



Global Nonviolent Action Database

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U.S. disability activists (ADAPT) campaign against rebuilding of Laguna Honda Hospital, 2001

20 October

2001

to: 24 October

2001

Country: United States

Location City/State/Province: *San Francisco, California*

Goals:

To stop Laguna Honda, the largest nursing home in the world, from being rebuilt, and to promote the expansion of home and community-based alternatives provided by San Francisco's long-term health care system.

Methods

Methods in 1st segment:

- 001. Public speeches
- 002. Letters of opposition or support
- 003. Declarations by organizations and institutions
- 004. Signed public statements
- 007. Slogans, caricatures, and symbols
- 008. Banners, posters, and displayed communications
- 018. Displays of flags and symbolic colors
- 019. Wearing of symbols
- 047. Assemblies of protest or support
- 048. Protest meetings

Methods in 2nd segment:

- 007. Slogans, caricatures, and symbols
- 008. Banners, posters, and displayed communications
- 010. Newspapers and journals
- 018. Displays of flags and symbolic colors
- 019. Wearing of symbols
- 047. Assemblies of protest or support
- 048. Protest meetings

Methods in 3rd segment:

- 007. Slogans, caricatures, and symbols
- 008. Banners, posters, and displayed communications

- 010. Newspapers and journals
- 018. Displays of flags and symbolic colors
- 019. Wearing of symbols
- 021. Delivering symbolic objects
- 033. Fraternalization
- 037. Singing
- 047. Assemblies of protest or support
- 048. Protest meetings
- 171. Nonviolent interjection
- 172. Nonviolent obstruction

Methods in 4th segment:

- 007. Slogans, caricatures, and symbols
- 008. Banners, posters, and displayed communications
- 010. Newspapers and journals
- 018. Displays of flags and symbolic colors
- 019. Wearing of symbols
- 021. Delivering symbolic objects
- 033. Fraternalization
- 037. Singing
- 038. Marches
- 047. Assemblies of protest or support
- 048. Protest meetings
- 171. Nonviolent interjection
- 172. Nonviolent obstruction

Methods in 5th segment:

- 002. Letters of opposition or support
- 003. Declarations by organizations and institutions
- 004. Signed public statements
- 007. Slogans, caricatures, and symbols
- 008. Banners, posters, and displayed communications
- 010. Newspapers and journals
- 013. Deputations
- 018. Displays of flags and symbolic colors
- 019. Wearing of symbols
- 047. Assemblies of protest or support
- 048. Protest meetings

Methods in 6th segment:

- 001. Public speeches
- 004. Signed public statements
- 007. Slogans, caricatures, and symbols
- 008. Banners, posters, and displayed communications
- 010. Newspapers and journals
- 018. Displays of flags and symbolic colors
- 019. Wearing of symbols
- 038. Marches

- 047. Assemblies of protest or support
- 048. Protest meetings
- 171. Nonviolent interjection

Classifications

Classification:

Change

Cluster:

Human Rights

Group characterization:

- Disability rights activists

Leaders, partners, allies, elites

Leaders:

Mike Auberger (co-founder of ADAPT), Herb Levine (of the Independent Living Resource Center), Bill Coffelt (co-chair of the National Coalition on Self-Determination (NConSD)), Stephanie Thomas, Bob Kafka, Barbara Toomer

Partners:

Independent Living Resource Center

National Coalition on Self-Determination (NConSD)

External allies:

Not known

Involvement of social elites:

Not known

Joining/exiting order of social groups

Groups in 1st Segment:

- Americans Disabled for Attendant Programs Today (ADAPT)

Groups in 2nd Segment:

Groups in 3rd Segment:

Groups in 4th Segment:

Groups in 5th Segment:

Groups in 6th Segment:

Segment Length: *Approximately 1 day*

Opponent, Opponent Responses, and Violence

Opponents:

San Francisco, California, and Federal government officials

Nonviolent responses of opponent:

Not known

Campaigner violence:

None known

Repressive Violence:

Arrests, dragging, and one campaigner got hit by a car trying to break through the blockade, but was unharmed.

Success Outcome

Success in achieving specific demands/goals:

3 points out of 6 points

Survival:

1 point out of 1 points

Growth:

1 point out of 3 points

On Saturday, October 20, 2001, five hundred ADAPT advocates gathered in San Francisco at the Ramada Plaza Hotel to get organized for their protest of the rebuilding of Laguna Honda, the largest nursing home in the nation, which demanded the majority of San Francisco's Long Term Care Budget, causing community-based services to become neglected and under-funded.

