

Tacoma, Immigration and
the Northwest Detention
Center:
A Call to Action for
Tacomans



and why YOU should care
enough to get involved

Introduction

As many Tacomans probably noticed, on November 9th 2007 there was a protest downtown. Tacoma hadn't seen this kind of action for years! The purpose of the march was to get the word out on the streets that there is a detention facility in the tide flats and to get a dialogue going about I.C.E. and immigration in our town. We made lots of fliers and information leaflets and passed them out to people as we marched. We stopped in front of the giant Wells Fargo building on Pacific to call attention to the fact that Wells Fargo is one of GEO Group's largest investors. GEO Group runs the Northwest Detention Center and many other facilities both in the US and other countries.

That march was not enough, nor was it our intention for it to be the end of our vocal opposition to the detention center here. As I write this our government is using our tax dollars to build more detention centers.

The biggest problem with this issue is that it leaves many of us between a rock and a hard place when it comes to figuring out what the "right" thing to do is. I have no doubt that most people are sickened at the thought of human suffering. We are being told that the mass arrests, detentions and ultimate deportations of undocumented immigrants are being carried out in our best interests. Words like national security, sovereignty, terrorism and criminals are invoked to raise our ire. We are told that the people coming from other countries to work are taking our jobs and hurting the economy. Any logical person would agree then, that removing these elements from our country is the right thing to do. The problem with this logic is that the holes in the arguments are big enough to throw a cop through.

ICE is a branch of homeland security that has managed to operate below the radar of most Americans, carrying out raids of homes and workplaces in a manner reminiscent of the gestapo. I use this language not to add dramatic effect, but to invoke imagery that we are all familiar with. This is part of other side of the coin that is very different than the one ICE and Homeland Security shows to the public. It does not take much reading between the lines (or reading on the internet for that matter) to begin to create a fuller picture of reality. This is not a conspiracy theory by any means. Again, Americans know what the bottom line is to government and it is money. Is it so far beyond a stretch of imagination to think that perhaps the government, under the guise of protecting our interests and safety is in fact merely making itself and the corporations that run it richer at the expense of a few human lives?

This is about human beings for us. This is about our need to stand up for ourselves and for those who have been silenced by force and

coercion. America is beautiful and exceptional because we have an opportunity to learn and live amongst every kind of person that exists, our culture can only be made fuller and richer by the contributions of human diversity. Take that away out of fear and we will shrivel up and die, a lone dragon on a horde of gold.

So many of us are blaming immigrants for our woes. It is torturously frustrating that the real monsters are getting away scott free. Government and big-business are congratulating each other for successfully pulling off this heist. They are stealing the very foundation of, the very meaning of America from us and our children and if we allow them to we are liable for our own destruction.

This booklet is a moderate compilation of articles and bits of information intended to tell the other side of the story. We BEG you to do your own research and come to your own conclusions, this is hopefully a jumping off point for that. This DOES affect YOU! If you have children it will affect them. It is up to us to decide, together, what we want Tacoma to look like in 10 years. If we choose to fight ICE and the detention center in the tide flats it will effect what the entire country looks like in 10 years.

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Immigration Flood Unleashed by NAFTA's Disastrous Impact on Mexican Economy
by Roger Bybee and Carolyn Winter

The recent ferment on immigration policy has been so narrow that it has excluded the real issue: family-sustaining wages for workers both north and south of the border. The role of the North American Free Trade Agreement and misnamed 'free trade' has been scarcely mentioned in the increasingly bitter debate over the fate of America's 11 to 12 million illegal aliens.

NAFTA was sold to the American public as the magic formula that would improve the American economy at the same time it would raise up the impoverished Mexican economy. The time has come to look at the failures of this type of trade agreement before we engage in more and lower the economic prospects of all workers affected.

While there has been some media coverage of NAFTA's ruinous impact on US industrial communities, there has been even less media attention paid to its catastrophic effects in Mexico:

* NAFTA, by permitting heavily-subsidized US corn and other agribusiness products to compete with small Mexican farmers, has driven the Mexican farmer off the land due to low-priced imports of US corn and other agricultural products. Some 2 million Mexicans have been forced out of agriculture, and many of those that remain are living in desperate poverty. These people are among those that cross the border to feed their families. (Meanwhile, corn-based tortilla prices climbed by 50%. No wonder many so Mexican peasants have called NAFTA their 'death warrant.'

* NAFTA's service-sector rules allowed big firms like Wal-Mart to enter the Mexican market and, selling low-priced goods made by ultra-cheap labor in China, to displace locally-based shoe, toy, and candy firms. An estimated 28,000 small and medium-sized Mexican businesses have been eliminated.

* Wages along the Mexican border have actually been driven down by about 25% since NAFTA, reported a Carnegie Endowment study. An over-supply of workers, combined with the crushing of union organizing drives as government policy, has resulted in sweatshop pay running sweatshops along the border where wages typically run 60 cents to \$1 an hour.

So rather than improving living standards, Mexican wages have actually fallen since NAFTA. The initial growth in the number of jobs has leveled off, with China's even more repressive labor system luring US firms to locate there instead.

But Mexicans must still contend with the results of the American-

owned 'maquiladora' sweatshops: subsistence-level wages, pollution, congestion, horrible living conditions (cardboard shacks and open sewers), and a lack of resources (for streetlights and police) to deal with a wave of violence against vulnerable young women working in the factories. The survival (or less) level wages coupled with harsh working conditions have not been the great answer to Mexican poverty, while they have temporarily been the answer to Corporate America's demand for low wages.

With US firms unwilling to pay even minimal taxes, NAFTA has hardly produced the promised uplift in the lives of Mexicans. Ciudad Juarez Mayor Gustavo Elizondo, whose city is crammed with US-owned low-wage plants, expressed it plainly: "We have no way to provide water, sewage, and sanitation workers. Every year, we get poorer and poorer even though we create more and more wealth."

Falling industrial wages, peasants forced off the land, small businesses liquidated, growing poverty: these are direct consequences of NAFTA. This harsh suffering explains why so many desperate Mexicans -- lured to the border area in the false hope that they could find dignity in the US-owned maquiladoras -- are willing to risk their lives to cross the border to provide for their families. There were 2.5 million Mexican illegals in 1995; 8 million have crossed the border since then. In 2005, some 400 desperate Mexicans died trying to enter the US.

NAFTA failed to curb illegal immigration precisely because it was never designed as a genuine development program crafted to promote rising living standards, health care, environmental cleanup, and worker rights in Mexico. The wholesale surge of Mexicans across the border dramatically illustrates that NAFTA was no attempt at a broad uplift of living conditions and democracy in Mexico, but a formula for government-sanctioned corporate plunder benefiting elites on both sides of the border.

NAFTA essentially annexed Mexico as a low-wage industrial suburb of the US and opened Mexican markets to heavily-subsidized US agribusiness products, blowing away local producers. Capital could flow freely across the border to low-wage factories and Wal-mart-type retailers, but the same standard of free access would be denied to Mexican workers.

Meanwhile, with the planned Central American Free Trade Agreement with five Central American nations coming up, we can anticipate even greater pressure on our borders as agricultural workers are pushed off the land without positive, alternative employment opportunities. People from Guatemala and Honduras will soon learn that they can't compete for industrial jobs with the most oppressed people in say, China, by agreeing to lowering their wages even more. Further,

impoverished Central American countries don't have the resources to deal with the pollution and crime that results from moving people from rural areas to the city, often without their families.

Thus far, we have been presented with a narrow range of options to cope with the tide of illegal immigrants living fearfully in the shadows of American life. Should they simply be walled off and criminalized, as Sensenbrenner and House Republicans suggest? The Sensenbrenner option seeks to exploit the sentiment that illegal immigrants entering the US -- rather than US corporations exiting the US for Mexico and China -- are the primary cause of falling wages for most Americans.

The Bush version is only slightly different, envisioning the "illegal immigrants" as part of a vast disposable pool of cheap labor with no meaningful rights on the job or even the right to vote, to be returned to Mexico upon the whim of their employers.

Yet there is another well-known path of economic and social integration that has been ignored in the debates over immigration in the US: the one followed by the European Union and their "social charter" calling for decent wages, health care, and extensive retraining in all nations. Before then-impoverished nations like Spain, Greece and Portugal were admitted, they received massive EU investments in roads, health care, clean water, and education. The implementation of democracy, including worker rights, was an equally vital pre-condition for entry into the EU.

The underlying concept: the entire reason for trade is to provide improved lives across borders, not to exploit the cheapest labor and weakest environmental rules. We need to question the widely-held assumption that what benefits American corporations benefits Mexican workers and American workers. An authentic plan for growth and development isn't about further enriching Wall Street, major corporations, and a handful of Mexican billionaires; it is about the creation of family-supporting jobs. It is also about a healthy environment, healthy workers, good education, and ordinary people being able to achieve their dreams.

The massive tide of illegal immigration from Mexico is merely one symptom of an economic arrangement where human needs -- not maximum profits-- are not the ultimate goal but a subject of neglect. Neither a massive, shameful barrier at the border nor a disposable guest-worker program will address the problems ignited by NAFTA.

The Real Political Purpose of the ICE Raids

New America Media, Commentary, David Bacon, Posted: Mar 30, 2007

Editor's note: Yesterday immigration agents arrested more than 50 people in raids on a temporary employment agency's offices and places where it provided undocumented workers in Baltimore. NAM associate editor David Bacon says these raids are serving more than one political purpose.

BERKELEY, Calif. - For the last several months, agents of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) have carried out well-publicized immigration raids in factories, meatpacking plants, janitorial services, and other workplaces employing immigrants. ICE calls the workers criminals, because immigration law forbids employers to hire them.

But while workers get deported, and often must leave their children with relatives, or even strangers, don't expect to see many of their employers go to jail. Further, ICE can't, and won't, deport all 12 million undocumented workers in the country. This would quickly halt many industries. Instead, these raids have a political purpose.

