

About

Prisoners' Justice Day began on August 10, 1975, when prisoners at Millhaven Institution held a 24-hour hunger strike and work stoppage to honour the one-year anniversary of the death of Eddie Nalon in a solitary confinement cell. In 1976, prisoners at Millhaven organized a 110-day strike to protest the death of another prisoner in segregation, Bobby Landers. Since then, prisoners across Canada have observed Prisoners' Justice Day by refusing food and/or work. It is now recognized as an International Day of Solidarity with Prisoners, marked by allies on the outside and prisoners on the inside.

*Prisoner's Justice Day presents on one level an act of solidarity, on another level it represents a period of remembrance in which past injustices within prisons become the focus of attention for a single day. On a higher level the most important aspect of Prisoner's Justice Day is that it symbolizes a way of life. This means that within our caged existence we must continually be aware of the constant struggle for survival... (Myles Sartor, 1983 from his column "Imaginary or Real" in *Cemetery Road*)*

In Memory of all those who died in prison

We do not intend to ever forget his [Eddie Nalon] dying, just like we do not intend to forget all of the other deaths that have taken place. That is what August 10th is all about. Remembering our friends, our comrades, our brothers and sisters who have died in prison ... (Odyssey

Newsletter, 1978:3)



August 10 Prisoners' Justice Day

In Support of Human Rights for Prisoners

See www.prisonjustice.ca for more information



Original Demands of PJD

Prisoners' Justice Day, August 10th, 1979 for the end to senseless deaths in prisons. In support of human rights for prisoners to attain:

1. THE RIGHT TO MEANINGFUL WORK WITH FAIR WAGES
2. THE RIGHT TO USEFUL EDUCATION AND TRAINING
3. THE RIGHT TO PROPER MEDICAL ATTENTION
4. THE RIGHT TO FREEDOM OF SPEECH AND RELIGION
5. THE RIGHT TO FREE AND ADEQUATE LEGAL SERVICES
6. THE RIGHT TO INDEPENDENT REVIEW OF ALL PRISON DECISION MAKING AND CONDITIONS
7. THE RIGHT TO VOTE*
8. THE RIGHT TO FORM A UNION
9. THE RIGHT TO ADEQUATE WORK AND FIRE SAFETY STANDARDS
10. THE RIGHT TO OPEN VISITS AND CORRESPONDENCE
11. THE RIGHT TO NATURAL JUSTICE AND DUE PROCESS

* Supreme Court decision in *Sauvé v. Canada (Chief Electoral Officer)*, [2002] 3 S.C.R. 519, 2002 SCC 68 gave prisoners the right to vote



PJD Is...

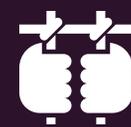
...August 10, the day prisoners have set aside as a day to fast and refuse to work in a show of solidarity to remember those who have died unnecessarily – victims of murder, deaths by suicide and neglect.

...a day when organizations and individuals in the community hold demonstrations, vigils, worship services and other events in common resistance with prisoners.

...a day to raise issue with the fact that a very high rate of women are in prison for protecting themselves against their abusers. This makes it obvious that the legal system does not protect women who suffer violence at the hands of their partners.

...is a day to remember that there are a disproportionate number of Indigenous, Black, People of Colour and other marginalized people in prisons. Prisons are the ultimate form of oppression against struggles of recognition and self-determination.

...a day to raise public awareness of the demands made by prisoners to change the punitive justice system and the brutal and inhumane conditions that lead to so many prison deaths.



PJD Is...

...a day to oppose prison violence, police violence, & violence against women, children, and 2SLGBTQ+ people in prisons which remain heteronormative and cisgendered.

...a day to publicize that, in their fight for freedom and equality, the actions of many political prisoners have been criminalized by government. As a result, there are false claims that there are no political prisoners in prisons on Turtle Island.

...a day to raise public awareness of the economic and social costs of a system of punitive justice which punishes for revenge. If there is ever to be social justice, it will only come about using a model of healing justice, connecting people to the harms and helping harm doers take responsibility for their actions.

...a day to renew the struggle for HIV/AIDS education, prevention and treatment in prison. It is also the day to renew the struggle for harm reduction, a safe supply and medical treatment for all in prisons.

...a day to remind people that the criminal justice system and the psychiatric system are mutually reinforcing methods that the state uses to control human beings. There is a lot of brutality by staff committed in the name of treatment. Moreover, many deaths in the psych-prisons are not investigated.