

Coordinating Council of Prison Organizations

Bay Area Prison Coalition

# CALL TO THE CONVENTION

December 2 - 3, 1972

U.C. Medical Center

APPENDIX 1

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November 15, 1972

Dear Friends:

Enclosed are a number of items dealing with the forthcoming CCPO/Bay Area Prison Coalition Convention of December 2-3, 1972.

This Convention is an extremely important one for the future of the prison movement in the San Francisco Area, and we hope that your group will give these materials your closest attention.

Preparations for this Convention have been taking place for the past three months and have involved virtually every major prison organization in the Bay Area. On October 21, a major meeting of CCPO took place in San Francisco, at which significant decisions were made about the Convention. Invitations to this meeting were sent to almost all organizations to which this CALL is being sent and the widest possible participation was solicited in order to insure (a) that the events of December 2-3 will reflect the needs of the prison movement and that (b) the Bay Area Prison Coalition is, from the beginning, an organization created "from the roots," and not from the top.

As you will see from the enclosed AGENDA and BY-LAWS, there are two somewhat distinct things occurring on December 2-3:

1. Workshops will be held in several crucial substantive areas of prison work--legislative activities in the coming Sacramento session, self-help groups and new prison and jail construction.
2. The groundwork will be laid for the Bay Area Coalition, a structure which will act as a distributor for block grants to "the prison movement" in the greater San Francisco Area.

The need for discussion of substantive areas of prison work does not need to be explained here. These workshops and panels will, we feel, be important events in the struggle to unify our efforts. It may be helpful, however, to explain the background of the formation of the Bay Area Prison

**Coalition.**

A number of Bay Area prison organizations have approached foundations in the area for financial support in the past year and have received the same feedback: there are so many prison organizations working right now that foundations cannot expend the time and resources to distinguish between them as to who should receive support. But if the prison movement could get itself together--form a structure to distribute the resources among the groups now operating--support would be forthcoming in sufficient amount to make the effort worthwhile--and, most importantly, to free our organizations from the crush of financial worries in order to do the work we are dedicated to, and to make the changes we think are crucial.

A number of us have been working on this project for the past months and are concerned that, above all, the Bay Area Prison Coalition must be a democratically run expression of the needs of the prison movement. In this effort, we are not representing our individual groups, but rather working for the prison movement as a whole. This Convention is the major step in creating BAPC and your group has an opportunity to participate in a meaningful way in this creation.

Enclosed are the following materials:

- (1) A Registration Form;
- (2) A Solicitation by the *Priorities Committee* for your suggestions;
- (3) A Solicitation by the *Structure Committee* for your suggestions;
- (4) The Agenda of the Convention;
- (5) The By-Laws of the Convention.

These materials indicate the kind of responses that are invited. Let us say again that our aim is to have the broadest possible participation in the BAPC. Toward this end, please feel free to let us know of any prison groups in the Bay Area that we may have overlooked. We will be happy to

CCPO/BAPC CONVENTION BY-LAWS

- (4) Prison Issues Education Workshop: Selected by CCPO. Duties are to plan, arrange and carry out, in conjunction with the Convention, an educational program designed to illuminate and clarify the issues involved in penal reform. The purposes of the program should be raise the consciousness of those interested parties in attendance; reach the general public through media involvement; and educate members of the California State Legislature who will have the ultimate responsibility to implement penal reform. The planning function of the committee shall be subject to the approval of CCPO.
- (5) Self-Help Group Workshop: Selected by CCPO. Duties are to arrange a program of interest both to groups and to the general public with regard to the present state and the future of self-help and service groups involved in prison work. The planning function of the committee shall be subject to the approval of CCPO.
- (6) Structure of Convention: A Temporary Chairman shall be selected by CCPO, subject to the approval of the Convention as Chairperson. The Chairperson shall make all procedural decisions, including the interpretation of these By-Laws, subject to being overruled by a majority of the Convention. The Convention Committee, consisting of the heads of the Credentials, Priorities and Structure Committees and the Education Workshop and Self-Help Workshop and the staff members, will act in an advisory capacity to the Chair-person. Votes will be by a majority of those approved by the Credentials Committee, present and voting.

send on to them a copy of this CALL and to welcome their participation.

A stamped envelope is enclosed for your convenience in returning these materials. The Convention, remember, is December 2-3, and if your input is to be meaningful it must be received by November 25.

If there are any questions or problems, please contact us at the number given below, or the Chairmen of the Convention Committees, as indicated within. We hope to see you at the Convention and that this short-time effort will result in more freedom to pursue the individual goals of our groups.

Linda Castro, 282-3983  
Howard Berman, 563-2410  
For CCPO

CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE

It has been the collective decision of the Coordinating Council of Prison Organizations to establish a Credentials Committee, whose function it is to review the background of prison organizations planning on attending the Convention on December 2-3 and participating in the Bay Area Prison Coalition.

In addition to basic information, we are also using the opportunity to obtain from groups other information about their status--incorporation, tax status, etc. This information will have no bearing on the preliminary determination of voting power at the December 2-3 Convention, but will be used by the ongoing BAPC in planning future directions.

The Credentials Committee will notify all groups of their representation shortly before the Convention. On Saturday of the Convention, December 2, at 10:00 A.M., the Credentials Committee will present its report to the Convention and at that time there will be an opportunity for all groups to discuss the findings.