Last fall, after agents raided Swift & Co. meatpacking plants, Homeland Secretary Michael Chertoff told the media the deportations would show Congress the need for "stronger border security, effective interior enforcement and a temporary-worker program." Bush wants, he said, "a program that would allow businesses that need foreign workers, because they can't otherwise satisfy their labor needs, to be able to get those workers in a regulated program."

In his recent visit to Mexico, President Bush again proposed new guest worker programs. He would allow corporations and contractors to recruit hundreds of thousands of workers a year outside of the US, and put them to work here on temporary, employment-based visas.

Last week, Congressmen Luis Gutierrez and Jeff Flake introduced a bill into Congress which would set up the kind of guest worker program the President calls for. Corporations could bring in 400,000 guest workers annually, while the kind of sanctions that have led to the wave of workplace raids would be put on steroids.

Labor schemes like this have a long history. From 1942 to 1964 the bracero program recruited temporary immigrants, who were exploited, cheated, and deported if they tried to go on strike. Growers pitted them against workers already in the country to drive down wages. Cesar Chavez and other Latino leaders campaigned to get the program repealed.

Advocates of today's programs avoid the bitter "bracero" label, and

call them "guest worker," "essential worker," or just "new worker" schemes. You can't clean up an unpleasant reality, however, by renaming it.

Guest worker programs are low-wage schemes, intended to supply plentiful labor to corporate employers, at a price they want to pay. Companies don't recruit guest workers so they can pay them more, but to pay them less. According to Rob Rosado, director of legislative affairs for the American Meat Institute, meatpackers want a guest worker program, but not a basic wage guarantee for those workers. "We don't want the government setting wages," he says. "The market determines wages."

The Southern Poverty Law Center's recent report, *Close to Slavery*, shows that current guest worker programs allow labor contractors to maintain blacklists of workers who work slowly or demand their rights. Public interest lawyers spend years in court, trying just to get back wages for cheated immigrants. Meanwhile, the Department of Labor almost never decertifies contractors who abuse workers.

The AFL-CIO opposes guest worker programs, and says immigrants should be given permanent residence visas, so they have labor rights and can become normal members of the communities they live in. Since 1999, the AFL-CIO has called for legalization of the 12 million people living in the US without documents. Most unions oppose employer sanctions and the recent immigration raids, because they're often used used to threaten and punish workers when they speak out for better wages and conditions.

Today over 180 million people in the world already live outside the countries where they were born. In the countries that are the main sources of migration to the US, trade agreements like NAFTA, and market-based economic reforms, have uprooted hundreds of thousands of farmers and workers, leaving them little option other than coming north.

A rational immigration policy should end trade and investment policies abroad that produce poverty and displace people. In the US, immigration policy should emphasize rights and equality, and protect all families and communities, of immigrants and native-born alike.

Using immigration raids instead as a pressure tactic to get Congress to approve guest worker programs is not a legitimate use of enforcement. It undermines the family and community values for which this country stands.

Paying the Price: The Impact of Immigration Raids on America's Children

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The text below is an excerpt from the complete document. Read the full paper in PDF format.

Introduction-

There are approximately five million U.S. children with at least one undocumented parent. The recent intensification of immigration enforcement activities by the federal government has increasingly put these children at risk of family separation, economic hardship, and psychological trauma. U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), the interior enforcement arm of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), the federal agency charged with enforcing immigration laws, has markedly increased the pace of worksite raids in the past few years to apprehend undocumented immigrants: the number of undocumented immigrants arrested at workplaces increased more than sevenfold from 500 to 3,600 between 2002 and 2006. These actions are part of intensified enforcement activities, including deportation of immigrants who have committed crimes; door-to-door operations to arrest immigrants with deportation orders; and large-scale raids of suspected undocumented immigrants' worksites. With the collapse of comprehensive immigration reform in Congress, and the all but certain appropriation of additional enforcement resources to ICE, it is likely that the number of worksite actions will continue to increase. The primary goal of this paper is to go beyond the human interest stories reported in the media and provide a factual basis for discussing the impact of worksite enforcement operations on children with undocumented parents. The study focuses on children because they have strong claims to the protection of society, especially when they are citizens and integrated into their schools and communities, and the United States is the only country they have known and consider home. They also warrant our attention because they are emotionally, financially, and developmentally dependent on their parents' care, protection, and earnings.

The findings discussed in this report are based on a study of three communities that experienced large-scale worksite raids within the past year: Greeley, Colorado; Grand Island, Nebraska; and New Bedford, Massachusetts. In each location Urban Institute staff met with employers, lawyers, religious leaders, public social service

agencies, nonprofit agencies, community leaders, and others to discuss the immediate aftermath of the raids, as well as the potential longer-term impact on children. Parents, including some released from ICE detention, and other caregivers of affected children were interviewed individually.

Greeley and Grand Island were two of the six sites in which Swift & Company meatpacking plants were raided. New Bedford was the site of a raid on Michael Bianco, Inc., a textile manufacturing facility that makes backpacks for the U.S. military. In all three sites the vast majority of workers arrested were from Mexico, Guatemala, or other Latin American countries. The findings in this report, however, may also be applicable to children with undocumented parents from other regions of the world, as about 22% of all undocumented immigrants in the nation come from regions other than Latin America.

Trans Woman dies in Immigration Detention Center

(a repost of an article by Leslie Feinberg)

Submitted by bmedia on Tue, 2007-09-11 06:38. BolivarianMediaExchange

Olga Arellano spoke at a rally at the Federal Building in downtown Los Angeles on Aug. 27 about how her 23-year-old daughter, Victoria, died July 20 at an Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) federal detention facility in South Los Angeles.

"I can only find the strength to talk about this because I want people to know what is going on inside that place," Olga Arellano stated. "I don't want another family to have to live through this nightmare." (Daily Journal, Aug. 9)

Authorities reportedly refused to give Victoria Arellano—an undocumented Mexican transwoman with AIDS—urgently needed medical attention and her critically necessary prescribed antibiotic, despite mass protests on her behalf by other immigrant detainees. Authorities had imprisoned her since May in a men's mass detention cell.

Outrage over Victoria Arellano's death is forging a coalition of organizations that fight for immigrant rights, AIDS care, and trans, lesbian, gay and bisexual rights. The bilingual Los Angeles vigil and media conference was called by Arellano's family and Bienestar—a Latina community service and advocacy organization working to meet the needs of people living with HIV/AIDS.

The Aug. 26 call for the vigil was signed by Grupo de Apoyo HIVIDA in Ciudad Juárez, México, and the following California-based groups: Asian Pacific American Legal Center of Southern California; API Equality; Garment Workers Center; Homies Unidos; Coalition of Humane Immigration Rights of Los Angeles; Club Napa Gay; QTeam; Gay and Straight Alliance Network; Inlakech; SELA HIV Prevention Program; Los Angeles Gay and Lesbian Center; Transgender Law Center; The Wall Las Memorias Project; and the American Civil Liberties Union of Southern California.

National organizations included the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF); National Immigrant Solidarity Network; Project Islamic HOPE; Lambda Legal; and the Gay and Lesbian Task Force. Coalición de Derechos Humanos—Arizona; Immigration Equality—N.Y.; and Esperanza Peace and Justice Center of Texas endorsed.

The immigrant rights March 25 Coalition and the Troops Out Now Coalition supported and publicized the vigil.

Bienestar communications manager, Coral Lopez, said: "This case exemplifies what we've been saying for all these years—immigration is in fact an LGBT issue. Victoria's unfortunate death demonstrates why we need to be working in coalition on these issues."

A solidarity vigil for Victoria Arellano was also held Aug. 28 at the Federal Building in Tucson, Ariz. Sponsoring groups included Derechos Humanos, the National Network for Immigrant and Refugee Rights, May 1st Coalition, Borderland Theater, Fundación México, Tucson Samaritans, Salt of the Earth Labor College, Humane Borders and Wingspan—Southern Arizona's LGBT community center.

That vigil called for socially just legislation, an end to deaths at the border, an end to raids, a moratorium on immigration detentions and deportations, restoration and expansion of the due process rights of all immigrants and protection and expansion of the labor, human and civil rights of all immigrants and refugees.

Prisoners protested for Victoria.

Victoria Arellano, whose birth name was Víctor, came to the U.S. as a child. As a young adult, she worked at a supermarket in West Hollywood while volunteering at a drug and alcohol treatment facility. Three years before her detention, she was medically described as "asymptomatic." She was prescribed a dose of antibiotics—first bactrim and later dapasone—designed to stave off pulmonary infections that could lead to pneumonia.

Arellano was swept up by ICE agents in May and denied medication while in detention facing deportation.

"The consequences of taking someone off that medication," observed Homayoon Khanlou, chief of medicine for the AIDS Healthcare Foundation, "is that within a few weeks a patient may unfortunately develop pneumonia and then not respond to treatment." (Daily Journal, Aug. 9)

She was held in a mass cell designed to bunk 50 men, but in which some 80 prisoners were crammed.

If the tenderness of the solidarity that the immigrant men showed to Arellano could have saved her life, she would still be alive.

The respect for her as a trans prisoner can be heard in the quotes by the men jailed with her, who described in an Aug. 9 Daily Journal report how Arellano lay in a bunk bed suffering from excruciating headaches, stomach cramps and back pain.

Prisoner Oscar Santander recalled, "We all asked the guards for help, to take Victoria to the infirmary, but no one did anything." In the last two weeks of her life, prisoner Walter Ayala said, "She was so sick that if you tried to move her she would scream."

He stressed, "We made requests to the infirmary asking for help because she was so sick. She wasn't eating, she had constant diarrhea, and she was vomiting blood. The nurse who responded was totally inhumane. She said, 'Oh, is that the same person you complained to us about before? The doctor hasn't approved any medication. Just give her Tylenol and water, and it'll go away.' This happened each time we made a request for six days."

The men described how they used their bath towels soaked in cold water to try to bring down her fever and brought cardboard boxes for her to throw up into. The immigrant detainees cleaned up the blood and vomit.

