



California Correctional Peace Officers Association

Front Street



Fronting the Facts, Watching Your Back

September 2005

Message from Louie Adame Vice President CYA

Although Front Street has not been published in the last year and a half, CCPOA is aware of the issues and problems occurring throughout the California Youth Authority (CYA) and specifically at NA Chaderjian (NAC). CCPOA executive committee members have attended many town hall and chapter meetings across the state and have listened to staff concerns about forced overtime; the lack of training; the confusion concerning "use of force"; unsafe state vehicles; vacant positions; staff assaults; improper investigations; faulty cell doors; ward rights vs. ward accountability; the worthless DDMS system; and faulty cell door indicator panels that are supposed



lone Townhall Meeting.

to display when a cell door is open or secured at NAC. This has made NAC the most dangerous institution for staff in the CYA, as is evident by the 51 staff assaults between January 2005 and July 2005. These problems did not start last year, but rather when they opened NAC with the wrong superintendent. And they've been exacerbated by the rushed implementation of the Court Consent Decree. This is not to say the decree is unworkable, but failing to hire sufficient staff and properly train them on CYA expectations is planned failure for both staff and wards.

Today, politics are playing a major role in the unilateral implementation of policies, procedures and ward programs without the resources to safely accomplish these reforms. Recently, the Inspector General published a report citing numerous issues within the CYA, outlining the very problems CCPOA has been attempting to resolve for years. CCPOA brought these same issues to the department back in 1997. But, nothing has changed. Legislators and administrators have come and gone without ever addressing the main problem — safety of staff and wards. Today, the agency secretary makes the decisions and authorizes the unilateral implementation of programs that put staff and wards in harms way. Since Mr. Hickman was appointed "agency secretary," his management team has refused to meet with CCPOA to discuss your safety issues. The new department has canceled all Director/CCPOA meetings since they took office over 22 months ago. The CYA management team says they cannot discuss your safety issues without permission from the new labor department who reports directly to the agency secretary. They refuse to discuss the increasing staff assaults, vacant positions and excessive forced overtime problems. They refuse to provide the necessary resources, equipment or training to insure you a safe working environment. They have flat out shut the door. There are a lot of managers who put together programs that sound great on paper. But, since most of the new management team has not worked the "toughest beat in the state," their programs are directly responsible for the increase of staff injuries. The agency secretary, along with his management team, closed the academy last year, failed to fill post positions and created forced overtime. It is time for all of us to stand tall, speak out and fight back!

In an effort to report these problems to the public and legislators, CCPOA will be stepping up its campaign to expose the agency and departmental mismanagement. If you have knowledge or perhaps a video of staff assaults, please send or fax them to (916) 340-2945. CCPOA needs your help in exposing these serious problems.

CYA WARD VIOLENCE

The media prefers to portray CYA wards as young, mentally disadvantaged youth to the legislators and public. The newspapers have misled the public by portraying the wards as “poor children” and insinuating that we deprive them of their rights.

But, when a ward escapes and word of his criminal history is broadcast, the ward suddenly becomes a serious gang affiliated felon. The simple truth is that 75.3 percent of CYA wards are entrenched in gang lifestyles, are over 18 years old and never did function in society. The local high schools, continuation schools, community programs and juvenile centers could not help these criminals. If you check their entire criminal history, you would find many of them have a multitude of felonies including murder, attempted murder, assault and battery, drugs, robbery, burglary and sex related crimes. If they were adults, you would be surprised how many have exceeded the three strikes law.



Hundreds of members “March on the Capitol” in protest.

NA Chaderjian (NAC) and Heman G. Stark (YTS) have many wards that were sent to CDC and housed in their SHU units for assaulting staff. Those same inmates are returned to CYA, where they are housed with younger and less sophisticated gang members. Then they start educating and recruiting soldiers for the prison gangs. It doesn't take a scientist to figure out the problems at those institutions.

VACANT POSTED POSITIONS

CYA currently has 3,217 wards in custody. A stark number compared to its designed capacity. With 37.3 percent of CYA vacant, the agency secretary has still failed to properly prepare for the post-position vacancies at all institutions. The agency secretary has failed to authorize the appointment of limited term positions to fill vacancies caused by IDL, EIDL, family sick leave, etc. This would stabilize the living unit teams and create a safer work environment. The agency secretary has not invited CCPOA, who represents the line/supervisory staff, to attend any of their re-organization committees in the past two years. Everyone he does invite appears to be an expert on corrections, but most enjoy their positions because of who they know, not what they know. Lack of experience has turned this team into the most dysfunctional group to ever run our system, especially while two departments are consolidating and reorganizing. They have been signing court decrees without any funding for resources, training or implementing new programs. That puts staff in extreme danger. CCPOA is in support of improving the educational and treatment needs of the young men and women entrusted to our care, but we are NOT in favor of irresponsible policies that allow:

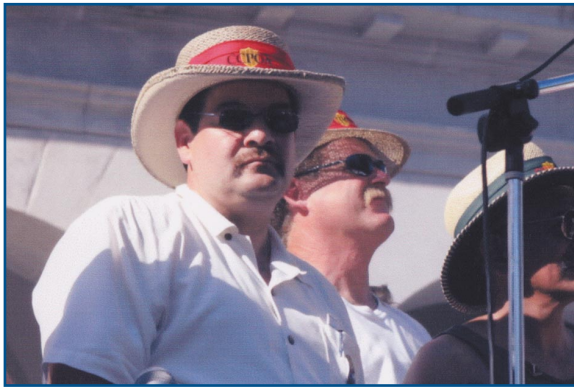
- Sexual Harassment of staff
(wards who masturbate openly in front of line staff)
- Gassing of staff
- Staff assaults
- Lack of training
- No ward accountability
- Lack of safety equipment



SECURITY

The CYA was under attack from the media, prisoner rights groups and the legislators who were citing the inhumane conditions of wards secured in “cages.” Those wards who complained were assigned to lock-up programs and are among the most violent in the CYA. Former CYA Director Harper, who inherited the problem, only complied with the changes coming from past legislative hearings. Those security “cages” were created for the education department because educators were dealing with daily gang related violence in the classroom. Those “cages” were a safe, effective and proven method to reduce the violence and still provide the mandated services to the most violent wards in CYA. They were used for short periods of time for educational, recreational and treatment needs, not as punishment.

However, after the publicized senate hearings, the agency secretary and his department managers discontinued the use of these “inhumane cages” at most institutions and created an extremely unsafe work environment for staff and wards, specifically at NAC and YTS.



CCPOA President Mike Jimenez speaks at the “March on the Capitol.”

We want Unit 6 members to know that they do an outstanding job accomplishing the daily functions in institutions. Unit 6 members go above and beyond the call of duty to fulfill the edicts of management. They should be commended, not insulted and hung out to dry. It’s time to go on the offensive and educate the public of the truth. It’s time they hear your horror stories about the incompetent management decisions, and the unpredictable and violent ward behavior. The department has serious staff shortages, and training and safety issues.

This “new” agency appears to be more concerned with the “No Smoking Policy,” new letterhead and job titles than they are for your safety.

NEW DEPARTMENT

We are all one big happy department now that the reorganization is complete. I heard the CYA building on Williamsborough is nearly empty. The new department says it will only cost \$20,000 to change everything over. What they haven’t said is that the changes to our departmental transportation vehicles, freeway/road institutional signs, etc., will be borne by the individual institution budgets.

What about staff safety? We need managers with real line experience, not Wal-Mart managers. The new department has eroded the morale of our staff and has done nothing to secure staff or ward safety.

CYA BUDGET

The funding for CYA has been deteriorating since 1989, thus causing us to fade from leading the nation in juvenile justice. Since then, line staff positions have been reduced and ward programs have disappeared, but management has continued to grow.

Newspaper reports that “the prison guards union” is the financial burden on the department and the state is egregious. Management’s mismanagement is the real cause!



Members gather for a “March on the Capitol.”

ASSAULT REPORTS CHADERJIAN:

1. 1/11/05 — YCC injured by a Blood gang member who struggled to open the Unit V kitchen door to assault another rival gang member. Pajaro Hall.
2. 1/19/05 — YCC assaulted by a Northern gang member. Owens Hall
3. 1/28/05 — YCC pushed down by a Bulldog gang member during a group disturbance. School area.
4. 2/2/05 — YCC assaulted with a laundry roll used as a baton by a Bulldog gang member. Merced Hall.
5. 2/2/05 — SYCC struck in the face and head area with closed fists by a Northern gang member. Pajaro Hall.
6. 2/2/05 — Lieutenant struck in the upper body, face and head area by a Northern gang member. Pajaro Hall.
7. 3/16/05 — SYCC struck in the face by a Northern gang member. San Joaquin Hall.
8. 3/23/05 — YCO knocked down the stairs by two Northern gang members. Kern Hall.
9. 3/23/05 — YCO knocked down the stairs by a Northern gang member. Kern Hall.
10. 3/24/05 — YCC assaulted when a Northern gang member gassed him.
11. 4/12/05 — YCC injured by two Northern gang members who were assaulting each other. Pajaro Hall.
12. 4/13/05 — YCC struck in the head with closed fists by a Northern gang member. Owens Hall.
13. 4/13/05 — SYCC assaulted from behind by a Northern gang member. Owens Hall.
14. 4/25/05 — SYCC gassed by a Blood gang member. Kern Hall.
15. 4/25/05 — PA gassed by a Blood gang member. Kern Hall.
16. 4/30/05 — YCC struck in the face by a Northern gang member. Pajaro Hall.
17. 4/30/05 — YCO struck multiple times in head and body area by a Northern gang member. Pajaro Hall.
18. 4/30/05 — YCO injured in assisting officer being assaulted by a Northern gang member. Pajaro Hall.
19. 5/5/05 — YCC gassed by a Northern gang member. Pajaro Hall.
20. 5/30/05 — YCC assaulted and knocked unconscious by a Crips gang member and was later transported by ambulance to a hospital. San Joaquin Hall.
21. 5/30/05 — YCC gassed by a Crips gang member. San Joaquin Hall.
22. 5/30/05 — YCC gassed by a Border Brother gang member. Merced Hall.
23. 5/31/05 — YCC struck in the head area by a Bay/415 gang member. Sacramento Hall.
24. 5/31/05 — YCC struck with a trash can by Bay/415 area gang member. Sacramento Hall.
25. 5/31/05 — YCO gassed by a Bay/415 area gang member. Sacramento Hall.
26. 6/1/05 — YCC injured assisting in restraining a Northern gang member. Sacramento Hall.
27. 6/1/05 — YCC assaulted by a Northern gang member. Tuolumne Hall.

