

## Section 15

### *Letters to the President from...*

15. People who know Larry from prison
  - 15.1. Harry Kreamer
  - 15.2. Michael Clegg
  - 15.3. Brian O'Dea
  - 15.4. Johanna Demetrakas
  - 15.5. Rabbi William Gordon
  - 15.6. Rev. Max Schiller
  - 15.7. Dan Millstein

*Whilst in custody, Larry has impressed and helped many of those he has come in contact with. The qualities he has demonstrated in prison reflect profound reflection and thought on his prior conduct and his determination to be a productive and worthy citizen in the future.*

**Kreamer & Kreamer**  
**Legal Services**

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January 9, 1997

President William Clinton  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Ave., NW  
Washington, DC 10500

RE: CLEMENCY PETITION FOR LARRY LAYTON

Dear Mr. President:

I am an ex-con. I am also a Dartmouth graduate (B.A., 1961), a graduate of Stanford Law School (L.L.B., 1964), and a former law clerk for the Honorable Stanley Weigel of the United States District Court for the Northern District of California (1964-1965). Presently I am an independent paralegal living and working in the San Francisco Bay Area.

During my period of incarceration, I met Larry Layton at Terminal Island Federal Correctional Institute. We were kindred souls. Like myself, Larry was a well educated and extremely idealistic member of the generation that came to maturity during the late sixties and early seventies.

Larry and I probably would have become friends if we had met in virtually any context. He is a warm gracious person with sensitivity and compassion. By the time I arrived at that institution (1989), Larry had lived through the rough first phase of his own notoriety within the penal context, and won virtually universal respect from the motley group of inmates that comprised the Terminal Island population at that time. That was a hard task. It is true that the denizens of a penal society are a pretty hard-eyed bunch and paradoxically, extremely judgmental. But

January 9, 1997  
President William Clinton  
page 2

Larry was recognized by that rough group as something much more real than his "name" and media-created image. He was recognized and appreciated as someone who had grown wise through his ordeal and someone who seemed to consider it his duty to help anyone in need. He was a consistent volunteer for hospice duty, putting in many hours at the institution's hospital. He was active in chapel activities -- not with any one denomination but as a spiritual seeker who was equally at home with the Jewish, Christian, and Buddhist traditions. Perhaps most importantly, however, he exemplified in his own bearing inspiration for reformation. I never once heard Larry personally complain that life had treated him unfairly. Instead I observed him taking advantage of any opportunity made available to him to educate and improve himself and encouraged others to do the same. He was an eager student and regularly enrolled in the courses offered through the institution and served as an instructor to others in skills and subjects in which he had become proficient.

There is no good reason for Larry to remain in custody. Like many other high profile personalities who have had to serve time in prisons for behavior that was fundamentally inconsistent with their true nature, he poses no threat to society. The events at Jonestown were unique in the history of the world. Jim Jones had the power to manipulate people and events in a way that shocked and horrified us all and taught a lesson that will not be forgotten. No one understands that lesson better than Larry Layton. Larry could better redeem himself and serve society as a liberated REFORMED personality who could become a living symbol of reconciliation rather than a continuation of the tragedy of Jonestown. Please help transform the awful legacy of that time into the more humane future you yourself have so eloquently painted -- when all people of good will work together to leave behind the mistakes of the past.

Sincerely,

*Larry Treanor*



*Alternative Choice Cremation Society*

**President Clinton  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Ave. N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 10500**

**Dear Mr. President,**

**January 8, 1997**

**I have known Larry Layton for five years now while I was an inmate at Terminal Island with him in Los Angeles. He was my best friend there and consequently I came to know him quite well. I can assure you he is the kindest, gentlest, most peaceful man I have ever known. He has no violent tendencies whatsoever and has always made a positive contribution to the overall welfare of that F.C.I. If ever a man was rehabilitated and deserving of release back into society, it is Larry Layton.**

**Therefore I beseech you to use your presidential power to grant him clemency for an immediate release. Justice has been more than served in this case.**