Under pressure from those imprisoned with Arellano, on July 13 the detention center infirmary gave her a prescription for amoxicillin, which is not an antibiotic used to treat AIDS-related infections, medical experts noted.

Less than a day later she was back in the cell. Arellano couldn't stomach the drugs and threw up blood, Santander said.

"The last week was the worst," he stressed. "She couldn't stand so we took turns taking her to the bathroom." Prisoner Abel Gutierrez said, "She was so sick and they wouldn't do anything." Gutierrez described how that night, 80 of her fellow prisoners defied the order to line up for evening head count, and staged a protest on Arellano's behalf.

Gutierrez said the detainees chanted one word loudly in unison, over and over: "Hospital!"

More than 70 of the prisoners signed a petition demanding immediate medical care for Arellano.

The mass demonstration by prisoners forced officials to call an ambulance. Arellano was taken to the intensive care unit of Little Company of Mary Hospital.

There, although she was too weak to stand and on a respirator, Arellano's mother found her daughter chained to a hospital bed, while two immigration agents stood at the door.

Olga Arellano said, "At times, my Victoria wanted to reposition her body, but she couldn't because she was shackled." Guards refused the mother's request to unchain her daughter, who died two days later.

Medical neglect is lynching

After Arellano's death, her fellow prisoners collected \$245 from what little money they had and sent it to the Arellano family. (Daily Journal)

Arellano family attorney Roman Silberfeld stressed the solidarity shown by the more than 70 detainees who petitioned authorities for immediate care for a fellow prisoner. "These are people who are on the verge of being deported and have their cases pending and yet they stand up to the government that could kick them out and say, 'This is wrong.'" (Los Angeles Times, Aug. 11)

More than 20 of the men who contacted outside help on Arellano's behalf or witnessed her mistreatment were reportedly transferred out of the Los Angeles area, which disrupted their legal consultations and family visits. (hrw.org)

Bardis Vakili, of the American Civil Liberties Union of Southern California, added that some of the detainees who were transferred were not allowed to bring their legal papers, although they were days from court hearings. "This means these men don't have access to their immigration paperwork, or the research they did on their case. Many of them are representing themselves and this makes it very difficult for them."

The Arellano family announced plans to file a wrongful death claim against the Department of Homeland Security and other U.S. government agencies.

Arellano was the third prisoner known to have died at the San Pedro center. Since Arellano's death, a pregnant Mexican woman in El Paso

and a Brazilian man in Rhode Island have died in immigration custody. A total of 62 prisoners are known to have died in federal immigration detention since 2004.

Close to 30,000 immigrants are believed to be imprisoned in some 400 privately run and federal detention centers and jails. (Los Angeles Times, Aug. 11)

Confiscation of badly needed medication and refusing life-and-death medical attention are lynchings. Solidarity—the kind of unity that Victoria Arellano inspired—is a powerful weapon against this war of terror being waged against the undocumented immigrant population in the U.S.

Civil-rights groups blast Hutto facility
Texas House considers resolution condemning family detention center
By Joshua Haney

Community organizer Jay Johnson Castro Sr. speaks out against the detainment of immigrants at the Hutto detention center.

Media Credit: Jordan Gomez

Community organizer Jay Johnson Castro Sr. speaks out against the detainment of immigrants at the Hutto detention center.

Just 30 miles northeast from the Texas Capitol, the chain-link fences and spotlights of the T. Don Hutto detention center, a facility maintained by the for-profit Corrections Corporation of America, houses 400 detained aliens, with approximately 200 of them children, as they wait for the outcome of their immigration hearings.

On Saturday representatives from civil-rights groups, such as the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations, Mothers Against Discriminatory Racism in Education and Society and the League of United Latin American Citizens, gathered at the Capitol for a hearing concerning House Concurrent Resolution 64, which officially condemns Hutto on behalf of Texas lawmakers. The resolution will also offer alternatives for detaining immigrants.

"Putting children in jail is a disproportionate response to the issue of immigration," said Rep. Eddie Rodriguez, D-Austin, who put forward the resolution, in a written statement. "As a society we should uphold core values which reject policies that punish children for the acts of their parents."

The resolution accuses those operating the T. Don Hutto facility of serving low-quality food to the detained and states that this has "caused digestive problems for the children, including infants who

are forced to consume formula beyond the advised date due to a lack of alternative nutrition."

According to the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement Web site, the T. Don Hutto Family Residential Facility is a "state-of-the-art facility designed for families [...] and provides an effective and humane alternative to maintain the unity of alien families."

This detention center was, according to the immigration and customs Web site, established as a necessary alternative to the previous "catch-and-release" policy that facilitated "border vulnerability." According to the Web site, before opening the Hutto facility, immigrant families were detained after attempting to cross the U.S.-Mexico border illegally were released with "notices to appear" on a future date with a federal judge, for which they seldom appeared.

The Web site points out a list of characteristics of life inside the detention center. Among other things, the Web site assures that the facility houses families together in residential, non-secure setting where they can interact with one another.

But those present at the public hearing described much different conditions.

Community organizer Jay Johnson Castro Sr., who spoke at the hearing, denounced the Hutto center as a "crime against humanity" and cited the case of the Ebrhaim family as evidence of the gross neglect and mistreatment of the detainees.

The Ebrhaims, a family of five, were separated between three different cells. The three oldest children were split between the two cells and were not allowed access to the mother, Castro said.

Castro also pointed to the amount of money the facility receives per immigrant detainee as a point of concern.

"It is a money-laundering scam based on the pretext of national security," Castro said.

U.S. Shrouds Immigration Detention Center in Secrecy

New America Media, Commentary, Michele Deitch and Sunita Patel,

Posted: Jun 14, 2007

Editor's Note: When the U.S. government denied a United Nations expert access to two immigrant detention lock-ups it sent a worrying message about secrecy and lack of transparency in a system already being condemned as woefully inadequate. Michele Deitch teaches at the Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs at The University of Texas at Austin and is an expert on independent oversight of prisons and

jails. Sunita Patel, a Soros Justice Fellow with the New York Legal Aid Society, is a human rights attorney focusing on immigrant detention issues. She is a member of Detention Watch Network, a national coalition working to reform the U.S. immigration detention system. IMMIGRATION MATTERS regularly features the views of the nation's leading immigrant rights advocates.

Lost in the news about the immigration reform package was an incident with diplomatic implications. Recently the U.S. government shamefully denied a United Nations expert access to two immigrant detention lock-ups during the expert's three-week fact-finding mission to the United States.

Jorge Bustamante, U.N. Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Migrants, was invited by the U.S. State Department to observe and investigate immigrant detention in the United States. Yet on April 30, he was denied access to the T. Don Hutto detention facility, a private Texas prison that holds entire families, even small children, behind bars. Then, on May 14, the official was refused access to the Monmouth County jail in New Jersey, which houses almost 150 immigrant men and women pursuant to a contract with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), a division of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS).

The refusals reveal the total lack of transparency in the system of immigrant detention in the United States. To deny access to an independent observer, such as the U.N. expert, is to draw an iron curtain around those imprisoned in our name. As Mr. Bustamante has commented, it raises the perception that there is something to hide, and it eliminates an avenue for detainees to register complaints about mistreatment or abuse.

While such secrecy is of concern in any closed institution, it is particularly troubling when the U.S. immigrant detention system has such a deplorable track record. For over a decade, the media, human rights groups, and government audits have reported accounts of staff-on-detainee rapes, brutal assaults, and attacks by dogs; there have been numerous deaths due to denial of basic medical care; and detainees have been denied access to counsel. Conditions like these can thrive unless outsiders are permitted to observe and report.

It strains credulity to think that a private prison company—the Corrections Corporation of America—and a local sheriff, both under lucrative contracts with the federal government, can thumb their noses at the United Nations and the U.S. State Department and thwart the kind of inspection that routinely takes place all over the world by U.N. observers. The federal government clearly has authority to admit the official to these two lock-ups. That DHS declined to exercise this authority speaks volumes about the federal government's

lack of commitment both to the U.N. and to international human rights protections.

The justifications offered by DHS for the denials of access ring hollow. "Pending litigation" about conditions was the reason offered at the Hutto prison in Texas. Yet this is exactly when independent observers should be invited in. While the U.N. expert's visit would have little bearing on the actual lawsuit, it would have everything to do with letting the public and the international community know whether the widely reported concerns about the family detention facility are valid. An agency's credibility is enhanced, not threatened, when it invites outside observers to inspect or monitor conditions behind the walls. According to the U.N. expert, no explanation was even proffered for turning down his visit to the Monmouth County jail.

The current scheme of detention oversight in this country is woefully inadequate, a point driven home by DHS's inspector general (IG). In January 2007, the IG issued a damning report that criticized ICE for its inadequate annual inspections of its own prisons and its contracted facilities, and for non-compliance with its own standards and procedures, including grievance processes. What's more, former DHS Under Secretary Asa Hutchinson has testified about existing gaping holes in detention oversight and accountability, emphasizing that greater transparency is needed when it comes to complaints about abuse and sexual assault in these detention facilities.

As the United States continues debate on the immigration reform package, we must take steps to ensure that detainees are treated humanely and to establish effective oversight of detention conditions. We should enhance transparency and promote accountability for the protection of human rights by creating an independent agency with authority to conduct unannounced inspections and to report publicly on conditions for all persons in detention. A related proposal contained within the Safe and Secure Detention Act (Senator Lieberman's Amendment #1191 to the pending immigration bill) passed unanimously on June 6. And we should welcome with open arms any international officials who wish to visit these prisons and jails. This would send a powerful message to the rest of the world about our nation's commitment to human rights protections and fair treatment of immigrants.

