

# Sitdown Strike at Prison Protests Tough Security

By Stirling Morita  
Star-Bulletin Writer

Inmates at the Oahu Community Correctional Center this morning staged a "peaceful" sitdown strike in apparent protest of new and tougher security procedures, a prison spokesman said.

The work strike occurred about 8:30 a.m. when some 270 inmates in the cellblock area refused to go out on their work and school assignments, prison spokesman Chapman Lam said.

The prisoners gave no reasons for their sitdown strike, but Lam said, "There are indications that

they are protesting the new security plan and its restrictions."

Lam said many of the inmates want to go to work or to school, but that there is some word out among them to participate in the strike.

The strike affects only the cellblock area of the prison, at Puuhale Road and Kamehameha Highway.

Inmates refused to go to their work stations, such as the boiler room, laundry and mess hall.

ASKED IF THE prison administration had any plans to resolve the strike, Lam said, "At this

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# Prisoners in Sitdown Strike Here

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stage, we'll just have to wait and see what happens." The administration always is willing to talk the matter out with the inmates, he said.

Meanwhile, outside the prison, 18 persons picketed the prison, protesting what they said was ill treatment of prisoners. They were mostly relatives of inmates and members of community groups, such as the American Friends Service Committee.

Maile Reigh, a member of the Prison Reform Committee, said the pickets were present because they knew a work strike would be going on inside the prison. They appeared to support the inmates in fighting problems, "especially the wall of secrecy surrounding the treatment of inmates," Reigh said.

Nelson Foster, of the American Friends Service Committee, said he objected to implementation of the new security plan without feedback from the prisoners and community organizations.

LAM SAID. "We have always said that the security for this facility is entirely the responsibility of the prison administration.

"We have said over and over again why more effective security regulations were needed. The measures certainly are necessary and reasonable. We don't believe they are negotiable with the inmates."

"We want activities, we need activities, but we want controlled activities," Lam said.

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**SYMPATHY FOR INMATES**—Pickets walk the sidewalk outside the Oahu Community Correctional Center today, attempting to draw attention to what they describe as ill treatment of prisoners. The picketing was in connection with a sitdown strike this morning by the inmates inside the Kalihi facility. —Star-Bulletin Photo by Terry Luke.

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## Governor Urged to Look into Conditions at Prison

Calling current conditions at Oahu Community Correctional Center "explosive," a group of religious leaders has asked the governor to tackle the issue.

At a meeting Friday, the "Religious Community Concerned about Prison Conditions" heard relatives and friends of inmates and former inmates "offer shocking and distressing testimony of abuses being perpetrated against the prisoners by the current prison administration," a statement from the group said.

The group will meet again July 8.

Members issued a statement saying they are available "for ongoing dialogue with the administration and the prison community."

Those who signed the statement were: Episcopal Bishop Ed-

mond L. Browning; Ronald T.Y. Choo; the Rev. Brian Grieves; the Rev. Jim Jackson, Sacred Hearts Church; the Rev. Teruo Kawata, United Church of Christ; Father Robert Mackay; Sister Anna McAnany; the Rev. Eric Potter; the Rev. Renate Rose, Central Union Church; and the Rev. Donald White.