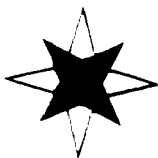




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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Tuesday, June 29, 1982

PRISON ADMINISTRATION IGNORES GRIEVANCES,
INMATES BEGIN HUNGER STRIKE

The sit-down strike at the Oahu Community Correctional Center expanded into a hunger strike today following apparent disciplinary action taken against some inmates. This information was contained in a hand-written note received this morning by the American Friends Service Committee. It is not known how many inmates are refusing food.

According to AFSC representative Ian Lind, "The situation at the prison is getting worse because the grievances of inmates have been ignored or misrepresented by the prison administration. Contrary to administration claims, the inmates have stated that they are not opposed to the new security plan as a whole, but they do have a few specific concerns about non-security aspects of the plan as well as some long-standing problems which need to be resolved."

"Unfortunately, the prison administration has refused to meet with the inmate's Huki Like Council since the last lockdown began in early June," Lind said. "On at least five occasions, the administration turned down inmate requests to discuss grievances."

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Add 1

Lind added that "it appears that the inmate leaders are being given no opportunity to resolve their grievances through established channels. This is what the current sit-down and hunger strike is all about."

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Attachments:

1. List of grievances
2. Note from cellblock inmates received 6/29/82
3. Note from Huki Like Council received 6/28/82
4. Statement of Huki Like Council received 6/21/82

ATTACHMENT #1: Inmate Grievances

Based on written statements from the inmate council and prior conversations with members of the Huki Like, the American Friends Service Committee believes that the following comprise the most important grievances which have prompted the current inmate strike.

1] Continued reports of inmates being assaulted in the prison's Holding Unit. These are part of a broad pattern of abuse in this part of the prison. Some of the most well-known incidents are described below:

An investigation was initiated by former prison administrator Masaro Oshiro inot charges of violence against inmates in Phase 1 of the Holding Unit. The state Attorney General's office was involved in this investigation prior to the "shakedown" of December 1981. In the aftermath of that shakedown, there were numerous reports of beatings in the Unit.

On april 2, 1982, four guards were arrested and charged with beating an inmate in the Holding Unit.

That same day, the president of the Huki Like Council was apparently taken from his dormitory and beaten by guards in the Holding Unit. Following this incident, the inmate was confined to the Unit for more than a month.

2] Concerns about specific provisions of the new "security" plan. Although the Huki Like Council has stated that it does not object to the new plan as a whole, questions are raised about a few provisions.

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a) Access to telephones. Under the new rules, inmates cannot use the telephone until after 4:30 p.m. Inmates report being told that this is to prevent them from "causing trouble" by contacting their attorneys or community groups concerned with prison conditions whose offices typically close at 4:30.

b) Limited recreation. The new rules restrict access to the small recreation area of the cellblock, thus increasing the amount of time inmates must spend idle in their living areas. This is especially difficult for the large number of inmates who do not have prison jobs or access to other programs, and are thus confined to their cells most of the day.

c) Restrictions on family visits. The new security plan eliminates the use of the small grassy area within the cellblock for family visits. This makes it more difficult for prisoners to see their children.

3] Reprisals or threats of reprisals against inmates for voicing grievances, even if through legal and legitimate channels. Inmates have been beaten or threatened with beatings for offering evidence or presenting testimony to official investigations of the prison now underway. Another inmate who recently spoke to a TV news team was sent to the Holding Unit and "slapped around" as a result.

4] Failure of the administration to work with the Huki Like Council to resolve problems. Inmates complain that the administration has failed to live up to agreements and commitments, thereby eroding the Huki Like's credibility. "Do this for a length of time and any thinking person knows the results", says a Council statement.

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TO ALL CONCERNED PERSONS:

ENOUGH IS ENOUGH.