From Human Rights Now! website:

Human Rights First Urges UN and IACHR to Review US Jailing of Asylum Seekers

Human Rights First has submitted a briefing paper to the United Nations Working Group on Arbitrary Detention outlining some of the ways in which U.S. detention of asylum seekers is arbitrary under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

As detailed in the paper, asylum seekers are held in prisons and immigration jails, the decision to detain them is not reviewed by an independent court, and the immigration agency's release processes vary widely across the country. Some refugees are jailed in these facilities for months or years.

Human Rights First has urged the U.N. Working Group to visit the United States to review the situation, but the United States must first extend an official invitation to the Working Group. On January 31, 2007, Human Rights First and 50 other organizations wrote to the U.S. Department of State and the Department of Homeland Security to urge them to extend that invitation to the working group.

Human Rights First also urged the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights to issue an advisory opinion on the arbitrary nature of U.S. detention policies for asylum seekers, and to visit detention centers where asylum seekers and immigrants are detained. In an October 24, 2007 submission, Human Rights First explained that U.S. detention of asylum seekers is inconsistent with Article 7 of the American Convention on Human Rights prohibiting arbitrary detention.

Commission: DHS Fails to Make Reforms for Jailed Asylum Seekers

In a February 2007 "report card," the Bi-partisan US Commission on International Religious Freedom gave the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) low marks for its failure to implement reforms to improve the treatment of asylum seekers in immigration jails and expedited deportation procedures. The reforms were initially recommended two years ago in connection with the Commission's 500-page report. DHS has failed to put the criteria for releasing asylum seekers into regulations and has not abandoned its use of "penal" facilities for detaining asylum seekers.

New U.S. Detention Directive May Leave Asylum Seekers in U.S. Immigration Jails for Even Longer

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement issued a new directive relating to the detention and parole of asylum seekers in the United States. The directive, issued in November 2007, appears aimed at further limiting the release of asylum seekers from U.S. immigration jails.

On February 19, 2008, Human Rights First and over 80 organizations and legal experts sent a letter to the Department of Homeland Security expressing their concern that the directive is inconsistent

with the recommendations of the bi-partisan U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom and with this country's commitments to those who seek protection from persecution. The Chair of the US Commission on International Religious Freedom wrote to Secretary Chertoff on December 14, 2007, to express concern that the directive is inconsistent with the Commission's recommendations on the detention and parole of asylum seekers.

U.S. asylum seekers face longer detentions

By Suzanne Gamboa | Associated Press 4:36 PM CST, December 2, 2007

WASHINGTON (AP) — More people seeking asylum in the U.S. could be detained and then jailed longer under a new Homeland Security Department policy for people wanting safe harbor.

The new policy applies to people placed in so-called expedited removal, a broad post-Sept. 11 category for immigrants who arrive in the U.S. seeking asylum or whose immigration paperwork is incorrect, invalid or nonexistent.

Immigration and Customs Enforcement, a division of the Homeland Security Department, said it issued the new policy Nov. 6 to make detention rules for asylum seekers more consistent and clear. But refugee advocates say it sets tougher standards for asylum seekers to win parole from detention.

"It's a sign of the times, with legitimate fear of terrorism morphing into an inability to distinguish between people who are terrorists and people who are victims of terrorism and asylum seekers," said Gideon Aronoff, president and CEO of the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society.

The U.S. generally grants safe harbor to refugees fleeing persecution because of their race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group or political opinion. Last year, the country granted asylum to 26,113 people, according to Homeland Security Department statistics. Most were from China, followed by Haiti and Colombia.

Asylum seekers are in detention in federal immigration facilities and county jails around the country. Exactly how many is unknown because ICE has not released statistics for two years, despite congressional mandates.

A total of 5,252 people claimed to have a credible fear of persecution in the fiscal year that ended Sept. 30. Sixty-three percent of those claims were handled by ICE's asylum office in Houston, according to Homeland Security Department statistics.

Of the total, 3,182 people established credible fear and 1,062 did

not. The remainder of the claims were withdrawn.

The numbers do not include Cubans requesting asylum because they are not placed in expedited removal.

Under old rules, asylum seekers placed in expedited removal had to establish they are not flight or security risks, prove their identity and show they have a credible fear of persecution if returned to their home country.

The new policy says detention and removal officers also must decide whether the person is seriously ill, a juvenile, pregnant, a witness in judicial, administrative or legislative proceedings or whether detention of the person is not in the public interest. The policy does not define public interest.

"It's important to remember this is not about a criminal population. They have a credible fear and are victims of persecution," said Eleanor Acer, director of refugee protection for Human Rights First, a member of a coalition of evangelical and advocacy groups that wanted Homeland Security to enforce the old rules.

In cases of people who requested asylum from deeper within the country – such as when a tourist visa ran out – an immigration judge can issue bond and order their release from detention.

Susan Cullen, ICE director of policy, said the agency is not adding new tests for detention release. The agency responded to the advocates' requests for consistency and clarity, she said. The second part of the policy comes directly from federal laws mandated by Congress for foreigners placed in expedited removal, she said.

Expedited removal was adopted to keep people in the country illegally from disappearing after being released on bond.

"Before it wasn't quite as clear to our field officers what they had to look at," Cullen said.

The agency chose not to define public interest to allow officers flexibility, she said. The policy also directs officers to collect information on parole denials and releases that will be collected monthly and analyzed.

But New York attorney Josh Bardavid, who represents asylum seekers, said once governments adopt stricter detention standards, it's difficult for them to retreat.

"Rarely is there political will in existence to take a step back and say, 'Maybe we shouldn't be doing this,'" Bardavid said.

The U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom found in a 2005 study mandated by Congress that the expedited removal policy puts people with legitimate asylum claims at risk of being returned to their home countries to be persecuted or tortured. The commission also found asylum seekers were being jailed with criminals while they waited for a decision on their claims. In a follow-up study this year, the commission said little had changed.

From Thelma Gutierrez
CNN

LOS ANGELES, California (CNN) -- Former detainees of Immigration and Customs Enforcement accuse the agency in a lawsuit of forcibly injecting them with psychotropic drugs while trying to shuttle them out of the country during their deportation.
art.immigrant.jpg

Raymond Soeoth, pictured here with his wife, says he was injected with drugs by ICE agents against his will.

One of the drugs in question is the potent anti-psychotic drug Haldol, which is often used to treat schizophrenia or other mental illnesses. Doctors say they are required to see patients in person before such drugs are administered.

Two immigrants, Raymond Soeoth of Indonesia and Amadou Diouf of Senegal in West Africa, told CNN they were injected with the drugs against their will.

Both are plaintiffs in a class-action lawsuit brought by the American Civil Liberties Union against the government. They are seeking an end to the alleged practice and unspecified damages. Video Watch why the former detainees claim abuse »

Dr. Paul Appelbaum, a professor of psychiatry, law and ethics at Columbia University, reviewed both men's medical records for this report and was stunned by what he discovered.

"I'm really shocked to find out that the government has been using physicians and using potent medications in this way," said Appelbaum, who also serves as a member of the American Academy of Psychiatry and the Law.

"That is the sort of thing that would be subject to a malpractice claim in the civilian world."

The allegations of ICE forcibly drugging deportees were raised last month by Sen. Joe Lieberman, I-Connecticut, during the re-nomination hearing of ICE chief Julie Myers.

"The information the committee has received from ICE regarding the forced drugging of immigration detainees is extremely troubling, particularly since it appears ICE may have violated its own detention standards," Lieberman spokeswoman Leslie Phillips told CNN in an e-mail.

"Senator Lieberman intends to follow up with ICE to ensure that detainees are not drugged unless there is a medical reason to do so."

ACLU attorney Ahilan Arulanantham, who is representing Soeoth and Diouf, said, "It would be torture to give a powerful anti-psychotic drug to somebody who isn't even mentally ill. ... But here, it's happening on U.S. soil to an immigrant the government is trying to deport."

Responding to Lieberman's written questions, Myers said 1,073 immigration detainees had "medical escorts" for deportation since 2003.

From October last year to the end of April this year, she said 56 received psychotropic medications during the removal process. Of those, 33 detainees received medication "because of combative behavior with the imminent risk of danger to others and/or self," she said.

"First, I am aware of, and deeply concerned about reports that past practices may not have conformed to ICE detention standards," Myers said.

She added no detainee should be "involuntarily medicated without court order," except in emergency situations.

But both Soeoth and Diouf say they had not exhibited any combative behavior.

Drug Facts

- Haldol is a drug used to treat psychotic disorders and symptoms such as hallucinations, delusions and hostility "to control muscular tics of the face, neck, hands and shoulders"
- Side effects of the drug can include seizures, tremors, irregular heartbeat, difficulty breathing and other symptoms. Cogentin is a drug used to treat symptoms of Parkinson's disease and to offset tremors caused by other medications. Side effects can include drowsiness, difficulty urinating, depression and delusions

Source: National Institutes of Health

Soeoth, a Christian minister from Indonesia, spent 27 months in detention awaiting deportation after his bid for political asylum was rejected. Hours before he was to be sent back home on December 7, 2004, he says guards injected him with a mystery drug that made him groggy for two days. See the document that shows Soeoth was injected

"They pushed me on the bench, they opened my pants, and they just give me injection," he said through broken English.

He says he was taken to Los Angeles International Airport while in this drug-induced stupor, but two hours before takeoff, airline security refused to transport him, so ICE agents returned him to his cell at Terminal Island near Los Angeles. Terminal Island, once a federal prison, is a crowded facility along the ocean where hundreds of illegal immigrants await deportation.

Soeoth's medical records indicate he was injected with Cogentin and Haldol, even though those same records show he has no history of mental illness.

In the records, the government says he was injected with the drug after he said he would kill himself if deported -- a remark Soeoth denies ever making.

ICE said in a written statement it couldn't respond to specific allegations due to pending litigation.

"Department of Homeland Security law enforcement personnel may not and do not prescribe or administer medication to detainees," the ICE statement said. "Only trained and qualified medical professionals, including officers of the U.S. Public Health Service, may prescribe or administer medication."