27 Total Assaults – June 3, 2005

28. 6/10/05 — YCC assaulted by a Northern gang member when serving breakfast in the cell. Sacramento Hall.
29. 6/25/05 — YCC injured right arm, when pulled through the food slot by a Northern gang member. Sacramento Hall.
30. 6/26/05 — YCO gassed by a Bay/415 gang member.
31. 7/6/05 — YCC assaulted by a Northern gang member and later transported by ambulance to a hospital. Pajaro Hall.
32. 7/6/05 — YCC assaulted by a Northern gang member and later transported by ambulance to a hospital. Pajaro Hall.
33. 7/6/05 — YCC assaulted by a Northern gang member and transported to the hospital by ambulance. Pajaro Hall.
34. 7/11/05 — T/A sexually assaulted by Bay/415 gang member. School area.
35. 7/16/05 — YCC assaulted when a Northern gang member popped his cuffs open.
36. 7/16/05 — YCC assaulted by a Crips gang member with a sharp object. Right hand cut. Kern Hall.
37. 7/16/05 — YCC assaulted by a Northern gang member in the face and head. Transported to hospital. Owens Hall.
38. 7/16/05 — YCC injured when restraining an out-of-control Northern gang member. Owens Hall.
39. 7/16/05 — YCO injured when assisting an officer who was being assaulted by a Northern gang member. Owens Hall.
40. 7/16/05 — YCO injured when a ward threw water on the floor by a Northern gang member. Owens Hall.
41. 7/16/05 — YCO assaulted by a Crips gang member when escorting him to his room. Kern Hall.
42. 7/16/05 — Lieutenant gassed by a Northern gang member. Kern Hall.

42 Total Assaults – July 16, 2005

43. 7/17/05 — YCC gassed by a Northern gang member. San Joaquin Hall.
44. 7/17/05 — YCO gassed by a Northern gang member. Kern Hall.
45. 7/19/05 — Lieutenant struck in the face by a Northern gang member. Kern Hall.
46. 7/19/05 — YCC injured when kicked in the legs by Northern gang member. Kern Hall.
47. 7/18/05 — YCO injured when his arm was pulled through the food slot by a Crips gang member. Sacramento Hall.
48. 7/20/05 — YCC gassed by a Bay/415 gang member. Sacramento Hall.
49. 7/20/05 — SYCC gassed by a Bay/415 gang member. Sacramento Hall.

49 Total Assaults – July 21, 2005

50. 7/24/05 — YCC assaulted by a ward when restraining him. Merced Hall.
51. 7/24/05 — YCC assaulted by a ward when serving a DDMS case. Merced Hall.

GOVERNOR'S TOUR

In November 2004, the governor did a tour of Chaderjian to proclaim a “new era” for the CYA. The day was called “historic” as the governor signed a court consent decree, obliging the agency secretary to make significant changes and reforms for the wards. But at the same time he also put wards and staff in danger, because he did not put into place the necessary resources to adequately implement those reforms. What the media did not know was that the governor conveniently avoided the worst living units there. Why? Because the cell doors can be popped open by the wards. Instead, he only visited the special treatment programs. Rest assured that if we stand and raise our voices together, CCPOA with your help, will expose the mismanagement, unsafe working conditions and myths perpetrated by the media.

THUMBS UP PROJECT

CCPOA had its first 2005 Thumbs Up event at the Sacramento Cal-Expo fair grounds with over 35 volunteers who fingerprinted more than 2,500 kids. So far this year, we've fingerprinted 6,347 children.

The Thumbs Up project is requested throughout the state by various organizations and has been operating for over eight years. Currently, the department is only authorizing one member at a time per institution to use RTB — effectively obstructing the operation of the program. The agency secretary has made the decision to deny the public one of the excellent community programs — provided free of charge by CCPOA — for the safety of children. The agency says that the use of RTB has a direct impact on their finances. But nothing could be further from the truth. Participation by the members on RTB is of no cost to the agency, as the members donate their own time to the release time bank. Regretfully, CCPOA must now cancel future events.



Members at the NCYC K-9 Trials.



Parents and children line up in Manchester Mall in Fresno.



Members volunteer their time at the Cal Expo event.



Pasa de Robles members at the Thumbs Up Visalia event.