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More than 750 Immigrants Join Hunger Strike at Tacoma Immigration Prison
Detained Immigrants Also Initiate Work Stoppage to Protest their Conditions

Tacoma, WA - Today at noon marked 48 hours since immigrants incarcerated at the Northwest Detention Center (NWDC) began refusing meals, launching a hunger strike to protest their treatment inside the immigration prison. Supporters who rallied outside the facility received constant updates from people detained as more pods (housing units inside the facility) joined the call to not eat, not to use the phones, and not to buy from the commissary. By Wednesday morning over 750 people had begun refusing meals, with reports of strikers in 9 different pods throughout the facility. In at least four pods, the people detained also called for a work stoppage, throwing the immigration prison's functions into chaos.

Detention conditions, already terrible under Obama, have worsened under Trump, triggering this latest strike. Under the Obama administration, federal officials at least pretended to be concerned about the immigration they incarcerated, but Trump has staffed his immigration force with openly anti-immigrant officials with links to white supremacist organizations, leaving people detained with little choice but to put their bodies on the line to fight for their basic dignity. Attorney General Jeff Session's newly released memorandum calling for increased prosecutions of immigrants and their supporters, combined with a roll-out where he referred to immigrants as "filth," only highlights the continued need for local fights responding to the federal deportation and detention dragnet.

Despite the threat of retaliation, the strike continued, with participant, Prince Edwards, noting that "we are humans, we are people too.... It is all about profit.... Hopefully what we are doing, it will be a little contribution to shine the light on this whole issue as a whole. You know, we know we might not make a big dent, but, you know, in Africa we have a proverb that says a little drop of water makes the mightiest ocean. You know? If people say it will not make a difference because, you know nothing happens? Well guess what? If nobody speaks out, the status quo will remain the same. So all we are trying to do is just shine a light on conditions here. This is not about one person, this is not about our immigration case, as they are trying to make it look like. This is about the conditions we are being held under." Another hunger striker, Johnathan Rodriguez Guzman added, "I am doing the hunger strike not just for me but for everyone out there in the future." He also mentioned that he was one of the people who stripped and rewaxed the floor in the detention center. He said that he stayed up three or four nights doing this work and was only given a cup of soup and some chips as payment. Audio from hunger strikers is attached as well as a letter from a pod of approximately 99 people who just joined the hunger strike today.

Community members have set up an encampment at the gates of the facility, planning to stay for the duration of the strike. A solidarity rally is planned for 6 p.m. tonight. For live updates, visit <https://www.facebook.com/NWDCResistance/>.

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NWDC Resistance is a volunteer community group that emerged to fight deportations in 2014 at the now-infamous Northwest Detention Center in Tacoma, WA as part of the [#Not1more](#) campaign, and supported people detained who organized hunger strikes asking for a halt to all deportations and better treatment and conditions.