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But, Diouf says, he was injected on the plane right before he was to be deported. He said he even had a federal stay of his deportation -- and the paperwork to prove it -- but his U.S. government escorts wouldn't let him show it to the pilot of the plane preparing to fly him out of the country. See Diouf's stay of deportation document

That's when, he says, "I was wrestled to the ground and injected through my clothes."

A government report says he was medicated because he did not follow

orders.

advertisement

In both cases, Diouf and Soeoth remain in the United States pending a decision in the case. If they lose, they may land back in the hands of ICE, once again facing deportation.

Soeoth says he's traumatized by what happened. "I know this country [is] very generous to immigrants," he says. "What they did to me was very, very bad."

The Northwest Detention Center

by robert sorensen - last modified 2008-01-26 19:35

Robert Sorensen is a master's candidate at the University of Washington, Tacoma, who has devoted considerable time and effort to researching the realities of the Northwest Detention Center, located right here on Tacoma's tideflats, at 1623 East J Street. Here we are treated to an introduction to the facility, in the first of a series of articles on this Immigration and Customs Enforcement prison.

On March 31, 2003, still in the wake of September 11th , the Department of Homeland Security absorbed the former Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) and assigned the agency's apprehension, detention and deportation responsibilities to Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) . By April 7, 2004, ICE, with its Office of Detention and Removal (DRO) managing, opened its newest immigration prison, a \$115 million facility named the Northwest Detention Center (NWDC) in Tacoma.

NWDC is a for-profit prison, a contract facility actually owned operated by the GEO Group Inc, a multinational corrections corporation that contracts with the DRO to run the day-in day-out operations. NWDC is located at 1623 East J Street in an industrial area not far from the Tacoma Dome.

Originally designed for between 700 and 870 inmates, the capacity had expanded to 1061 detainees by 2007, in part of a national enforcement strategy dedicated to "removing all removable aliens by 2012."

Although daily operations have been outsourced to GEO, the DRO still transports aliens and manages the detainees while they are in custody awaiting their cases to be processed. The DRO calls the inmates

detainees--not prisoners--even though the detainees are kept behind locked doors with armed guards. Not all detainees are charged with crimes. Many are economic refugees, commonly referred to as illegal aliens, who have simply entered the United States without inspection.

In the realm of detention and deportation, when illegal and criminally-convicted aliens are picked up by ICE or DRO agents, they enter a distinct world of sub-constitutional justice under a separate system of administrative procedural law. For example, detainee arrests are not necessarily public knowledge. The court files are not public. There is no public record of who is in the detention centers in the United States as required with citizens in prisons and jails. When noncitizens appear in immigration court to try to remain in the country, the burden is on them to prove they are in the country legally and deserve to stay. Moreover, the government is not required to provide them with a lawyer. Troubling is the fact that most people who appear in immigration hearings have no resources for attorneys.

Arguably, their cases are essentially lost before they appear in court. Expulsions for noncitizens with prior criminal convictions have been predetermined by the sweeping "aggravated felony" and "crimes of moral turpitude" statutes under 1996 immigration law. The majority of the deportees in the NWDC--those who only entered the country without authorization--came only to work and got caught. For them, the forgone finale to their detention is removal from the United States.

Who and what is in the facility?

Of the 1061 beds, the average daily population totals 985, with approximately 890 men and 95 women. Most have been apprehended in the states of Washington, Oregon, and Alaska. Detainees represent approximately 60 countries or more; with the most representation from Mexico, El Salvador, Guatemala, The Philippines, Honduras, China, and Vietnam. The duration of detention at NWDC for undocumented aliens and post-sentence criminal aliens ranges between 2-3 days up to 2-4 years. The average incarceration at NWDC lasts 33 days. In the fiscal year ending 2007, the NWDC booked-in 9,441 detainees and booked-out 9,258.

The vast majority of book-outs are deported from the US. However, a few are released on bond pending deportation and a few more are released on Order of Supervision (OS). There are approximately 600 noncitizens released under OS in the state of Washington. There are good reasons for this. OS status is granted to deportees that cannot be removed from the US due to international conditions or absent repatriation agreements. Many countries are too simply too dangerous to send anyone. Some countries that will not receive deportees from the US are Vietnam, Somalia, and Cuba. In spite of their temporary

reprieves, OS releases remain subject to removal at anytime pending changes in international conditions.

All deportation hearings at NWDC are conducted in the adjacent Executive Office of Immigration Review (EOIR) courtrooms. The EOIR is an administrative court within the Department of Justice (DOJ). The Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR) has the final say on who can enter or stay in the US. The EOIR interprets and administers federal immigration law by conducting immigration court proceedings, appellate reviews, and administrative hearings. The EOIR consists of the Office of Chief Immigration Judge, the Board of Immigration Appeals, and the Office of Chief Administrative Hearing Officer. The EOIR adjudicates immigration cases involving detained aliens, criminal aliens, and aliens seeking asylum as a form of relief from removal.

A division of the DOJ, the EOIR operates within a system of administrative law independently of the immigration enforcement functions ICE and the DRO.

Administrative law is procedural law administered by the executive branch of government. Deportations are executed by administrative agents called Immigration Judges. Some immigration law scholars complain that they are not trained as real judges, but rather, they are akin to bureaucrats in robes. Others complain that pre-deportation detentions as well as deportation hearings extend a lesser standard of due process protections to noncitizens.

It is important that citizens insist on the extension full constitutional protections to all persons, during all forms of legal adjudication. The standard of social justice that citizens accord noncitizens may be the same standard that citizens could someday be subjected to. One way to ensure that equal due process protections are accorded during deportation proceedings is to closely monitor the semi-secretive EOIR courts. Under normal conditions, an immigration judge will admit courtroom observers unless the case in question is deemed to be a matter sensitive to national security.

A local immigration law group is monitoring local EOIR court hearings to ensure that immigration judges treat noncitizens fairly. The Northwest Detention Court Watch Project, sponsored by the National Immigration Project of the National Lawyers Guild, is looking for law school students and/or local community activists to participate in a monitoring project as court watch volunteers. Volunteers are needed to observe court proceedings in both the immigration court located in Tacoma's own NWDC. A three hour training session to be held on Saturday January 12th, 2008 on the UW Tacoma campus can be accessed by emailing cricri@u.washington.edu.

LOCAL NEWS: City Council hears concerns on eve of Tideflats prison's 'grand opening'

Written by Mark Jensen

Wednesday, 07 April 2004

On the eve of the Northwest Detention Center's "grand opening," the Tacoma City Council is finally paying some attention to the danger of a major disaster in Tacoma that could result from mismanagement on the part of a private prison company poised to open a for-profit "contract detention facility" for immigration detainees on the Tacoma Tideflats, according to a front-page article in the News Tribune Wednesday....

CITY COUNCIL'S EYES OPENED TO GRAVE SAFETY CONCERNS AT TACOMA'S HOMELAND SECURITY PRISON ON EVE OF "GRAND OPENING"

By Mark Jensen

** DHS Secretary Tom Ridge may appear at Tideflats ceremony this morning; Bill of Rights Defense Committee-Tacoma rallies **

Bill of Rights Defense Committee-Tacoma
April 7, 2004

TACOMA (WA) -- Better late than never. The Tacoma City Council is finally paying some attention to the possibility of a major disaster in Tacoma that could result from mismanagement on the part of a private prison company poised to open a for-profit "contract detention facility" in Tacoma, according to a front-page article in the city's daily paper Wednesday.

The company, Correctional Services Corporation of Sarasota, Florida, has a poor safety record, the executive director of Corrections U.S.A. told council members Tuesday at a City Council study session. CSC has a five-year contract with the United States Department of Homeland Security to operate the privately owned facility at 1623 East "J" St., on the Tacoma Tideflats.

Only hours before the event, the article in the News Tribune (Tacoma) was the first public announcement of the "grand opening" of the Northwest Detention Center, as the prison for immigration detainees is called. The company hopes to populate the prison next week.

There are rumors that Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge himself will be on hand for the opening ceremony. Ridge is currently visiting the Puget Sound area and made a public appearance yesterday at a Seattle town forum.

If Tacoma does avoid disaster, it will owe an enormous debt of gratitude to Tim Smith, Army veteran and founder of the Bill of

Rights Defense Committee-Tacoma. Smith has taken the lead in bringing many troubling safety, health, environmental, legal, and moral concerns swirling around the huge new prison, of which the public had been largely unaware.

Smith's Bill of Rights Defense Committee will hold a rally near the intersection of East 15th and East "J" St., not far from the gates of the prison's barbed-wire fence this morning, between 9:00 a.m. and 12:00 noon.

Brian Dawe, the executive director of Corrections U.S.A. who addressed the Tacoma City Council's study session Tuesday, will be among the speakers.

Dawe opposes prison privatization on principle, and is part of a growing movement against for-profit detention facilities, which are rife with opportunities and incentives for abuse of detainees.

The Bill of Rights Defense Committee-Tacoma has officially adopted the bus stop near the gates of the Northwest Detention Facility as part of the city's Adopt-a-Spot campaign. Wednesday morning's rally will also feature activists cleaning up the area around the bus stop.

They will be taking safety precautions, however, because the Homeland Security prison stands on a former Superfund site known as the Tacoma Tar Pits. Smith and others are concerned that construction of the prison may have ruptured the cap covering a noxious stew of toxic and carcinogenic chemicals that permeates the earth beneath the prison site.

COUNCIL HEARS CONCERNS OVER DETENTION CENTER

By Kris Sherman The News Tribune (Tacoma, WA)

April 7, 2004 Page A1

<http://www.tribnet.com/news/story/4939970p-4869249c.html>

Some Tacoma City Council members are worried a federal detention center about to open on the Tideflats will put a drain on fire and police services -- and they want an analysis done right away.

Police officials already are negotiating a memorandum of understanding with the private company that will run the facility, seeking reimbursement if the SWAT team is called out to help quell an inmate uprising or if extra officers are needed for crowd control, assistant chief Jim Howatson said.