**Thanking you for your kind consideration in this matter and forever indebted to you for this,**

**Michael W. Clegg**





*Brian O'Dea*

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*Scarab Cap Corp  
109 Wineva Avenue  
Toronto, ON M4E 2T1  
CANADA*

**January 12, 1996**

**re: Larry Layton**

**President Clinton  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue N.W.  
Washington, DC 10500**

**Dear Mr. President:**

**In 1991 I was sentenced to serve ten years in a Federal Institution as a result of pleading guilty to a charge of Conspiracy to Smuggle Marijuana into the United States. Four years prior to this I had made a decision to turn my life around, embarking on a path of sobriety and service to others similarly afflicted, and I have remained on that path since. My charge and conviction (for an offense which took place over a period of some months in 1986 and 1987) were subsequent to this spiritual awakening, and I consider my spiritual condition to have been an essential part of my ability to make it intact from such a devastating experience. While incarcerated at F.C.I. Terminal Island I actively sought out other inmates who were convinced there was a better way of life, others who shared a similar spiritual seeking. One of the first people I encountered as I entered what was to me the most frightening world imaginable was Larry Layton. Larry's serenity in the face of adversity, his calm and gentle approach to me, and to his own dilemma, helped me solidify in my own mind, that the only way I might make it through this ordeal was with such an attitude.**

Larry did not limit his help to me, but shared his abilities, knowledge, and assistance to any who was in need.

During my stay in Terminal Island, Larry helped organize and be an active participant in many spiritually oriented programs, such as Saturday Morning Meditation, Yoga, and Spiritual Book Study groups. Larry encouraged many who, without such encouragement, would have floundered in the face of their experience, to participate in these enlightening programs, and continues to be of such assistance today.

Having spent many hundreds of hours with Larry, I only know him to be the gentlest, kindest, and most caring of persons. To think that he might be considered a danger to society is to be aware that the holder of such thoughts does not know Larry Layton.

Today, as I speak to high school groups (since my release from prison, I have spoken to tens of thousands of school students in many schools throughout Canada on *The Consequences of Choice - It's Never Too Late for Change!*) I use Larry, and his story, as an example of change, strength found in the face of adversity, and true spirituality through service to others.

I write to you today, Mr. President, as spokesperson for my entire family, my wife, Susannah, my children, Cheyenne, Cherokee, and Rufus, with a sincere request from the heart of our family to your heart, that you now express your deep compassion and sense of justice in a very real way by granting clemency to Larry Layton.

Thank you.

Sincerely



Brian O'Dea

**jOHANNA dEMETRAKAS**

**4233 GLENALBYN DRIVE LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90065**

**(213) 224-8061 fax (213) 224-8122**

President Clinton  
The White House

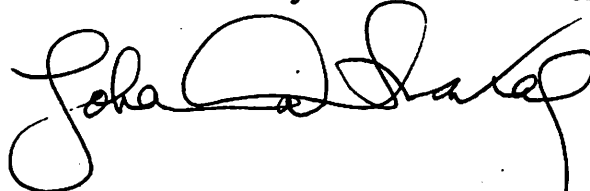
Dear Mr. President,

In my two and a half years of teaching Bhuddhism and meditation at Terminal Island Prison, Larry Layton struck me as perhaps the most intelligent, serious and tragic inmate to enter the chapel. He was the only man I worked with whose profound suffering radiated from his being without any excuses or blame, without playing the victim or attempting to manipulate his position in any way whatsoever.

Larry has a most gentle heart and it is broken for life. He also has a fine mind. Larry could contribute much to this world, starting with the impeccably honest way he faces his disastrous fall from grace.

I think it would be a terrible waste of our federal resources and of Larry Layton's life to keep him imprisoned for so many more years. Please consider immediate clemency for Larry.

I know I can trust your fairness and compassion,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Johanna Demetrakas', with a long, sweeping flourish extending from the bottom right.

Johanna Demetrakas, Senior Teacher,  
Shambhala Center, Los Angeles, California



February 13, 1997

To Whom It May Concern;

Chairman of the Board  
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Please note: I met Larry Layton 5 years ago when I became the Contract Rabbi at the Federal Correctional Institute at Terminal Island, San Pedro, California.

