



Global Nonviolent Action Database

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Dream Nine campaign for immigrants' rights 2013

22 July

2013

to: 7 August

2013

Country: United States

Location City/State/Province: Eloy, Arizona

Location Description: Eloy detention center

Goals:

The Dream Nine wanted to return to their American homes. The National Immigrant Youth Alliance wanted to capture media attention and change the United States' stance on illegal immigration.

Methods

Methods in 1st segment:

- 005. Declarations of indictment and intention
- 006. Group or mass petitions
- 015. Group lobbying
- 038. Marches
- 071. Consumers' boycott
- 159. The fast (fast of moral pressure, hunger strike, satyagrahic fast)

Methods in 2nd segment:

- 034. Vigils
- 048. Protest meetings
- 071. Consumers' boycott
- 159. The fast (fast of moral pressure, hunger strike, satyagrahic fast)

Methods in 3rd segment:

- 034. Vigils
- 048. Protest meetings
- 071. Consumers' boycott
- 159. The fast (fast of moral pressure, hunger strike, satyagrahic fast)

Methods in 4th segment:

- 034. Vigils
- 048. Protest meetings
- 071. Consumers' boycott
- 159. The fast (fast of moral pressure, hunger strike, satyagrahic fast)

Methods in 5th segment:

- 034. Vigils
- 048. Protest meetings
- 071. Consumers' boycott
- 159. The fast (fast of moral pressure, hunger strike, satyagrahic fast)

Methods in 6th segment:

- 034. Vigils
- 048. Protest meetings
- 071. Consumers' boycott
- 159. The fast (fast of moral pressure, hunger strike, satyagrahic fast)

Additional methods (Timing Unknown):

- 001. Public speeches
- 002. Letters of opposition or support

Classifications

Classification:

Change

Cluster:

Human Rights

Group characterization:

- young adult undocumented mexican immigrants in the United States

Leaders, partners, allies, elites

Leaders:

The Dream Nine,

Partners:

The National Immigrant Youth Alliance

External allies:

Many additional people being held in detention joined the hunger strike of the Dream Nine in solidarity.

Involvement of social elites:

Congressman Luis Gutierrez plus 42 members of the U.S. Congress who wrote letters of support.

Joining/exiting order of social groups

Groups in 1st Segment:

- Congressman Luis Gutierrez
- The Dream Nine

- The National Immigrant Youth Alliance

Groups in 2nd Segment:

Groups in 3rd Segment:

Groups in 4th Segment:

Groups in 5th Segment:

Groups in 6th Segment:

Segment Length: 3 days

Opponent, Opponent Responses, and Violence

Opponents:

The United State Government

Nonviolent responses of opponent:

not known

Campaigner violence:

No campaigner violence

Repressive Violence:

Two of the campaigners were held in solitary confinement, classified by the United Nations as torture, for around 15 days.

Success Outcome

Success in achieving specific demands/goals:

4 points out of 6 points

Survival:

1 point out of 1 points

Growth:

2 points out of 3 points

Notes on outcomes:

The Dream Nine were successful at least for the time being in returning to their homes. The National Immigrant Youth Alliance was successful in bringing the Dream Nine to the attention of federal lawmakers as well as many different national media sources, and was partially successful in changing U.S. immigration policy, as the Dream Nine campaign helped to create a more viable route for deported undocumented immigrants to return to their American homes.

Beginning in 2008, the Obama Administration of the United States government accelerated the deportation of illegal immigrants from the United States, deporting roughly twice as many immigrants as the most recent previous presidential administrations.

Many children had been brought into the U.S. from Mexico illegally as small children during the 20th and 21st centuries, and had grown up in a state of legal limbo in which they were constantly scared of being deported. In July 2013, nine members of the National Immigrant Youth Alliance who had either been deported to Mexico or had left the U.S. because of discrimination, called themselves “Dream Nine” after the Dream Act, which would provide immigrants with a path for legalization, and met to form a protest. Members of the Dream Nine included Lizbeth Mateo, Adriana Diaz, Lulu Martinez, Ceferino Santiago, Claudia Amaro, Luis Leon, Mario Felix, Maria Peniche and Marco Saavedra.

On 22 July, the “Dream Nine” held a press conference in which they declared their intent to march across the Mexico-United States border. The Nine wanted to return to their homes in America, and the National Immigrant Youth Alliance wanted to get

national media coverage of the legal predicament many illegal immigrants were in, as well as change the United States' immigration policy. In response to the press conference, the United States border patrol sent an email to the National Immigrant Youth Alliance threatening the immediate arrest and deportation of the border-crossers.

Later that day, the Dream Nine crossed the border as supporters including citizens, green card-holders, and undocumented activists gathered on the U.S. side of the border, chanting "Bring Them Home." Upon crossing the border, the nine were detained by the United States border patrol, and sent to the Eloy Detention Center in Arizona after petitioning to enter the United States on humanitarian grounds.

Congressional Representative Luis Gutierrez called on the Obama Administration to use its discretionary powers to free the activists, and the National Immigrant Youth Alliance instigated a mass petition to free the Dream Nine, gathering thousands of signatures.

The prison guards refused to allow the Dream Nine access to basic telephone privileges, and in response, the Dream Nine began a hunger strike, which lasted for two days. 70 other women joined the hunger strike in solidarity, and 12 additional women began a partial fast, eating just one meal per day. In addition, members of the Dream Nine and the other fasters began a boycott, refusing to go outside, or shop from the store in the detention center.

As a result of the hunger strike, the detention center allowed the striking prisoners to make phone calls on 26 July 2013. However, in response to the organizing, the prison guards began verbal and physically harassing prisoners who spoke to the Dream Nine. Maria Peniche and Lulu Martinez encouraged other women to join the hunger strike during dinner, chanting "Undocumented, Unafraid" in Spanish. In response, the prison placed both of them in solitary confinement.

The immigration officials at the detention center rejected the Dream Nine's appeal to enter the U.S. under humanitarian grounds, and in response the Dream Nine applied for asylum within the U.S. In a telephone interview, Amaro said that the goal of the Dream Nine was to go home to America.

Outside of Eloy detainment center, members of the National Immigrant Youth Alliance and supporters of the Dream Nine held a vigil every night, and other supporters held a rally in Manhattan outside of Senator Chuck Schumer's office on 26 July, as well various protests in other cities. The Dream Nine received hundreds of letters of support, including letters from 42 Federal Congressman and Senators, and Congressman Gutierrez gave a speech on the floor of Congress asking for them to be freed. Meanwhile, prison officials continued to hold Peniche and Martinez in solitary confinement, considered torture by the United Nations, although by 6 August immigration officials approved the submitted "credible fear" of seven of the nine, a requirement to apply for asylum.

On 7 August, immigration officials approved the "credible fear" of all nine of the Dream Nine, and released them on parole, allowing them to return to their American homes for an indefinite amount of time until an immigration judge is able to hear their case for asylum, a process that often takes many years. In the following months, a group of 30 undocumented immigrants employed similar tactics as the Dream Nine, crossing the border from Mexico into the United States and applying for asylum. 22 out of the 30 were allowed to return into the United States on parole. (Over the past 8 years, 2% of Mexican citizens applying for asylum were allowed to enter the U.S. on parole.)

The Dream Nine were successful at least for the time being in returning to their homes. The National Immigrant Youth Alliance was successful in bringing the Dream Nine to the attention of federal lawmakers as well as many different national media sources, and was partially successful in changing U.S. immigration policy, as the Dream Nine campaign helped to create a more viable route for deported undocumented immigrants to return to their American homes.

Research Notes

Influences:

not known

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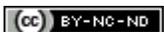
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