But council members were concerned about the potential for out-of-the-ordinary police and fire calls to the new facility following a presentation to them Tuesday by a correctional association representative.

The 162,000-square-foot facility, which will house convicts and others being detained by the federal Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement, is to have its grand opening today. But the \$115 million facility at 1623 E. J St. won't actually house inmates until next week.

The jail, owned and operated by Correctional Services Corp. of Florida, is designed to hold as many as 500 inmates, but its capacity could be increased to 760.

Brian Dawe, a career corrections officer who is executive director of Corrections U.S.A., told council members the facility would be staffed with poorly trained guards who are ill-equipped to handle serious problems.

Corrections U.S.A. describes itself as a nonprofit coalition of professional corrections officers and others. It opposes privatization of prisons and other detention facilities.

Inmate-on-inmate assaults are 66 percent higher in privately run prisons than in public institutions, Dawe said. Inmate-on-staff assaults are nearly 50 percent higher, he added.

Dawe and Tim Smith, a member of the Bill of Rights Defense Committee of Tacoma, were invited to the council's study session by Councilman Bill Evans, who called their presentation "an eye-opener."

Smith, who has complained for some time about the facility, already has vowed that protesters will visit the site regularly.

Councilman Mike Lonergan left the meeting, complaining that no representatives of the federal government, Correctional Services Corp. or the police and fire departments were invited to take part.

Councilman Rick Talbert called it "one side of the story."

A representative of Correctional Services Corp. could not be reached for comment.

But Bill Paul, who is overseeing construction of the detention center, told The News Tribune last month that the facility has a 21st-century, state-of-the-art security system. That and other amenities will make it better for everyone, especially the inmates, he said.

Even so, Mayor Bill Baarsma said he has concerns.

"We had some pretty grim statistics shared with us at the study session," he said. "That's why we asked the city manager for an

impact analysis."

But how much police presence is needed remains to be seen, Howatson said.

The City Council unanimously approved putting the prison on the Tideflats in a vote taken four years ago after community outcry spoiled plans to build it in Auburn, Pacific and Sumner.

Detention Center Blues

By Dan Frosch

On April 7, politicians and law enforcement officials gathered in Tacoma, Washington, to celebrate the opening of the Department of Homeland Security's newest gem, a \$115 million facility called the Northwest Detention Center.

The building, designed to hold up to 700 undocumented immigrants awaiting deportation, was nearly two years in the works, and supporters hoped it would provide a much-needed economic boon to the region.

Later that week, the Justice Department's Civil Rights Division sent a report to Maryland Governor Robert Ehrlich, documenting the results of an investigation into two of the state's juvenile halls. In stomach-churning detail, investigators described how employees brutally beat youths at the facilities, and how basic living conditions didn't meet even the lowest constitutional standards. In a subsequent statement, Assistant Attorney General R. Alexander Acosta said, "No juvenile should be exposed to such conditions."

One of the juvie halls named in the report, the Charles H. Hickey, Jr. School, was operated by Correctional Services Corporation (CSC), the Sarasota, Florida-based company contracted by Homeland Security to run its Tacoma detention center and another in Texas, slated to open next year.

The fact that Homeland Security—specifically its Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) branch that oversees detention centers—would hire a company whose facility was the subject of a recent and damning federal investigation is as perplexing as it is disturbing. More disconcerting is that the government would employ CSC after nearly a decade of similar scandals.

Founded in 1989 by Morris Esmor and James Slattery, who ran an infamously decrepit welfare hotel in New York, CSC initially was involved in operating halfway houses for the state. Then known as

Esmor, the company rose to prominence when detainees at a federal detention center for undocumented immigrants in Elizabeth, New Jersey, rioted over deplorable living conditions and abuse by guards. Shortly after, the Immigration and Naturalization Services (INS), ICE's predecessor, closed the detention center and terminated its contract with Esmor—which then changed its name to CSC and moved its headquarters to Florida.

Three years later, a Florida state jail monitor discovered that CSC was purposefully keeping juveniles at the Pahokee Youth Development Center past their release dates so it could make more money. Inspection reports ripped conditions at Pahokee and the way employees treated its charges, some of whom alleged physical abuse. In 1999, the state seized Pahokee from CSC before its contract was up.

"CSC has had lots of problems here in Florida," says Ken Kopczynski, executive director of the Florida-based Private Corrections Institute, a national organization monitoring private corrections companies.

INS nonetheless awarded CSC a contract to run its Seattle detention center. But back in New York, the company still couldn't steer clear of the headlines. In 2000, the head of CSC's New York offices was arrested in the Dominican Republic on charges of producing child pornography.

Impropriety regarding CSC's cozy relationships with local politicians also surfaced. In 2003, the New York State Lobbying Commission fined CSC \$300,000 for failing to disclose gifts to elected state officials—the stiffest penalty meted out by the agency. CSC executives were subpoenaed in a criminal probe into the company's political activities.

CSC's most recent abuses in Maryland hardly present a new phenomenon in that region, either. In 2001, the Maryland Department of Juvenile Justice chose not to renew CSC's contract to run another youth facility, the Victor Cullen Academy, after a series of audits revealed the familiar pattern of inadequate living conditions and abusive treatment by employees, including allegations of a "fight club" where youths were encouraged to battle each other like gladiators. CSC was forced to pay \$600,000 to the state for violating the terms of its contract at Cullen.

"It's safe to say we've been unhappy with CSC's performance," says LaWanda Edwards, spokeswoman for the Maryland Department of Juvenile Justice.

"I can't imagine CSC being an appropriate provider of correctional services for any human being in the U.S., based on what they've done here," adds Heather Ford, director of the Maryland Juvenile Justice

Coalition, which monitors the state's juvenile facilities and has interviewed youths and their parents from both Cullen and Hickey.

Indeed, given the haunting consistency of CSC's problems, one wonders how Homeland Security came to decide that this particular company should run two of its detention centers.

Part of the answer lies in the history of immigration detention centers themselves, says Mark Dow, author of the new book *American Gulag: Inside U.S. Immigration Prisons*.

Before the Department of Homeland Security was created in 2002, Immigration and Naturalization Services (INS) handled detentions under the purview of the Justice Department. Dow's book documents cases of abuse and unjust imprisonment in INS detention centers dating back to the '80s and the influx of immigrants from countries like Haiti, Guatemala and El Salvador. Such an environment thrived, he says, because detainees were trapped in a legal netherworld and few outside the detention center walls noticed.

The potential for abuse worsened as the number of undocumented immigrant detainees exploded from 5,532 in 1994 to 20,000 in 2001. Faced with mounting costs, INS began contracting with private companies, states and counties. But the resulting patchwork of federal, private and local responsibility created even less accountability, says Dow, and in effect helped further shield INS from public scrutiny.

Following 9/11, the Justice Department added to the secrecy shrouding detainees by invoking a series of draconian measures designed to expand INS's power. They include closing immigration hearings to the public and holding detainees without charge for 48 hours, or in emergency cases, indefinitely. INS officials denied mass roundups, but it was clear people were being detained with increased regularity. Although specifics are difficult to come by, Dow says between 1,200 and 5,000 people have been detained as a result of the Justice Department's new policies.

The Department of Homeland Security absorbed INS and repackaged the agency's detention center responsibilities into ICE, which made little difference in how things were run, says Dow.

"There is a long and entrenched agency culture of racism and brutality that carried over from INS to ICE," he says. "And on top of that, you have always had the accountability and incompetence problem."

Indeed, in 2003, the General Accounting Office (GAO) produced a report on Homeland Security finding inherent problems with the

contracting procedures of INS, which had not yet morphed into ICE. The report concluded that INS wasn't conducting fair and open contracting, and perhaps more important, that it wasn't adequately monitoring its contractors once they were hired. ICE responded by updating its oversight of contractors to ensure humane treatment of detainees, says Tim Perry, ICE's branch chief of detention acquisition and support.

The GAO didn't specifically examine the relationship between Homeland Security and CSC but emphasized that the problems with open competition and oversight are still there, says Michele Mackin, assistant director of acquisition and sourcing management for GAO and a co-author of the report.

"Our concerns are not 100 percent gone," she says. "Clearly, we recognize there are problems."

Despite that, a company's history is "one of the most important factors" of the contracting process, says Soraya Correa, director of procurement for ICE. CSC's Seattle facility has experienced relatively few problems, but given the overwhelming scope of its troubles elsewhere, it appears that ICE didn't do its homework.

"In some cases when you go out and call references, what's being explained to you isn't quite what's been documented in the newspapers," Correa says. "We have to make a best value judgment based on the information made available to us."

Dow disagrees. "Generally speaking, people at the highest levels know about the history of mistreatment and lack of accountability [in terms of whom they're hiring]," says Dow. "As one INS official told me, immigration headquarters uses private companies as a buffer."

CSC official Russell Rau, however, maintains his company's integrity. "We've been running the INS facility in Seattle for over a decade without incident. Now we've built this new facility at our expense for the needs of the detainees. We're proud of our record."

Meanwhile, CSC, which employs a former INS official as a senior vice president, stands to earn up to \$22 million a year in federal dollars in Tacoma and close to the same in Texas.

With its well-documented and tragic history, the real cost could be much greater.

*Dan Frosch is an award-winning journalist based in New York whose work has appeared in the Los Angeles Times, The Source and the Santa Fe Reporter

Detention center cooks faulted in food poisoning outbreak

Detainees in Tacoma fell ill with food poisoning

SCOTT FONTAINE; The News Tribune

Published: December 10th, 2007 01:00 AM | Updated: December 10th, 2007 07:16 AM

Hundreds of detainees were sick. Many complained of severe abdominal cramps and diarrhea. The medical staff was called in early but couldn't cope with the long lines.

The culprit was *Clostridium perfringens*, a foodborne bacterium that poisoned hundreds at the Northwest Detention Center on Tacoma's Tideflats in August, according to public documents recently released to The News Tribune.

