

Revolutionary greetings!

30 March 2016

Recently, a new Sergeant has taken over the mailroom here at Coyote Ridge Corrections Center (CRCC). Rumor has it that he is cracking down on incoming/outgoing mail that may or may not violate DOC policy. As a result, the population has seen a tremendous increase in rejected incoming/outgoing mail. While many of these rejections have merit, some do not.

In my particular case, I believe the title and the political content are the reasons why the mailroom rejected "Chican@ Power and the Struggle for Aztlan." When I received the rejection notice (#F-11-334-15), I reviewed the reasons they listed as violating DOC Policy 450.100 Mail for Prison Offenders, and then checked the actual policies to see if the publication in question was actually in violation. I found that the reasons they listed did not apply to the publication in question. In fact, I found that DOC Policy 450.100 Mail for Prison Offenders prohibits the rejection of mail for political reasons (along with other anti-discriminatory categories). I also found that any publication that is rejected by the institution is automatically sent to DOC Headquarters in Olympia, WA, where the Publication Review Committee determines whether the publication is in violation.

So I appealed the rejection and cited DOC Policy to make my case. The mailroom responded and said that the publication in question is automatically being appealed and sent to DOC HQ for review. A few days later, I received another rejection notice on the same publication in question, but enumerating different reasons than the initial rejection notice. (I have included copies of both rejection notices, Exhibit A and B, which are in the order of the timeframe I received them. Both rejection notices have the same # and date.) After comparing both rejection notices, Exhibit A and B, I found that they differ dramatically. Where Exhibit A enumerates very cursory and vague reasons, Exhibit B uses language that is more inflammatory.

It is clear that the mailroom rejected the publication in question solely for political reasons. The mailroom backdated the Exhibit B rejection notice to correspond to the timeframe of Exhibit A. I am almost certain this was done to cover up for the lack of compelling evidence of a clear violation of DOC Policy seen in the first rejection notice (Exhibit A).

DOC HQ, Publication Review Committee, has had the publication now for well over 4 months and I still have not received a response. I asked about the status of the appeal about a month ago, but the mailroom said the publication in question is still being reviewed.

I do not know what MILMP is willing to do, but DOC HQ responds to criticism and concern from the community. They are not influenced or moved by what prisoners' say or think. I think an articulate argument from MILMP will compel them act in our favor. There are other prisoners having similar troubles with the mailroom's indiscriminate rejecting of incoming/outgoing mail. I have let them know MILMP may be willing to assist them. Let me know how I should respond to these requests for help as it relates to MILMP. In the interim, I have taken it upon myself to help these individuals using the resources and info on censorship from MILMP.

In Struggle, In Solidarity