

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*

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

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