

# Open Letter to Attorney General Jerry Brown: Drop the Charges Against the SF 8!

I am writing to join with Nobel Peace Laureates Desmond Tutu and Mairead Corrigan Maguire, as well as Cynthia McKinney, Danny Glover, Cindy Sheehan and others, in an international call to drop the charges against the SF 8.

The eight are elders and activists formerly associated with the Black Panther Party who have devoted their lives to serving their communities. Four are local to California. Richard Brown and Richard O'Neal are from San Francisco and have been known and deeply respected in social service circles for over 20 years. Hank Jones and Ray Boudreaux are well known and loved community activists in the Los Angeles area.

Prosecution of the case against these men is now over 37 years old. Although this is a California state and not a county prosecution, the cost of the case, which is in the millions, is being borne by the City of San Francisco at the precise moment when vital services are in jeopardy due to lack of funds.

Previous attempts to prosecute these men in the 1970s were dismissed when it was revealed that so-called "confessions" were the product of torture by the New Orleans police department.

The SF Board of Supervisors has already gone on record as opposing torture. I call on all officials to do so as well, to reject prosecution based on the results of torture, and to do everything in your power to re-establish the priority of serving the needs of the communities of San Francisco and the State of California.

People in the Bay Area have a proud history of defending human rights and social justice. I urge Attorney General Jerry Brown to drop the case against the SF 8 now.

## *Signers of the International Call*

The Most Reverend Dr. Desmond Mpilo Tutu, *archbishop emeritus of Cape Town, primate of the Church of the Province of Southern Africa; Nobel peace laureate 1984* • Mairead Corrigan Maguire, *Community of Peace People, Northern Ireland; Nobel peace laureate 1976* • Betty Williams, *Community of Peace People, Northern Ireland; Nobel peace laureate 1976* • Darryl Jordan, *director, American Friends Service Committee Third World Coalition; Nobel peace laureate 1947* • William Wardlaw, *Executive Director's Leadership Council, Amnesty International; Nobel peace laureate 1977* • Danny Glover, *award-winning actor and activist* • Cindy Sheehan, *peace activist and 2008 congressional candidate* • Cynthia McKinney, *2008 presidential candidate, Green Party; former Georgia congresswoman*