Larry was a regular attendee at our Friday Morning Discussion and Sabbath Service.

Larry is a mild mannered, soft spoken, quiet individual. Without sharing, what he expressed <sup>was</sup> his remorse at what transpired that brought him into prison. I feel he is not a threat to himself nor to anyone else. If his case could be reviewed I feel his release would be helpful to himself, his family and the society.

If I can be of further help, please call me (818) 774-3018.

Shalom,

Rabbi William J. Gordon

18855



January 8, 1997

President Clinton  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW  
Washington, DC 10500

Dear Mr. President,

My name is Max Schiller. I am a volunteer at the Terminal Island Men's Correctional Institution at San Pedro, California. I have been visiting the inmates as part of the Chapel worship program every Wednesday for the past two years.

I am sending this letter to you in support of the application for clemency for **Mr. Larry Layton**. I first met Larry while I was conducting Chapel religious services for the inmates at the Terminal Island Men's prison.

Larry impressed me with his knowledge of religion and his sincere desire to follow in the path of god. Larry is truly sorry for what he did in the past. He is remorseful for his prior actions. Larry has served many year in prison and has worked very hard to improve his mental and physical attitude. Larry accepts responsibility for what he did. He studies History and Religion and is an active educational tutor to the inmates who are trying to educate themselves. Larry is very compassionate and giving. He is concerned about others and is constantly trying to help with prison programs that benefit the other inmates. Larry feels and expresses great shame and regret and harbors no bitterness toward anyone.

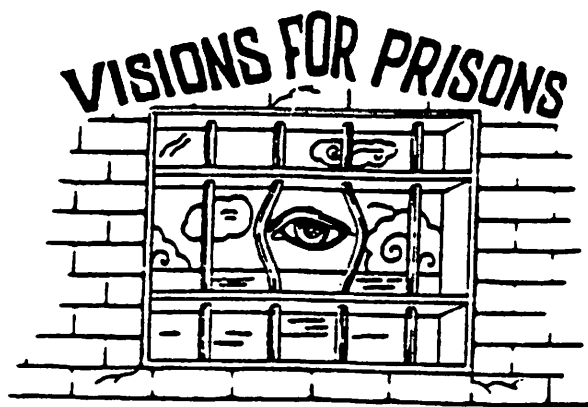
I have spent many hours with Larry and I believe that he is not a threat to society and that he will present no problem to our community.

Please give Larry the chance to become a contributing member of society. I know that he will prove to be worthy of your consideration.

Sincerely,



Max Schiller  
21606 Talisman Street  
Torrance, Ca. 90503



January 11, 1997

William Jefferson Clinton  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW  
Washington, D.C. 10500

RE: Larry Layton Clemency

Dear Mr. President,

My name is Dan Millstein. I am the program director of a world wide network of volunteers who serve as facilitators of Attitudinal Healing support groups in both state and federal prisons. We began our first group in Terminal Island F.C.I. in 1988. This is where we became acquainted with Mr. Larry Layton. I have personally facilitated that group, which meets every Saturday, over 300 times. These groups are places of safety where inmates can share their feelings of anger, sadness and frustration without fear of judgment or reprisal. Mr. Layton has been a participant for over 8 years seldom missing a Saturday morning in all that time.

As a professional therapist and intimate confidant of Mr. Layton I feel strongly that he is a compassionate man who is truly sorry for his involvement in Jonestown and that he could be and will be an asset to his community when he is released. I believe Larry's value system to be of the highest caliber and do not hesitate to recommend him as a fine example of how one can rehabilitate oneself in prison. He has expressed his interest in speaking to and helping young people as part of our volunteer network and he has exhibited those skills as a mentor to other prisoners in our group.

I am proud to know Larry and I sincerely hope you will consider and grant Mr. Layton's immediate release. Please feel free to contact me if you wish to verify this information.

BEST REGARDS,

Dan Millstein

Director, Visions for Prisons