On Sunday, October 21, ADAPT members gathered across the street from the Laguna Honda Hospital, where they held an opening rally. They then marched across the street and to the front entrance of the building, where they continued their rally until leaving peacefully for the evening.

On Monday, October 22, ADAPT went to the San Francisco City Hall building. At noon, they successfully shut down the four streets around the building by simultaneously breaking the traffic at all four surrounding intersections. They also blocked the two main entrances to the building. Downtown traffic came to a standstill until San Francisco police were able to re-direct traffic away from the building.

ADAPT demanded that Mayor Willie Brown, who had supported the rebuilding of Laguna Honda, meet with them about the numerous community-based alternative long-term care options to rebuilding the huge institution. The Mayor negotiated with ADAPT through the San Francisco Police, agreeing to meet with representatives of ADAPT on Wednesday, October 24 at 9:00 a.m. if ADAPT would reopen City Hall and allow normal traffic to resume.

On Tuesday, October 23, ADAPT carried out a similar action at the California State Office Building, but got very different results. The 500 ADAPT activists simultaneously surrounded the building, blocked the two main entrances, and blocked all four surrounding intersections at noon, and demanded that California "develop, fund, and implement by February of next year (2002), a comprehensive, effectively working plan that will end inappropriate state institutionalizations." Robert Oaks, the Director of the Regional Governor's Office, eventually agreed to meet with ADAPT representatives after claiming that he was unable to get in touch with the governor, but ADAPT refused the offer.

At 2:30, a group of about 25 activists who were blocking one of the entrances climbed out of their wheelchairs and began crawling up the stairs toward the line of California State Police guarding the door. The police then began their arrests, arresting 5 of the crawling group members, pulling them into the building without their wheelchairs. At the other entrance, another confrontation occurred, in which the police officers demanded that the protestors stop restricting access to the building, to which the protestors responded by getting out of their wheelchairs and laying down in the pathway to the entrance. Eventually, the state troopers gave up and ADAPT took control of the door. The ADAPT activists blocking traffic were also dealing with angry

confrontations. One activist was hit by a driver attempting to break through the blockade, but was luckily unhurt.

The confrontations continued all afternoon. Statements from Governor Davis were offered to ADAPT by his staff in attempts to end the standoff, but ADAPT refused to stop protesting until he committed to attending the meeting with Mayor Brown on Wednesday morning. At 4:40, the San Francisco Police Department declared ADAPT's to be an unlawful assembly, and the mass arrests began. By 5:50, the streets were reopened and a total of 120 ADAPT activists had been arrested.

On Wednesday, October 24, fifteen ADAPT representatives met with Mayor Brown, as agreed upon during ADAPT's City Hall protest on Monday, in order to discuss community-based alternatives to the rebuilding of Laguna Honda. Outside of City Hall, where the meeting was being held, the rest of the ADAPT members held a rally of support. The meeting did not go well when Mayor Brown would not agree to ADAPT's minimal demand of starting a task force in order to study the issues.

After the meeting with Mayor Brown, ADAPT marched from City Hall to the Federal Building at the United Nations Plaza, where they performed their action of blocking the entrances one last time. ADAPT demanded that "the Regional Department of Health and Human Services Office of Civil Rights take action on the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Title II complaint against Laguna Honda, stop federal reimbursement funds for the thirty-bed wards at Laguna Honda, and not allow federal funds to be used in the rebuilding." Josh Valdez of the Department of Health and Human Services agreed to ADAPT's demands, and scheduled a meeting with San Franciscan ADAPT organizers to coordinate a task force on the issue.

Research Notes

Influences:

For more campaigns by ADAPT, see: "Colorado disability rights activists (ADAPT) prevent budget cuts to Medicaid Home-Health Services, 2002"; "U.S. disability rights activists (ADAPT) win support from Governors for Medicaid reform, 2002-2005"; and "Disability rights activists (ADAPT) campaign for affordable and accessible housing in Chicago, 2007"

Sources:

Wheat, Tom, ADAPT Action Report, San Francisco. October 2001, <http://www.adapt.org/freeourpeople/aar/lh/>

Ward, Brant. "Rights Protest Parade." The San Francisco Chronicle, pg A18. 25 Oct 2001

Sullivan, Kathleen. "S.F.'s plan to keep Laguna Honda draws protest - Disability rights activists say city's nursing home too large." The San Francisco Chronicle, pg A13. 20 Oct 2001

Additional Notes:

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Name of researcher, and date dd/mm/yyyy:

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