It was the largest food poisoning outbreak in Pierce County this year, Health Department spokeswoman Joby Winans said.

The incident also fueled criticism of the 1,000-bed privately operated immigration detention center, which has been the subject of protests in Tacoma.

The poisoning likely began Aug. 11 with a lunch of turkey and potato casserole. Many detainees wrote in surveys that the meat served that day looked raw and smelled odd. The department's food experts believe the potatoes - which were cooked the day before, cooled and reheated for the meal - allowed the bacteria to flourish.

By about 9 p.m., about 300 detainees were ill, most with diarrhea. Detention center staff told detainees they had to wait until the in-house medical clinic opened in the morning, but the volume of complaints prompted the administration to call clinic staff at 4 a.m. and ask them to come in early.

Only 197 people were seen at the medical clinic.

"Others likely came to the clinic but left without being seen, due to long lines," the Health Department's investigation report states. Most people, the report continues, recovered rapidly, and no one required hospitalization.

The Health Department was contacted about the outbreak Aug. 12, and it sent a food safety specialist that day to review food handling procedures.

Tests and surveys were unable to pinpoint the exact source of the illness. Tests on detainees' stool samples showed high levels of *C. perfringens*, but the food samples were negative.

The Health Department report stated that while "the food item with

the strongest association with illness" was the sausage served with dinner, the time frame of the onset of illness suggests that lunch led to the apparent poisoning.

The report also identified several problems with food preparation procedures at the detention center. Potatoes, the report said, were prepared a day in advance, cooled and reheated prior to distribution to detainees, a practice that can contribute to outbreaks.

"The abuse of temperature can be a real problem" with *C. perfringens* outbreaks, said Barbara Bruemmer, a senior lecturer in epidemiology at the University of Washington.

If food is not cooled in the proper manner, she said, it can become a home for the bacteria.

In its food poisoning investigation, the Health Department recommended that the detention center refrain from preparing some food in advance and that detention center kitchen managers take a food safety course.

Lorie Dankers, a public affairs specialist with Immigration and Customs Enforcement, said employees of The GEO Group, the corporation that operates the detention center, have complied with the recommendation about attending food safety courses and have ended the practice of making food long in advance.

"I think if you take the total number of meals prepared there each day," Dankers said. "That's three hot meals for 1,000 people per day, these types of incidents are rare. And they're regrettable.

"But if you look at the overall track records of the facility and the contractor, when issues are brought to their attention, they fix them immediately." Scott Fontaine: 253-320-4758

More immigrants in detention: Tacoma center getting influx

By Lornet Turnbull

Seattle Times staff reporter

Unbeknownst to her family, friends and attorney, Maria Del Toro Chacon was suddenly moved this week from the Northwest Detention Center in Tacoma, where she'd been held for the past year.

Chacon — a Mexican national and mother of two — and 14 other women were not told where they were going, weren't allowed to take personal possessions and weren't permitted to make any telephone calls.

In the dark on Sunday night, she said, they were driven south in two vans that left the highway somewhere beyond Olympia, eventually coming to idle in an unlit, isolated area. In the back of the van, the panicked women cried and prayed – certain they were being taken somewhere to be shot.

They were transferred from the vans to a bus and taken to Columbia County jail in St. Helens, Ore., where they remained for four days before being returned to the detention center in Tacoma.

Movements like these, from and between immigration detention centers nationwide, have occurred with increasing frequency since this summer, when the Department of Homeland Security stepped up efforts to detain and deport illegal immigrants.

Chacon and the others were relocated, immigration officials said, to free up bed space for a new group of detainees expected in from another state. The move was also intended to relieve overcrowding that resulted after a flight to remove some detainees was canceled.

Under mounting pressure from Congress and the public to better enforce immigration laws and expel illegal immigrants, Homeland Security is moving to detain every illegal immigrant taken into custody by guaranteeing a bed somewhere in the country – anywhere in the country, no matter how far away.

It replaces a practice known as catch and release, in which immigrants picked up in areas with chronic bed shortages were released on the promise they would show up for court later.

Most, immigration officials said, never did.

As part of their new focus, enforcement officers are conducting more raids at work sites and scouring jails and prisons looking for immigrants – those here illegally and those holding green cards – who are nearing the end of their criminal sentences and are subject to deportation.

The end goal: to expel from the country every illegal immigrant without a legitimate claim to be here. Within a year, officials expect to have rattled many of the estimated 12 million illegal immigrants in the country, creating a disincentive for others to attempt illegal crossings.

Homeland Security was on track to remove 180,000 people from the country during the fiscal year that ended Friday, up 7 percent from the previous year.

"We're detaining them with full expectation of removing them and, depending on where they came from, that process can be very quick," said Gary Mead, assistant director for detention and removal operations with the Department of Homeland Security in Washington, D.C. Homeland Security wants to send a clear message, he said: "If you come to this country illegally, we'll apprehend you, detain you and remove you."

Under Operation Reservation Guaranteed, as it is being called, detainees are flown to wherever in the country a bed is available. As part of the operation, Homeland Security has relocated about 700 detainees a week across the country, Mead said.

In recent weeks, they've come from places like New York, Puerto Rico and Guam to the Northwest Detention Center, which opened in the Tacoma Tideflats in spring 2004.

The self-contained complex boasts a law library, recreational facilities, two courtrooms and a fully equipped clinic capable of rapid detection and treatment for tuberculosis.

"Headquarters is looking to see where there are open beds," said Neil Clark, Seattle-based field director for detention and removal operations of Homeland Security. "They'd call and ask: Can you guys handle this many? We're using the efficiencies of the system."

When the operation began in July, there were about 18,000 immigrants in detention nationwide, he said. The current population is around 25,500.

The stepped-up enforcement has led to a crunch on beds throughout the system, and the push is on to add more space nationwide. The Bush administration's 2007 budget calls for a 25 percent increase in detention beds.

In the Pacific Northwest, where the number of beds has grown from 150 in 2004 to the current 800, officials expect to add another 200 by the start of the year. Clark said admissions at the detention center are about 1,000 people ahead of last year.

Angry advocates

This aggressive approach has angered many immigrant advocates, who call it inhumane and politically expedient in an election year. Attorneys for immigrants grumble that people's rights are being compromised.

More than two years after the Northwest's 147,000-square-foot detention center opened, they point out, the Justice Department has yet to assign a judge to either of the two courts there, a

shortcoming government officials call a "resource issue."

Hearings in the courts are conducted by visiting judges, while routine procedures, such as first appearances, are done through videoconferencing, common throughout the detention system.

"One of the most unfortunate side effects of the increase in detention is this huge backlog of cases," said Nancy Acevedo, an attorney with the Northwest Immigrant Rights Project. The agency conducts workshops at the detention center to help explain immigrants' rights to them.

Detainees are entitled to a hearing before a judge within 10 days, she said, but "at this point they're getting pushed out to three to five weeks."

At least 80 percent of people detained don't have legal counsel, she said, mostly because they can't afford it. "There are so many of them and so few of us," she said.

Some people end up waiting so long they simply give up — even those with a legitimate immigration claim, said Robert Gibbs, a Seattle immigration attorney.

"If Homeland Security plans to realistically keep people detained, they are not set up in terms of having judges and courtrooms in proximity to the jails to do that," Gibbs said. "Which makes my point: They don't expect any of these people to ask for hearings."

Outside the detention center on Friday, Community to Community Development, a Whatcom County advocacy group, rallied to draw attention to the hardships such arrests are creating for immigrant families throughout the state.

In raids across the state, from Bellingham to Yakima, workers have been picked up at job sites, including those that traditionally employ women, such as hotels and nursing homes. Many of the workers' families don't learn of their fate until the workers eventually call from Mexico.

"We're seeing a disproportionate number of women being taken," said Rosalinda Guillen, executive director of the group. "It's raising the level of paranoia in our communities."

"Back to the basics"

Operation Reservation Guaranteed was launched this summer along the southern border and later implemented nationwide with the goal of detaining and expelling virtually every illegal and criminal fugitive

immigrant that enforcement officials apprehend.

"We're trying to get away from letting people walk out the door without addresses," Clark said. "With the immigration situation the way it is in this country, as many beds as we have, we can fill them. We're getting back to the basics – putting stability back into immigration enforcement."

Homeland Security contracts with The GEO Group, a national detention-management company, to run the Northwest Detention Center and several others nationwide.

These facilities were never intended to be punitive. Often they are the last stop for illegal immigrants with a one-way pass back to their home countries. Detainees are held while they await an initial hearing before an immigration judge, or while their case is on appeal. In other cases, they are simply waiting on paperwork for deportation.

There is constant churn in these centers. Two flights a week remove about 200 detainees from the Northwest Detention Center, most destined for Mexico or Central America.

Their beds don't stay vacant long.

The average stay, Clark said, is 21 days. "There are many who stay much longer," he said.

Chacon, who is waiting out an asylum appeal, will mark one year in detention next month.

She had been in the country 14 years when she was picked up last year at her job at a health-care facility in Burien. Her friends arranged for her teenage daughter to stay with other friends in Arizona. Her son attends college at Gonzaga University.

"The waiting is tough. I'm ready to give up," she said. "That's the one thing that keeps me going are my kids."

From BORDC Website:

By the fall of 2007 the Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) will spend an estimated \$1 billion per year to detain over 27,500 immigrants. ICE operates eight Service Processing Centers (SPCs) and seven contract detention facilities. Additionally, immigration detainees are being held in local jails and private prisons across the United States. According to ICE, the average detention is about one month, although some detainees are kept for several years.

Tacoma Contract Detention Facility
Correctional Services Corporation
Northwest Detention Center
1623 East J Street, Suite 2
Tacoma, Washington 98421-1615

Telephone: (253) 779-6000
Fax: (253) 779-6007
Fax: (253) 779-6096
Officer-in-Charge: Vacant
Contract Facility Administrator: Gerorge Wigen
Emergency Contact at the Center: In case of family or other emergencies involving a detainee, please call (253) 396-1611.

