

Prisoners in Danbury Refuse to Work

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Special to The New York Times

DANBURY, Conn., Feb. 28—About 420 inmates of the Federal Correctional Institute staged a peaceful work stoppage beginning at 8 A.M. today, but did not present any demands, according to prison officials.

"The work bell rang and only about 40 per cent of the men left their dormitories to work," said William Key, chief of classification and parole. "Some of the correctional officers went

over to the quarters and the fellows said they didn't want to work."

The prisoners did not ask to speak to the warden, and he has not met with them, according to Mr. Key.

"We're trying to talk the men individually and find out why they are not working," he added.

He said that the Federal Bureau of Prisons had been notified of the work stoppage but that no state officials had been

reached nor had "outside help" been requested for the 30 security guards on duty.

The medium-security prison, on a hill four miles north of Danbury, has 764 inmates serving sentences of five years or less. Most live in open dormitories, although there are 30 cells in the beige three-story building.

Most prisoners are employed in a glove factory and electronic cable assembly shop within the one-and-a-half acre building complex, or in maintenance work on the several dozen acres of open lawns outside the buildings.

Hunger Strike Wanes

Special to The New York Times

SOMERS, Conn., Feb. 28—A weekend hunger strike by as many as 900 of the 1,050 inmates at the Connecticut Correctional Institution here dwindled to fewer than 150 hold-outs today as state prison authorities continued interviewing inmates to determine the cause of the boycott.

A spokesman for Connecticut Correction Commissioner John R. Manson said late today that the prisoners had made no formal demands and that the reasons for the strike had not been established. Weekend visitors at the prison—the largest of the state's 11 penal institutions—said inmates had complained of food quality, inadequate medical attentions and harassment by guards.

The hunger strike, which began at supper Friday, was punctuated by two brief disturbances. Prison authorities said some inmates declining to participate were attacked in a brief scuffle in the dining hall last night by others trying to enforce the boycott. One inmate was slightly injured, and all prisoners were then confined to their cells.

Early this morning, several inmates were said to have set fire to bedding, which was pushed through bars into cell-block corridors. The fires were quickly extinguished without injury, officials said.