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The Coordinating Council of Prisoner Organizations  
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Coordinating Council of Prisoner Organizations is angered by the violent outburst and saddened by the resulting death of prisoners and guards at San Quentin.

The Council is at the present time unable to determine the facts surrounding the incident at San Quentin.

Previous press releases and resolutions by the Council regarding the underlying causes for the unrest in the California prisons suggest that the violent outburst at San Quentin is only an inevitable outcome of the serious deficiencies throughout the total system of criminal justice.

The Council urges strongly, besides the necessity of uncovering the true facts of the incident at San Quentin, that the following actions be taken immediately by appropriate agencies:

(1) The prison administration and the staff give official support to the prisoners self-help movement as expressed in its activities in the field of education, employment counseling and drug abuse.

(2) The prison administration and the staff give their outright support and trust to representatives from community and neighborhood groups, private agencies, colleges and universities, that are working with citizens who are temporarily detained.

(3) An Ombudsgroup be established for San Quentin and other prisons, the group to be made up of relatives of the prisoners and representatives from the groups working with the prisoners and their relatives. The group would have as one of its functions the obligation to suggest to the administration new and

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imaginative ways of dealing with new problems.

(4) The Marin County Grand Jury, although the Council has some questions about the Grand Jury as an institution, as one of its stated functions, conduct public hearings in and outside the San Quentin Prison to determine the underlying causes for the serious unrest which threatens the lives of both prisoners and staff.

(5) A state legislative committee be established to conduct public hearings on the serious deficiencies within the Department of Corrections and the Adult Authority Board; and invite active assistance from and participation by the prisoners self-help movement, ex-prisoners, prisoners relatives, and community groups working with prisoners and ex-prisoners to conduct investigations into the allegations of brutality and other injustices experienced by prisoners and guards.

The Council of Prisoner Organizations is constantly involved in the lives of prisoners and ex-prisoners and their relatives; is actively engaged in informing legislators and testifies occasionally before legislative committees.

The Council invites participation from the community-at-large in finding solutions for the problems in the criminal justice process and invites speaking engagements before civic and church groups.

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