If there are any questions about Credentials, please contact me at 642-2190. Thank you.

Craig Close  
Chairman

CCPO/BAPC CONVENTION BY-LAWS

- (1) Credentials Committee: Selected by CCPO. Duties are to accept responses from Call mailing, hold meeting or meetings, make decisions and inform groups, prior to the Convention, of their status. Possible status's are: full vote for full-time prison organizations, half-vote for part-time prison organizations; advisory status for other organizations and individuals. Committee report will be presented to the Convention on Saturday for approval, discussion or further action.
- (2) Priorities Committee: Selected by CCPO. Duties are to prepare a Bay Area Prison Coalition List of Priorities for internal use and for presentation to foundations. The Committee will solicit, receive and compile written recommendations from groups in response to the Call mailing and hold such open sessions prior to the Convention as it deems necessary in order to reflect the perspectives of all groups. The List of Priorities will be presented to the Convention on Sunday for approval, discussion or further action.
- (3) Structure Committee: Selected by CCPO. Duties are to prepare a proposed structure for the continued functioning of the Bay Area Prison Coalition. The Committee will solicit, receive and compile written recommendations from groups in response to the Call mailing, and hold an open session on Saturday at which groups and individuals may verbally present recommendations. The Proposed Structure will be presented to the Convention on Sunday for approval, discussion or further action.



PRIORITIES COMMITTEE

## Solicitation of Ideas

One of the most important functions of the Convention will be to determine the priorities of prisoner support groups and organizations.

We are concerned here not so much with the priorities of individual organizations as with their views of what the priorities of the prison movement should be.

The Priorities Committee has devised a democratic means of beginning to determine priorities. We are requesting each organization to meet prior to the convention and decide amongst themselves what they feel the priorities of the movement should be. Then they should list these priorities (in priority order) and return this form to the Priorities Committee with their registration. The Committee will then make a compilation of the results.

This compilation should in no way be considered the final determination of priorities. In addition, these priorities will not be binding in any way on the individual activities of individual groups. They will be used primarily to educate foundations and others as to the priorities of the prison movement as a whole. The Committee's Report will be used as a working paper at the Convention where all and every member will have an opportunity to contribute to an open discussion of the subject.

On the reverse of this page please list your organizations views of the priorities for meaningful change in the prison system.

Please feel free to give me a call if you have any questions about the Priorities Committee.

Mark Dowie, Chairman  
752-7716

## COORDINATING COUNCIL OF PRISON ORGANIZATIONS

## BAY AREA PRISON COALITION

CONVENTION AGENDASaturday, December 2

- 9:00 Opening Speaker (to be announced)
- 10:00 Credentials Committee Report
- 10:15 Self-Help Group Workshop
- 12:00 Lunch Break

## Education Workshop on Prison Issues:

- 1:00 "An Assault From the Right" -- Paul Halvonik, General Counsel, ACLU of Northern California
- 1:45 Legislative Challenges for 1973 -- An educational exchange between prisoner movement groups and Bay Area legislators -- Including Coleman Blease, Legal Director, ACLU of Southern California
- 4:00 Structure Committee Hearings

Sunday, December 3

- 10:00 Opening Speaker (to be announced)
- 11:30 Priorities Committee Report
- 12:30 Lunch Break
- 1:30 New Prison Construction Panel
- 3:00 Structure Committee Report

3. How should the duties and limits of the BAPC be defined?

- (a) staffed by volunteers, paid staff, part-time, full-time?
- (b) what sources should be solicited for funds, what sources should not be approached?
- (c) should groups be limited to receiving money only through BAPC?
- (d) what systems should there be for distributing the funds?

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
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Other suggestions or comments are welcome: \_\_\_\_\_  
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\_\_\_\_\_  
Organization

\_\_\_\_\_  
Representative

PRIORITIES COMMITTEE LIST

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.

COMMENTS:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Organization

\_\_\_\_\_  
Representative

STRUCTURE COMMITTEE

Solicitation of Ideas

On the reverse side of this page you will find a questionnaire regarding the continuing structure of the Bay Area Prison Coalition. The Structure Committee asks that you discuss these matters with your group and give them some hard thought. Then complete the questionnaire and return it with the other materials.

On Monday, November 20th, at 11:00 A.M., there will be an open meeting of the Structure Committee at which all groups are invited to add verbally to what they have indicated on the questionnaire. In addition, at the Convention itself (Saturday, December 2, at 4:00 P.M.) there will be further opportunity for groups to give verbal presentations as to their thoughts on the continuing structure of BAPC. The November 20th meeting will be at the Prisoners' Union, 1345 7th Ave., San Francisco, Calif. 94122 (664-4315).

If there are any questions about the Structure Committee or its operations, please call me at 664-4315.

Connor Nixon, Chairman

STRUCTURE COMMITTEE QUESTIONNAIRE

1. How large a continuing group do you think would be most workable and most democratic:

- (a) five
- (b) ten
- (c) one representative per group
- (d) two representatives per group
- (e) representatives both from groups and outside people as well
- (f) large group with "board of directors"
- (g) other

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. How should the representatives to the continuing body be chosen?

- (a) one person per group
- (b) two persons for full time groups, one person for halftime groups
- (c) representation by "effectiveness"
- (d) representation by size of group
- (e) representation involving type of work performed-- service, legal, self-help, etc.
- (f) other

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
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