

WE DEMAND:

Overturn the Ban of *Revolution* Newspaper at Pelican Bay and Chuckawalla Prisons in California and All Prisons

From the Overturn the Ban Committee

In February 2010, *Revolution* newspaper was banned at California's Pelican Bay State Prison and Chuckawalla State Prison. Announcing this ban, prison authorities stated, "The Publication *Revolution* is ban (sic) from all institutions within the state of California. Please remove all inmates from your mailing list", and further alleged that, "your periodical newspaper has been determined to be contraband because it 'promotes disruption and overthrow of the government and incites violence to do so'... ", and further, that the newspaper "incites racial violence and promotes governmental anarchy."

The banning of any newspaper, especially alternative voices that challenge and expose the status quo, is chilling and intolerable. It is even more so when censorship is done by officials and agencies of the government. We see the banning of *Revolution* newspaper from California's prisons (or any other prison) as an immediate and serious threat to freedom of speech and of the press. We strongly oppose the attempt by prison authorities to enforce "mind control" and conformity with officially-approved thinking.

Revolution newspaper, the voice of the Revolutionary Communist Party, is subscribed to by 800 prisoners nationwide and over 45 at Pelican Bay State Prison in California. It is provided through the educational non-profit Prisoners Revolutionary Literature Fund (PRLF).

Claims by the prison authorities are not supported with examples connecting the newspaper to acts of violence and disorder at the prison. In fact through reading and debating *Revolution* newspaper, "racial" barriers between prisoners come down. The Prisoners Revolutionary Literature Fund reports receiving letters from men living in dungeons dominated by pornography and fundamentalist religion who have come to understand and oppose the oppression of women, inmates with 7th grade education who debate philosophy, prisoners who are exploring revolutionary solutions to the plight of people and the planet. And prisoners who learn to understand the world and the possibilities to radically change it.

For 20 years, subscriptions to *Revolution* newspaper, which numerous prisoners call their "lifeline" to the outside world, have been provided by donations to the PRLF, a non-profit educational literature fund that fills requests from U.S. prisoners for revolutionary literature. We strongly oppose the denial of freedom of information for prisoners, including the right to educate and transform themselves while in prison. Any infringement on this right for California prisoners cannot be allowed to stand. It is a precedent that has ominous implications throughout the prison system in the U.S. and for broader society at large.

Prisoners are human beings! And as human beings they have the right to develop as critical thinkers and explore alternative solutions to the plight of the people and of the planet itself. We, in signing this statement, may not agree with all or any of the content of *Revolution* newspaper. But we stand united on opposing this ban of this newspaper at any prison and on the belief that prisoners, like the rest of us, should have the right to explore alternative analyses and solutions.



Revolution newspaper photo-illustration includes image from AP

Signatories include:

Michelle Alexander, Professor, OSU* • **Rafael Angulo**, USC* • **Ed Asner** • **William Ayers**, Univ of IL at Chicago* • **Anna Baltzer**, author, Witness to Palestine • **Barbara Beanel**, Stanley "Tookie" Williams Legacy • **Derrick Bell**, NYU Law School* • **Eric Bernard**, European Christian Political Movement—Lawyer* • **Dr. Dorsey O. Blake**, Presiding Minister, The Church For The Fellowship of All People* • **Richard Brown**, San Francisco 8 • **Carmelo Campos**, Puerto Rican Coalition Against the Death Penalty* • **Solomon Comissiong**, Hip Hop Historian, Educator and Community Activist • **Peter Coyote** • **Freedom Against Censorship Thailand** • **H. Candace Gorman** • **Jack Heyman**, ILWU • **Ray Hill**, The Prison Show, KPFT, Houston • **Jacky Hortaut**, French Collective for Mumia Abu-Jamal • **Ron Jacobs**, author and journalist • **Erin Aubry Kaplan**, 1st regular (weekly) Black columnist for the LA Times op-ed page* • **Robin DG Kelley**, USC* • **Gloria Killian**, Exec Dir ACWIP • **Yuri Kochiyama** • **Charlotte Koons**, Suffolk Chapter, NYCLU* • **Emily & Sarah Kunstler** • **Harry J Lennix**, actor/educator • **Lewis E. Logan** • **Chokwe Lumumba** • **Cynthia McKinney** • **Calvin Morris**, Community Renewal Society* • **J-J De Christ Nganga**, Spc. Exec. Diocesan, Pax Christi Uviva, D.R. Congo* • **R. Tomas Olmos** • **Ozomatli** • **Robert Perkinson**, author, "Texas Tough" • **Peter Phillips**, Project Censored/Media Freedom Foundation • **Mary and Willie Radcliff**, San Francisco Bay View • **Anne Ramis**, artist • **George Regas**, Episcopal Priest • **Stephen Rohde**, Interfaith Communities United For Justice and Peace (ICUJP)* • **Cindy Sheehan**, peace activist • **Navkiran Singh**, Gen Sec, Lawyers for Human Rights Int'l* • **Debra Sweet**, World Can't Wait • **Maiko Tagusari**, Sec Gen, Ctr for Prisoners' Rights*, Japan • **Bato Talamantez**, Calif. Prison Focus, fmr political prisoner • **Paul Von Blum**, UCLA* • **Leonard I. Weinglass**, attorney • **Saul Williams**, Punk Rock of Gibraltar • **Paul Wright**, editor, Prison Legal News • **Clyde Young**, Revolutionary Communist Party, fmr prisoner • **David Zeiger**, Displaced Films

Joined by many more. Full list at PRLF.org

*Organizations listed for identification purposes only

To add your name to the statement, read letters from prisoners, donate, get updates on PRLF legal challenge of CA ban by ACLU-F (S. CA) go to www.PRLF.org

Mail to: Prisoners Revolutionary Literature Fund,

1321 N. Milwaukee, #407, Chicago, IL 60622

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.

Make checks to: **Prisoners Revolutionary Literature Fund** and send to PRLF 1321 N. Milwaukee, #407, Chicago, IL 60622

Make tax deductible checks to: **IHCenter/PRLF**

Tax deductible 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: PRLF.org

First name _____ Last _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

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

To contribute to the publication of this statement, send your contributions and earmark them for "ban statement."