done? Well, there are countless ways. The most important, in my opinion, is for the more politically advanced and rights conscious prisoners to become teachers. The object would be to make social prisoners rights conscious and rights conscious prisoners class conscious. Yeah, each one teach one.

Advances in the movement can only be made through increasing the rights and political consciousness of larger and larger numbers of prisoners. Those with a more advanced level of consciousness should reach out to the intermediate layers of political development, who in turn can penetrate the bottom strata, moving them forward or at least neutralizing the most backwards. Two of the many ways of accomplishing this is through study groups and putting out small newsletters.

I have been doing this work for some forty years, from both the inside and out here in minimum custody. One thing I've learned in those years is that in this movement nothing stands still. It is growing or decaying—there will be political progress or there will be internecine cannibalism.

Our masthead says "Working to extend democracy to all." Welcome to democracy! Each of you has a vote. You vote with your feet. ●

Ed Mead

NETHERLANDS CLOSE EIGHT PRISONS DUE TO LACK OF CRIMINALS

Huffington Post UK

As prison populations surge in the UK, with overcrowded cells and repeat offenders, the opposite is happening in the Netherlands.

The country is actually to close eight prisons because of a lack of criminals, the Dutch justice ministry has announced.

Declining crime rates in the Netherlands mean that although the country has the capacity for 14,000 prisoners, there are only 12,000 detainees, reported the nrc.nl.

The decrease is expected to continue, the ministry said, with Deputy justice minister Nebahat Albayrak saying that natural redundancy and other measures should counter any forced lay-offs.

Meanwhile in Britain

A report last year on prison overcrowding said that surging populations undermined the rehabilitation of prisoners and risked increasing reoffending in the future.

The Criminal Justice Alliance (CJA), which represents more than 60 organisations, called for the government to urgently limit “the unnecessary use of prison, ensuring it is reserved for serious, persistent and violent offenders for whom no alternative sanction is appropriate”.

It came after Chief Inspector of Prisons Nick Hardwick said the rising pressure on prisons from budget cuts and increasing numbers cannot go on indefinitely. ●

LAO SAYS PRISON REALIGNMENT PLANS WON'T WORK

Just a few months from the federally mandated deadline to reduce California's prison population by 137.5 percent capacity, Governor Jerry Brown released a plan to partner with private prisons and a correctional staff union. It would invest more than \$700 million over the next two years for the construction of new contracted lock-up facilities bringing incarceration numbers down to required levels.

State lawmakers and corrections watchdogs emphasized that it sacrifices long-term tactics for short-term tactics. State Senate pro Tem Darrell Steinberg — an advocate of rehabilitative corrections strategy — argues that without evidence-based programs that actually correct, the state of California may not see desired results from the Governor's plan.

On September 4, the Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO) of the state of California released an official report on the content and criticisms surrounding Brown's original plan, as well as Steinberg's competing rehabilitative plan. Both plans were summarized with potential risks and concerns for deciding lawmakers:

- Gov. Brown's original plan:
- Contract beds to increase by 12,500 in out-of-state facilities, two reactivated facilities and one new in-state private facility
- First year cost at \$315 million, second year data missing — estimated at \$400+ million
- Waives all California laws and regulations restricting new private prison contracts
- Suspends December 2016 closure of California Rehabilitation Center
- Provisions officially expire in January 2017, but administration says expiration is really June 2015
- Sen. Steinberg's proposal:
- Negotiates conditional settlement to extend deadline three years, five-member panel to determine a relevant population cap
- Establishes \$200 million yearly grant program incentivizing counties into developing rehabilitative alternatives to incarceration, with performance rewards
- Finds 18-member advisory commission on public safety to prepare long-term recommendations for 2015
- Acknowledges failure to meet December deadline; dependent on negotiation to avoid fine

Facility construction is the shortest route to compliance with the federal mandate. However, the LAO remains skeptical about the governor's long-term goal, seeing that 2015-2016 remains without a definitive plan. If the contracts expire in June 2015, the scheduled January 2015 submission of a long-term plan only allows a few months for legislators to debate and facilitate implementation.

The LAO noted an alarming lack of cost-savings analyses or accountability mea-

asures expected with spending millions in state reserves. Not only will the price of contracting beds likely rise due to being short-term, founding the private facility staffed by state employees in California City may cost double.

