

October 22nd in Cleveland was a breath of fresh air! Between 50 and 60 people started at the women's prison and it was clear this was the kind of coming together that is rare in this very segregated and economically divided city. With the prison population of women exploding all over the country, this was a fitting place to start the protests and loudly to take the national Pledge of Resistance.

A spirited march took off at a fast pace towards downtown. Whistles accompanied chants of "Indict, Convict, Send those Killing Cops to Jail, the Whole damn System is Guilty as Hell!" Horns bared in support. People gave thumbs up. "Killer Cops by the Hour, What do We Say? Fight the Power!" At Cleveland State University, the March went inside the student center, where the Pledge echoed loudly three stories up the atrium as people lined the balconies. "Mass Incarceration is the New Jim Crow, the Whole Damn System has Got to Go!"

It was 3 miles to Cleveland's downtown Public Square which was filling up with public school students catching buses. The marchers arrived and were joined by over 100 more people for the 3:00PM rally. Pictures of people whose lives have been stolen by killer cops were lined up along the front of the make-shift stage. The outrage against the brutal killing of Malissa Williams and Timothy Russell when police fired 137 shots was strong on people's minds. Banners and a large mock-up jail cell were the backdrop to a powerful rally featuring family members of people murdered by the police, talented young Black spoken word artists, and reps from diverse groups who have been in the trenches for years of protests and the new faces of resistance.

Puncture the Silence and Revolution books had tables, and Food Not Bombs was there with free food. There was also a small, but spirited group of drummers there during the rally.

The people were determined that this day was the beginning of the end to this new Jim Crow and slow genocide. Inspiration was taken from the courageous people in Ferguson and around the country as the call "We are all Michael Brown. We are all Eric Garner" went out in earnest. With youth in the forefront, the day ended with a March to the (In)Justice Center.