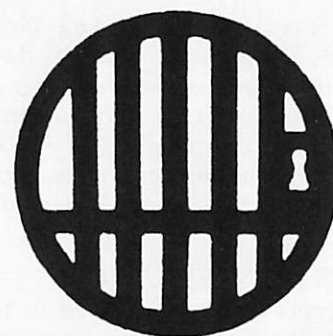
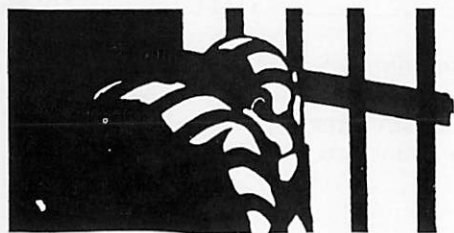


PRISONERS UNION
1315 18th ST.
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94107

PRISONERS UNION



Convicts, ex-convicts, and
concerned individuals
fighting to promote and
uphold the rights and
welfare of California
prisoners.



WHAT IS THE PRISONERS UNION?

The Prisoners Union had its origins in a 1971 work strike at Folsom Prison. The Folsom prisoners staged a peaceful work strike and presented a clear set of grievances to the prison administrators. After the strike was over many of the participants in and supporters of the work stoppage, both in and out of prison, decided to form an organization to work toward the goals that had been set in the strike on a more organized, consistent, and long-term basis. The organization was named the Prisoners Union to stress the idea that certain goals were being sought by all who suffer the same conditions of confinement, and so that the group could bargain collectively for those it represented.

The Prisoners Union has worked since its founding towards three major goals: 1) the achievement of uniform and equitable sentencing laws; 2) the restoration of civil and human rights to prisoners; and, 3) the payment of fair wages for work done, safe working conditions, and compensation for injuries that are work-related.

WHY A PRISONERS UNION?

The Prisoners Union developed to fill a need that existed. Prisoners in correctional institutions are extremely vulnerable, since they are subject to conditions, regulations, and treatment over which they have no control. Because they have committed anti-social actions, these prisoners have been segregated from the rest of society for their crimes. During their confinement prisoners are often forced to survive in substandard and inhumane environments. When prisoners complain of these injustices, few, if any, listen.

The founders of the Prisoners Union, many of them ex-convicts themselves, recognized the dilemma that prisoners are in. The founders of the Prisoners Union maintained that prisoners, despite their crimes, are human beings and should be treated as such. While the Prisoners Union does not dispute the fact that the convicted need to pay for their crimes, it can see no reason why men and women who are confined should be treated condescendingly or disparagingly. Prisoners need to have their civil and human rights protected, more so than others, because of their confined status.

WHAT DOES THE PRISONERS UNION DO?

The Prisoners Union works around a variety of issues involving the welfare of California prisoners:

- **VISITING**—The Prisoners Union is constantly at work to better visitation conditions and to improve the regulations that govern visiting so that convicts can maintain strong ties with their loved ones while incarcerated. The Prisoners Union has actively and effectively opposed legislation that would have allowed indiscriminate strip-searching of prison visitors, and is currently petitioning the California Department of Corrections to consider and implement new visitation policies that would better the relationship between prisoners and their families.
- **ADVOCACY**—Although the Prisoners Union does not have the resources to provide legal assistance for the individual cases of prisoners, it does work on a class-action basis to achieve rulings that will benefit the welfare of all California convicts. The Prisoners Union is also working towards developing a program to train the friends and families of the incarcerated to act effectively in the realm of prison law.
- **LEGISLATION**—Prisoners Union representatives lobby to oppose legislation that would be injurious to California prisoners, such as indeterminate sentencing laws and the prison visitor strip-search bill. At the same time, the Union works to enlist legislators to carry bills that will generate prison reform and meaningful reviews of the standards and policies of the California Department of Corrections.
- **INFORMATION**—In addition to providing referrals and answers to the great numbers of requests for information that come into the offices every day, the Prisoners Union also publishes the *Prisoners Union Journal* bi-monthly. The *Prisoners Union Journal* is the major publication of the Prisoners Union, and it chronicles the progress of the organization in its prison reform efforts. The *Prisoners Union Journal* is distributed free of charge to California prisoners, and provides them with pertinent information on their legal status and conditions that they might not otherwise receive.

WHY SHOULD I SUPPORT THE PRISONERS UNION?

Prisoners are human beings and one day they, too, will be free. There is no need to punish those who are already incarcerated with unjust living and working conditions and inhumane treatment. Contempt breeds only contempt; it is time to generate humanity, not engender greater distrust.

IF YOU ARE CONCERNED ABOUT THE RIGHTS AND WELFARE OF THE 25,000 MEN AND WOMEN IN CALIFORNIA PRISONS:

- **MAKE A TAX DEDUCTIBLE CONTRIBUTION TO THE PRISONERS UNION**
- **SUBSCRIBE TO THE PRISONERS UNION JOURNAL**
- **ACTIVELY SUPPORT THE LEGISLATION THAT WILL GUARANTEE THE HUMANE TREATMENT OF THE IMPRISONED; OPPOSE THE LEGISLATION THAT WILL FURTHER CURTAIL THE RIGHTS OF THE INCARCERATED**

If you would like some more information, or if you would like to volunteer to help the Prisoners Union in its activities, write, visit, or call us at: 1315 18th Street, San Francisco, CA, 94107, (415) 648-2880.

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- ☐ \$15 Institutions
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- ☐ Free to California Prisoners

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