WE ARE LOCKING OURSELVES DOWN IN PEACEFUL PROTEST AT THE GROSS MIS-MANAGEMENT OF THIS ~~PRISON~~ PRISON. WE ARE ASKING TO EAT IN THE DORMS JUST LIKE THEY OFTEN DO WHEN THEY LOCK US DOWN. THE MODULES ARE PARTICIPATING TOO AND WE ASK THE ANNEX AND THE HALAWA FACILITY TO JOIN US. EVERYONE IS IN CONTROL OF THEMSELVES AND DETERMINED TO RIGHT THIS WRONG. IF THEY DO NOT FEED US - WE WILL NOT EAT.

THE FACTUAL DISPUTE IS AMONG THE STAFF. ALL IN THE POSITION OF AUTHORITY, MIS-MANAGEMENT ON THE ONE HAND, AND INCOMPETENCE ON THE OTHER, AND THE MIS-USE OF POWER ON BOTH HANDS, AND WE ARE THE BALL.

WE ASK FOR ALL RIGHT THINKING PERSONS TO AID US IN THE REALIZATION OF OUR AIMS. NONSENSE CANNOT EXIST IN THE PRESENCE OF SENSE.

RESPECTFULLY

THE IWAHATE HUKI-LIKE

6/29/82

THEY (ADMINISTRATION) LOCKED UP
SOME INMATES THIS MORNING.
WE ARE NOW ON HUNGER STRIKE.
WE MUST REMEMBER THAT HUNGRY PEOPLE
WHO CANNOT BE HEARD ARE HARD TO CONTROL.
SOME PEOPLE ARE TALKING ABOUT DYING.

June 1982

To: Concerned People

The inmate Huki Like council has always adhered to its name and purpose; that is, "Huki Like--pull together."

The administration, in its recent statement in the media, among other ambiguous statements said "that the inmate Huki Like has been a big help in keeping sense and peace to prevail."

The truth of that matter is that for a long while the inmate Huki Like's credibility has by degrees become eroded by the administration's attitude or thoughtlessness thereby eroding their own credibility. For instance, something is to be allowed or done and we go and report it to the population. Then, something else or nothing happens. Do this for a length of time and any thinking person knows the results.

It has been a while that we have been waiting for some kind of results from investigations that have produced no positive or discernible results. Many inmates are in despair. We have controlled ourselves--as advised by outside agencies, because we want to do things in the right way so that brutality, be it physical or mental, would not happen again.

The recent "governor's investigation panel"--now five--though made up of responsible persons, is all "flash" to us. They do no investigative work of their own--they have no choice. Instead, theirs is an investigative agency whose existence depends upon the "goodwill" of the state when it has already been established that a "cover-up" might be in progress. The investigative men have already stated to us that "we would not touch this if we're not persuaded."

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The Senate committee on Judiciary working on "heptachlor" seems to have forgotten us and they are our "hope".

To "engineer" things so that we could be "got back at" for having the temerity to complain about "conditions"; "we'll show you how bad it can get"; or "ignorant criminals, liars and thieves, we'll straighten your asses out," are attitudes, normal, counter-productive at best and which seems to us a prevalent attitude.

The "offensiveness or defensiveness" of the weapons found in a "particular dorm", while important, is not as important as why they were there. The weapons were in places of "not easy access." That means that they were there for or as an "eventuality". What eventuality? Were inmates threatening inmates? A whole dorm? Will anyone ask for the truth of the matter? Does anyone care? The investigations we asked for are all in progress because there must have been some truth to our allegations. What we are saying is that, while we are not truthful all the time, we do not lie all the time and that goes for all--even in high places.

All is based on "resentment" and "fear" and though we fill the place with "one guard per square inch" or take inmates "one by one" to chow, work, programs or recreation, the results will be the same. We "belabour" the "results" and do nothing about the "cause".

The "big" majority of us do not condone weapons or violence--to solve things--as it will not produce "good" or "lasting" results. We have no objections to the "new plan" as a whole.

In fact we welcome it, but we strongly feel that our "free time"--recreation and phone time--should not be curtailed as punishment or in fear or as an excuse for implementing "long standing" plans of a "few" maybe for their own aggrandizement all of which is undeserved by the majority of inmates. The attitude with which the changes are being made can never produce "good" or "lasting" results. Expedience hurts everything it touches. We want to be heard.

Thank You,

Inmate Huki Like