

# OFFER OF HOPE

*"Freedom with responsibility: responsibility to self and community."*

We, prisoners of Australia, call upon governments to acknowledge that having lost our freedom of movement we are still entitled to all other rights and safeguards provided to those outside prison.

We believe in the real meaning of the term "corrective services". Instead of wasting government money, causing fear in the community and allowing our lives to slip away in despair, we believe that with help, trust, and encouragement we can return to our communities, families and friends and make a positive contribution to society.

We ask for your help

- with education
- with medical care
- with contact with families and the community

We ask for your trust

- with freedom of association
- with freedom of speech

We ask for you to believe

- that we are humans with rights and entitlements
- that we can change
- that our lives are just as important as any

In exchange, we offer peace, a commitment to non-violence, to listen as we are also heard in the spirit of the motto from the Special Care Unit at Long Bay, Sydney: *"Freedom with responsibility: responsibility to self and community."*

30 November 2005

<http://www.justiceaction.org.au/actNow/Campaigns/hope/hope.html>



## Australian prisoners speak out on Human Rights Day

*"End the penal colony mentality now."*

Attempts to remove prisoners' right to vote have been confronted at the launch of a prisoners' statement, *Offer of Hope*, on International Human Rights Day, 2005.

Prisoners have drawn a line in the sand in their relationship with Government over this attempt to remove a fundamental democratic right.

Prison populations are rising yet governments only notice prisoners when they can be used for cheap political point-scoring and fear-mongering. We must end the penal colony mentality now.

The *Offer of Hope* is an expression of solidarity among prisoners and a positive offer to governments to help break the cycle of destructive vengeance in prisons.

**It was supported with a minute's silence at the International Human Rights Day rally in Sydney.**

**There will be a silent vigil at 12 midday each Monday until there is a response to the *Offer* by governments.**

The Offer of Hope is supported by Senator Kerry Nettle; Dr Arthur Chesterfield Evans MLC; Peter Garrett MP; Lee Rhiannon MLC; The Public Interest Advocacy Centre; Sisters Inside; Prison Action and Reform-Tasmania; Deaths in Custody Watch Committee-WA; Indigenous Social Justice Association; Professor David Brown-UNSW; Mick Doleman, Asst Fed Secretary, MUA; John Maitland National Secretary CFMEU; Australian Aid for Ireland; Mercy Foundation; Redfern Legal Centre; Prisoners Legal Service-Qld; Stop the War Coalition, Reverend Bill Crews.

**10 December 2005**

<http://www.justiceaction.org.au>

PH: (02) 9660 9111 • FAX: (02) 9660 9100 • [ja@justiceaction.org.au](mailto:ja@justiceaction.org.au)