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## **Over 100 People Detained in ICE Custody Begin Hunger Strike and Work Stoppage Inside the Northwest Detention Center**

Migrants detained begin hunger strike, demand better conditions, lower bonds and end of indefinite detention

Tacoma, WA – At least 120 detained migrants in four units at the Northwest Detention Center (NWDC) have begun a hunger strike to protest the abuses they face inside the facility, which is owned and operated by GEO Group, a private prison company, for Immigration and Customs Enforcement. The strike comes at the heels of a work stoppage on Wednesday February 7th by detained people who work in the kitchen and just days after NWDC Resistance held a People’s Tribunal in front of the NWDC.

Leaders of the strike report continued inhumane conditions and abuse at NWDC. Strikers are demanding GEO Group provide edible, nutritious food and emphasized the egregiousness of GEO’s practices by saying “food has gotten so bad it makes people sick. Food served in the hole [solitary confinement] is hardly enough, as we received smaller portions than people in general population.” The use of isolation, particularly as a form of retaliation, is a prevalent issue at NWDC. Strikers have also reported that GEO guards constantly search the beds and units of detained people without reason nor explanation and demand an end to these searches.

In addition, strikers demand ICE provide fair hearings and lower bonds, particularly in light of recent bond amounts as high as \$35,000. This contributes to ICE’s practices of indefinite and prolonged detention, as do excessively long delays in carrying out deportation orders. Together, these have the effect of keeping people incarcerated and growing GEO’s profits.

Lastly, strikers delivered a message of resistance and called on others to join their efforts, “We are used to retaliation and intimidation, we are placed in the hole constantly, but no more! We need everyone to join us and stop working!”

NWDC Resistance activists and allies will mobilize to support strikers at the Northwest Detention Center. For live updates on the strike, visit <https://www.facebook.com/NWDCResistance/>

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***NWDC Resistance** is a volunteer community group that emerged to fight deportations in 2014 at the now-infamous Northwest Detention Center in Tacoma, WA. NWDC Resistance is part of the #Not1More campaign and supported people detained who organized hunger strikes asking for a halt to all deportations and better treatment and conditions.*