The LAO also doubted the state's capacity to maintain project control; without careful contract oversight, the state could end up paying for empty beds. In the event of construction delays during the two and a half months until the deadline, dreaded early releases may be necessary anyway. Waiving all restrictions also raises questions about the Legislature's power to oversee expenditure and implementation.

...a compromise had been reached between the governor and the Senate, using both construction and rehab as bargaining chips.

The LAO estimated that for December 2016 compliance, Steinberg's plan would have to oversee yearly reductions of 7,000 detainees. However, because the new population cap and deadline settlement are undefined, accurate estimates for impacts and savings are impossible to formulate. The effects on public safety could be either disastrous or miraculous, depending on implementation quality.

Both plans still have questions to address. If grants alone don't work, are there contingency plans? How much money per reduced admission will be rewarded? What's the performance baseline for evaluating counties, and how would the existent grant program work with the proposed one?

On Monday, Sacramento announced that a compromise had been reached between the governor and the Senate, using both construction and rehab as bargaining chips. While the construction of the costly new facilities has been green-lit to insure against noncompliance fines, the federal panel is still given an option to avoid the expense by granting a deadline extension for rehabilitation results.

Given that full construction by December is unlikely, the state is dependent on federal cooperation to avoid federal fines.

Ultimately, the LAO primarily recommends exploring three critical objectives: reduce prison admissions, reduce time in prison, and reduce parolee recidivism. Contract and capacity expansion are the last options, reserved for emergency and not evidence-based priorities. ●

Health Professionals Who Participate in Force-feeding Prisoners on Hunger Strike at Guantanamo Bay Should Lose Professional Licenses

New research in Prehospital and Disaster Medicine, WADEM's peer-reviewed journal, concludes that force-feeding prisoners violates medical ethics and amounts to torture.

Physicians and other licensed health professionals are force-feeding hunger strikers held prisoner at the US Naval Base at Guantanamo Bay (GTMO), Cuba. These health professionals are violating the medical ethics they swore to uphold and are complicit in torture, according to the authors of an article published in Prehospital and Disaster Medicine.

Hunger strikes are political acts, not medical conditions. Hunger strikers refuse food on a voluntary, informed basis and without suicidal intent. Force-feeding involves the use of force and physical restraints to immobilize hunger strikers without their consent and against their express wishes-actions which constitute battery and violate basic human dignity. ●

Writing Off Lives

By The New York Times Editorial Board

The prison population in the United States has declined modestly in recent years after three decades of growth. This is partly the result of saner sentencing policies for nonviolent drug offenders, who are more likely to be given probation and drug treatment than in the past.

At the same time, however, the number of people in prison for life has more than quadrupled since 1984 and continues to grow at a startling pace. The zealous pursuit of these sentences began in the 1970s, becoming something of a fad; it is past time to revisit the practice.

A new study from the Sentencing Project, a research group, found that one in nine inmates, about 160,000 people, is serving a life sentence. Nearly one-third of these prisoners are serving life without parole. Many of these lifers were convicted of non-violent crimes or of crimes that occurred before they turned 18.

For much of the 20th century, a sentence as harsh as life without parole was rarely used. Instead, a person sentenced to "life" — for murder, say — could be released af-

ter 15 years when the parole board determined that he or she had been rehabilitated and no longer posed a threat. This began to change during the drug war years. Harsher sentences once reserved for people convicted of capital crimes were expanded to include robbery, assault and nonviolent drug offenses. States restricted the use of parole and governors who feared being portrayed as soft on crime began to deny virtually all clemency requests.

Research shows lengthy sentences do nothing to improve public safety. But these long sentences are turning prisons into geriatric centers where the cost of care is prohibitively high. The practice of routinely locking up people forever — especially young people — also ignores the potential for rehabilitation.

The whole trend is deeply counterproductive. States need to encourage more rational sentencing, restore the use of executive clemency and bring parole back into the corrections process. ●

*<http://www.nytimes.com/2013/09/30/opinion/writing-off-lives-in-prison.html?smid=fb-share>
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COMMUNICATION IS A HUMAN RIGHT