Mailing Address:
Northwest Detention Center
Detainee Detention Number
1623 East J Street, Suite 5
Tacoma, Washington 98421

From ICE website:

ICE Operations

- U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), is responsible for eliminating vulnerabilities in the nation's border, and with economic, transportation and infrastructure security.
- The ICE organization is composed of four law enforcement divisions and several support divisions. These divisions of ICE combine to form a new investigative approach with new resources to provide unparalleled investigation, interdiction and security services to the public and our law enforcement partners in the federal and local sectors.
- Office of Congressional Relations (OCR)
- The Office of Congressional Relations (OCR) represents ICE's core values and DHS objectives through federal Congressional liaison activities.

How We Work:

The OCR maintains an effective liaison by promoting Congressional awareness of ICE operations, national and local programs, policies and initiatives.

- Office of Detention and Removal Operations (DRO)

The Office of Detention and Removal Operations (DRO) is responsible for promoting public safety and national security by making certain through the enforcement of U.S. immigration laws that all removable aliens depart the United States.

How We Work:

DRO makes use of its resources and expertise to transport aliens, to manage them while in custody and waiting for their cases to be processed, and to remove unauthorized aliens from the United States when so ordered.

- Office of Federal Protective Service (FPS)

Federal Protective Service (FPS) is responsible for policing, securing and ensuring a safe environment in which federal agencies can conduct their business. FPS does this by investigating threats posed against the more than 8,800 federal facilities nationwide.

How We Work:

FPS' work focuses directly on the interior security of the nation and the reduction of crimes and potential threats to federal facilities throughout the nation. Uniformed FPS officers and special agents respond to calls for assistance, conduct investigations and provide crime prevention tips, as well as assist in occupant emergency

planning.

All federal facilities under FPS control receive a thorough building security assessment on a recurring schedule. During this assessment representatives of all agencies in the facility are interviewed to gather information on the specific mission they perform within the facility, and intelligence and crime statistics for the area are reviewed, as are existing security countermeasures. Based on the findings and working with the agencies housed in the facility, security countermeasures are added or adjusted. This allows for tailored security for each individual facility versus a one-size-fits-all approach.

- Office of Intelligence

The Office of Intelligence is responsible for collecting, analyzing and sharing strategic and tactical intelligence data for use by the operational elements of ICE and DHS.

How We Work:

ICE intelligence professionals process information from a variety of sources to provide assessments of patterns, trends and new developments in a wide range of law enforcement areas. Intelligence focuses on data and information related to the movement of people, money and materials into, within and out of the United States, to provide accurate and timely reporting to ICE leadership and field agents in support of enforcement operations.

The branches and divisions of ICE fulfill their mission to protect America and uphold public safety by working together and separately, within ICE and with other law enforcement and intelligence entities, to keep the United States secure.

- Office of International Affairs (OIA)

OIA is the largest international investigative component in DHS, interacting with the international community on behalf of ICE through investigations of immigration and customs violations, management of the Visa Security Program and the International Visitor's Program, representation with international organizations, conducting international training and guiding repatriation efforts.

- Office of Investigations (OI)

The Office of Investigations (OI) is responsible for investigating a range of issues that may threaten national security.

How We Work:

OI uses its legal authority to investigate issues such as immigration crime, human rights violations, and human smuggling; narcotics, weapons and other types of smuggling; and financial crimes, cybercrime and export enforcement issues. ICE special agents also conduct investigations aimed at protecting critical infrastructure industries that are vulnerable to sabotage, attack or exploitation.

- Office of Principal Legal Advisor (OPLA)

The Office of Principal Legal Advisor (OPLA) provides legal advice, training and services to support the ICE mission and defends the interests of the United States in the administrative and federal courts.

How We Work

OPLA protects the security of the United States by providing professional, highly motivated and client -focused staff in sufficient numbers to promptly and effectively prosecute immigration and customs law violators, particularly those who threaten the safety of our citizenry.

- Office of Professional Responsibility (OPR)

The Office of Professional Responsibility (OPR) is responsible for investigating allegations of misconduct involving employees of ICE and Customs and Border Protection (CBP).

How We Work:

OPR preserves the organizational integrity of ICE by impartially, independently and thoroughly investigating allegations of criminal or serious administrative misconduct by ICE and CBP employees worldwide. OPR adjudicates ICE background investigations and issues security clearances for all prospective and current ICE employees and contracted staff. OPR inspects and reviews ICE offices, operations and processes so as to provide executive management with independent reviews of the agency's organizational health. In this role, OPR assesses the effectiveness and efficiency of ICE in carrying out its mission.

Immigration Detention Facilities

Strengthening the nation's capacity to detain and remove criminal and other deportable aliens is a key component of the comprehensive strategy to deter illegal immigration and protect public safety. Detention and removal of illegal aliens is a priority of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). This commitment has been backed by significant resources devoted to detention and removal efforts.

DRO secures bed space in detention facilities, and monitors these facilities for compliance with national Detention Standards. The standards specify the living conditions appropriate for detainees. These standards have been collated and published in the Detention Operations Manual (Detention Standards). This manual provides uniform policies and procedures concerning the treatment of individuals detained by ICE.

- For information on services relating to but not under the direct jurisdiction of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, please contact the following:

- o The Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR) is an agency within the Department of Justice (DOJ). Its primary mission is to preside over immigration cases in an attentive and timely manner. These cases involve detained aliens, criminal aliens, and aliens seeking asylum as a form of relief from removal. EOIR ensures the standards of due process and fair treatment for all parties involved.
- For information about a matter in an Immigration Court administered by EOIR or information about each of its offices, visit EOIR's Web site at <http://www.usdoj.gov/eoir/>. You may also call its electronic information system at 1 (800) 898-7180.
- U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) is part of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). USCIS is responsible for the administration of immigration and naturalization arbitration functions and establishing immigration services policies and priorities including ruling on immigration visa petitions, naturalization petitions, asylum and refugee applications, cases performed at the service centers and all other mediation.

From the GEO Group website:

NORTHWEST DETENTION CENTER

Contract With: US Immigrations & Customs Enforcement (ICE)
Contract Award: Contract Award 04/23/04. Original Contract: 04/04
- 04/05 with four 1-year options.
Type And Design: Minimum/medium security, dormitory housing
Capacity: 1,000. Initial capacity was 890 (ICE contract for 500
undocumented aliens). Contract amended 12/21/06 with ICE to expand
capacity to 1,000 beds effective 01/01/07.
Received Prisoners: 04/04
Services/Work: Operator. Previously designed, constructed and
managed by CSC.
Accreditations: ACA and NCCHC

What we can do to fight this:

→ BOYCOTT WELLS FARGO AND OTHER GEO GROUP SHAREHOLDERS!

If you are someone that you know banks with them, switch banks and let them know exactly why you are closing your accounts with them! Tell your friends and family that Wells Fargo makes money on human suffering. Hit them where it hurts.

Here is a list of major shareholders:

- FMR LLC
- ALGER (FRED) MANAGEMENT INC
- WELLS FARGO & COMPANY
- FRIESS ASSOCIATES INC
- WESTFIELD CAPITAL MANAGEMENT COMPANY
- Barclays Global Investors UK Holdings Ltd
- SCHRODER INVESTMENT MANAGEMENT GROUP
- RAINIER INVESTMENT MANAGEMENT
- ARTISAN PARTNERS LIMITED PARTNERSHIP
- VANGUARD GROUP, INC. (THE)

KEY EXECUTIVES at GEO Group, we are sure they would LOVE to hear from you!:

Mr. George C. Zoley , 58
Founder, Chairman, Chief Exec. Officer, Chairman of Exec. Committee,
Chairman of GEO Care Inc of Wackenhut Corrections Corp. Australia Pty
Limited PAY - \$ 2.67M

Mr. Wayne H. Calabrese , 57
Vice Chairman, Pres, Chief Operating Officer, Member of Exec.
Committee and Pres of WCC Devel. Inc PAY - \$ 1.61M

Mr. John G. O'Rourke , 57
Chief Financial Officer and Sr. VP of Fin. PAY - \$ 634.00K

Mr. John M. Hurley , 60
Sr. VP and Pres of US Corrections PAY - \$ 555.00K

Mr. John J. Bulfin , 54
Sr. VP, Corp. Sec. and Gen. Counsel PAY - \$ 555.00K

→ Write, Email and speak directly to Tacoma Officials!

They are elected officials and they rely on US to stay where they are. They do not allow that facility to remain, WE DO! Let them know we want the detention center OUT, we want raids STOPPED, we want ICE to GET OUT OF OUR TOWN!

Mayor - Bill Baarsma

Deputy Mayor - Spiro Manthou

Tacoma operates under the Council-Manager form of government. The City Council consists of an elected Mayor and eight elected Council Members (from five Councilmanic districts and three at-large). All serve four-year terms.

Council duties include adopting and amending City laws, approving the budget, establishing City policies and standards, approving contracts and agreements, appointing citizens to boards, committees and commissions, and representing the City.

The Council appoints the City Manager to administer the City's day-to-day operations. The City Manager works with the City departments to carry out the policies adopted by the City Council.

Council Meetings and Contact Information

Tacoma City Council meetings are held Tuesdays at 5 p.m. in the Council Chambers, first floor of the Tacoma Municipal Building, 747 Market Street, Tacoma, Washington. TV Tacoma (Channel 12) airs the meetings live and replays them throughout the following week. City Council districts are adjusted every ten years following the census.

To contact the Mayor and Council, address mail to:

747 Market Street, Suite 1200
Tacoma, WA 98402-3766
253.591.5100

- **Find out about raids, when and where they are happening locally and help raise awareness.**

Check out DetentionWatchNetwork.org for tons of ways YOU can help.

- **Find local groups and organizations that are actively involved in organizing against ICE and raids, or start a group with your friends and family.**

- **Join the next ICE Protest Rally, TBA SOON!**

