

Overturn the Unconstitutional and Inhumane Ban on *Revolution* Newspaper in Pelican Bay State Prison, and Other Prisons! Funds Urgently Needed!

In February, 2010, prison officials at California's Pelican Bay State Prison declared that *Revolution* newspaper was banned from their institution. It appears that issues of the newspaper dating as far back as October 2009 were confiscated, leading up to the outright ban. The first issues confiscated last fall announced a special issue, *Revolution* 183 on prisons and prisoners, "From the Hellholes of Incarceration to a Future of Emancipation." (Available at www.revcom.us or from the PRLF.)

PRLF has received literally hundreds of letters which convey the tremendously educational value of *Revolution* newspaper for these prisoners. Their subscriptions and other revolutionary literature has enabled them to hone critical thinking; learn about history and debate current events in the world; understand root causes for why so many are in prison in the U.S.; come to appreciate science and atheism; consider radical, revolutionary and Communist alternatives for how the world could be different; examine lessons from previous socialist revolutions; examine causes of divisions between the people by nationality and gender.

Many people from all sections of society who have listened to these prisoners' voices have been struck by the power of their words and their moral clarity about transforming society. Now it is up to those on the

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Locked Down in Pelican Bay, CA

Imagine you are in the Security Housing Unit (SHU) of a prison, locked in a solitary cell for 23 or more hours a day, every day, year after year. Your lifeline to the world is a newspaper and all of a sudden prison officials decide that you cannot read it anymore. As a prisoner wrote: "I've been getting the *Revolution* paper for about 8 years and can't imagine being in this dungeon without it."

Welcome to California's remote supermax Pelican Bay State Prison. Here 1200 of the 3400 inmates are in the most restrictive prison-within-a-prison found anywhere in the U.S. At Pelican Bay is the single largest block of subscribers to *Revolution* newspaper in U.S. prisons. The 45+ subscriptions read by many others are provided through funds raised by Prisoners' Revolutionary Literature Fund (PRLF).

THE PRISONERS WRITE:

Here are excerpts from different prisoners. Visit PRLF's website: www.PrisonersRevolutionaryLiteratureFund.org, to read entire letters:

"Everyone I've managed to share issue 183 [ed: special issue on prisons and prisoners] of Revolution newspaper with had positive feedback. You understand this place is a dungeon where we communicate through solid steel doors with plexiglass slits everyone's thrilled to know someone out there has an inkling what we're forced to go through for years and even decades...and actually cares."

"One main thing which I love about your newspaper—it covers all topics, presents pro and con positions, raw facts for the reader to analyze, one can not help but recognize the details that the mainstream media isn't telling the public through its corporate machine. Your publication is read by me from cover to cover, although some articles I greatly disagree about. We must be open minded, accept new ideas, be tolerant to accept and understand other opinions and belief system, though they are different from our own."

"For many years, I was bound & chained to the walls of ignorance. However, thanks to the revolutionary leadership of Bob Avakian... I have since been provided with the tools to shatter these chains from deep within the bowels of the beast. I now enthusiastically accept the responsibility of helping others do the same..." [*FYI: Revolution newspaper is the voice of the Revolutionary Communist Party, whose leader Avakian is a frequent contributor to its pages.]*

"Got the literature you sent... It's good to have some good study material at hand for the brothers here. I have been trying to get deeper into the theoretical and philosophical questions as regards communist application. I like to study so many different fields of science, all of it basically. I'm just amazed at the whole realm of science, especially how everything is interconnected. I was reading Stephen Hawking..."

"I kind of like the idea that women are equal to me. But I never would have this understanding if it was not for Communism."

outside to make sure this lifeline is not cut off and these voices are not muffled or worse silenced.

Banning *Revolution* newspaper from Pelican Bay State Prison is inhumane and unconstitutional.—HELP OVERTURN it now!

The banning of *Revolution* is an overt political act of censorship by prison officials and a suppression of prisoners' most basic rights to have access to the educational opportunity provided by the PRLF when it provides subscriptions to *Revolution* newspaper as well as other revolutionary literature. As PRLF's mission statement explains, this literature provides "an educational opportunity for prisoners to engage with world events and key political, cultural, and philosophical questions of the day from a unique revolutionary perspective, including discussions of morality, religion, science, and the arts. Every week prisoners can delve into the urgent and lively news and debate about unfolding political and social struggles and can critically think about and dissect the current state of society as well as search for an alternative."

Anyone concerned about the rights of prisoners including the right to educate and transform themselves while in prison—the right for revolutionary alternatives to be considered—the rights of alternative media—the rights that are supposed to be guaranteed by the First Amendment—should see this is a precedent that cannot be allowed to stand for these prisoners, for its implications throughout the prison system in the US and for the broader society of which they are an integral part.

A determined legal and political struggle needs to be waged to overturn this ban. PRLF is expanding its work through stopping this effort to cripple its work. We together can stop the prison officials from removing the oxygen out of windowless cells.

Here is how you can help today:

1. GIVE FUNDS TODAY. This will both seed a much more major campaign and also enable us to immediately wage a legal struggle and to fill the urgent backlog of literature requests from prisoners, as well as maintaining current subscribers.
2. Write a letter stating your opposition to the ban of *Revolution* newspaper at Pelican Bay State Prison. Warden Francisco Jacquez, Pelican Bay State Prison, P.O. Box 7000, Crescent City, CA 95531-7000. Send a copy to the PRLF.
3. Spread the word about the ban and the struggle to overturn it. Develop networks of support. Organize dramatic readings of the prisoners' letters everywhere! Script available at <http://www.prisonersrevolutionaryliteraturefund.org>
4. Volunteers of all skill sets urgently needed. Contact PRLF today to volunteer.

Our Mission: The Prisoners Revolutionary Literature Fund (PRLF) is an educational literature fund that fills requests from U.S. prisoners for revolutionary literature.

(For our full Mission Statement and more information on PRLF, go to our website: www.prisonersrevolutionaryliteraturefund.org)

Who really promotes racial violence?

Prison authorities allege that *Revolution* incites racial violence.

The reality is the opposite of what prison authorities have alleged. Prisoners including at Pelican Bay write about how the newspaper has helped forge bonds of unity among prisoners of different nationalities:

"This paper has been a primary vehicle of crossing racial lines and bringing the people together."

"I'm African American, and everything I read prior to Bob Avakian was afro centric in thought. ...what he taught changed my perspective on all of that. It's more than a black and white thing with me now. I see the commonalities that black and white share now..."

"Maybe you could send me an English and Spanish copy of the paper because many of my comrades are Latino."

The Prisoners Revolutionary Literature Fund is in affiliation with International Humanities Center, a nonprofit public charity exempt from federal income tax under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

Send your checks to Prisoners Revolutionary Literature Fund, 1321 N. Milwaukee, #407, Chicago, IL 60622

**Make checks to Prisoners Revolutionary Literature Fund
Make tax-deductible checks to IHCenter/PRLF**

**Credit card and Pay Pal donations can be made online at:
www.IHCenter.org/groups/prlf.html ("International Humanities" will appear on your credit card statement), or at www.prisonersrevolutionaryliteraturefund.org**

To volunteer with or contact PRLF: (773) 960-6952 or prlf_fund@yahoo.com