## *Signers of the Open Letter (partial list)*

Ramona Africa, co-founder, MOVE organization • Adjoa A. Aiyetoro, assoc. prof. of law, U of Arkansas • Jahahara Amen-RA Alkebulan-Maat, past chair, Nat'l Coalition of Blacks for Reparations in America • Ashanti Alston, co-chair, Jericho Amnesty Movement • All of Us or None • Max Anderson, Berkeley City Council • ANSWER Coalition • Helen P. Arnold, Esq., Chicago National Conference of Black Lawyers • Curtis Austin, assoc. prof., director of Center for Black Studies, U of So. Miss. • Ellen Barry, 1998 MacArthur fellow • China Brotsky, senior vice president, Tides Foundation • Rev. Lea D. Brown, senior minister, Metropolitan Community Church • Amos Brown, president, NAACP, Northern Calif. Chapter • California Prison Focus • Center For Constitutional Rights • Noam Chomsky, prof. (retired), MIT • Ward Churchill, AIM/Rainbow Council of Elders • Chinosole, writer, activist • Kathleen Cleaver, senior lecturer, Emory Law School • Artnelson Concordia, Bayan USA • Terry Collins, co-founder & programmer, KPOO • Marjorie Cohn, Esq., president, National Lawyers Guild • Common, activist, peacemaker, rapper, actor • Angela Y. Davis, prof. emeritus, UC Santa Cruz • Lenore Jean Daniels, Ph.D., *Black Commentator* • Michael Deutsch, Esq., People's Law Office, Chicago • Melvin Dickson, editor, *Commemorator* • Harvey Dong, instructor, Asian American Studies, UC Berkeley • Emory Douglas, former minister of art and culture, Black Panther Party • Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz, prof. emeritus, CSU East Bay • Jeff Duncan-Andrade, asst. prof., co-director, Raza Studies and Interdisciplinary Studies, SFSU • Ecumenical Peace Institute/CALC • Allan Fisher, exec. committee member, S.F. Labor Council • Freedom Archives, San Francisco • GABRIELA Network • Jess Ghannam, clinical prof. of psychiatry, UCSF • Joan Gibbs, Esq., Center for Law and Justice and Peace • Felicia Gustin, exec. director, Speak Out! • Simón Hanukai, co-artistic director, Destiny Arts Youth Performance Company • Noelle Hanrahan, radio producer, KPFA • Hard Knock Radio—Anita Johnson, Weyland Southon, Davey D • Haiti Action Committee • Aileen Hernandez, union organizer & civil rights activist • Lennox Hinds, Esq., Int'l Assoc. of Jurists • Shane Hoff, SF Labor Council delegate for UTU 1741 • Rev. Nozomi Ikuta, co-chair, Interfaith Prisoners of Conscience Project, United Church of Christ • Ron Jacobs, author and journalist • Billy X Jennings, Black Panther Party historian, Sacramento • Jose (Cha-Cha) Jimenez, founder, Young Lords Party • Archbishop Franzo Wayne King, founder and pastor, St. John Will-I-Am Coltrane African Orthodox Church • Jane Kim, commissioner, SF Board of Education • Yuri Kochiyama, renowned nuclear disarmament & political prisoner activist • Terry Kupers, M.D., psychiatrist and author • Talib Kweli, M.C., co-founder of Black Star • Pierre Labossiere, co-founder, Haiti Action Committee • Tom Lacey, chair, SF Peace & Freedom Party • Gloria La Riva, Media Workers Pres. • Legal Services for Prisoners with Children • Lesbians and Gays Against Intervention (LAGAI) • José E. López, exec. director, Juan Antonio Corretjer Puerto Rican Cultural Center • Chokwe Lumumba, Esq., civil & human rights attorney • Rukia Lumumba, board member, National Council of Black Lawyers • Kim-Shree Maufas, president, SF Board of Education • Eric Mar, SF Board of Supervisors • Jeff Mackler, national secretary, Socialist Action • Robert Meeropol, exec. director, Rosenberg Fund for Children • Robert L. Meola, chairperson, Berkeley Peace and Justice Commission • Alejandro Luis Molina, co-coordinator, National Boricua Human Rights Network • Meshá Mongé-Irizarry, exec. director, Idriss Stelley Action & Resource Center • Mos Def, actor, rapper, activist • Minister Christopher Muhammed, Nation of Islam • National Boricua Human Rights Network • Gus Newport, former Berkeley mayor • Dorsey Nunn, co-director, Legal Services for Prisoners with Children • Kiilu Nyasha, talk show host, columnist, *SF BayView* newspaper • Out of Control, Lesbian Committee to Support Women Political prisoners • Ozomatli, musicians • POOR News Network • Prison Activist Resource Center (PARC) • Andrea Pritchett, Cop Watch, Berkeley • Jim Queen, renowned Bayview activist • Margaret Randall, author, poet and journalist • Mary Ratcliff, editor, and Willie Ratcliff, publisher, *SF BayView* newspaper • Radical Women • Ninotchka Rosca, GABRIELA Network • Penny Rosenwasser, Middle East Children's Alliance • The Ruckus Society, Oakland • Mark Sanchez, former president, SF Board of Education • Art Sato, program host, *In Your Ear*, KPFA • Carolyn S. Scarr, program coordinator, Ecumenical Peace Institute/CALC • Rodger Scott, Ph.D., AFT Local 2121 Executive Board • Rev. Hozan Alan Senauke, Clear View Project: Buddhist-Based Resources for Relief and Social Change • Tony Serra, human rights defense attorney • Muhjah Shakir, senior scholar & asst. prof. of occupational therapy, Tuskegee University • Karen Shain, co-director, Legal Services for Prisoners with Children • Speak Out! • Lynne Stewart, human rights attorney • Student of Color Alliance, Pomona College • Jan Sussler, Esq., People's Law Office, Chicago • Rev Arnold Townsend, third vice president, NAACP • Walter Turner, Global Exchange • Akinyele Umoja, prof. of African American history, Georgia State U • David Welsh, delegate, SF Labor Council • Laura Whitehorn, NY State Taskforce for Political Prisoners • Mabel R. Williams, renowned civil rights activist • Kriss Worthington, Berkeley City Council • Nellie Wong, UPTC/CWA 9119 • Merle Woo, Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance • Howard Zinn, author, historian

*(Individuals' organizations are listed for identification purposes only. For more information and a complete list of signers, please go to [FreeTheSF8.org](http://FreeTheSF8.org).)*