

Third People's Tribunal against the Immigration System and The Northwest Detention Center

On February 4, 2018, a tribunal, sitting in the Northwest Detention Center in Tacoma Washington, heard testimony pertaining to the detention and deportation process, conditions of the detention center, and treatment of the detainees. Judges for this tribunal were selected from popular organizations that are engaged in a wide variety of struggles and coming from a broad set of experiences: Black, Filipino, Latinx, and Indigenous women who organize within climate justice, anti-imperialist, anti-racist, and anti-prison movements. Each of these judges met with someone detained at the Northwest Detention Center and listened to their testimonies. They then delivered these testimonies publicly and deliberated about the injustices of the immigration detention center, the system it is a part of, and what must be done to rectify these injustices.

I. INTRODUCTION.

People's Tribunals have a long history of being used anytime legal or political systems do not provide adequate remedy for harm in cases of abuse or injustice. The testimony today demonstrated the importance of using the People's Tribunal, because our systems are clearly failing. Based upon the testimony of the detainees, the Tribunal submits these written findings of fact:

II. FINDINGS OF FACT.

As it concerns to the United States Immigration and Customs Service (hereinafter "ICE") and GEO Group, City of Tacoma and the State of Washington:

1. People living inside the Northwest Detention Center experience dehumanizing and exploitative conditions, whether they live there for a short or long period of time. Immigration and detention centers are a part of a broader system of dehumanization and exploitation of migrants.
2. Health care:
 - a. Detainees are not consistently provided with their prescribed medicines or medical treatment for injuries.
 - b. Detainees are not provided with adequate resources to support their mental health. This is especially a problem because detention negatively impacts mental health.
3. Retaliation:
 - a. Detainees who have stood up for their rights have received retaliation in the form of solitary confinement and transfer.
 - b. Detainees who have stood up for their rights are subject to arbitrary transfers between detention centers, making it difficult to access their property and legal records, and to stay in touch with family members.

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4. Food:
 - a. The food served at this facility is consistently of poor quality, and is often inedible.
 - b. The food served lacks diversity and proper nutrition.
5. Recreation Time: People detained in the Northwest Detention Center are confined to the indoors 23 hours a day and only get to have recreation in a small yard for one hour a day.
6. Solitary Confinement: The practice of solitary confinement in this detention center amounts to psychological and physical torture.
7. Lack of Proper Staffing: Staff have behaved in unprofessional way towards detainees.
8. Lack of Access to Counsel:
 - a. Detainees have very limited understanding of their rights and the court process. There are language barriers and a lack of communication.
 - b. There is a lack of due process.
9. Hyper-Exploitation:
 - a. Commissary prices for necessary items like food and hygiene products are inflated.
 - b. Detainees work for \$1/day in order to make enough money to call their families and purchase necessary items in the commissary. GEO Group thus enriches itself off the labor of detainees, while Keefe enriches itself off their commissary spending.
 - c. Detention facilities earn money per person detained, and when detainees are transferred they are counted again as a new detainee, adding numbers to the detention count and making more money for the detention corporation GEO Group.
 - d. Detainees must pay high rates to make phone calls and send messages to their families. Sound quality on the phones is bad, and the tablets used for sending messages are often faulty.

III. JUDGMENT/RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE TRIBUNAL.

We find ICE, CBP, and all immigrant detention centers (and private companies that run them) guilty of extensive human rights abuses, of conspiring collectively to dehumanize and profit from the suffering of immigrant communities. Guilty of profiting from the organized slavery carried out within the walls of each detention center and guilty for all the death and abuses that take place day to day as people detained are transferred, shackled and mistreated. These entities are guilty of abusing and traumatizing immigrant communities for generations, denying them of their right to live and thrive collectively. These entities are guilty of carrying out all these crimes on occupied

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land that belongs to indigenous communities specifically the Puyallup nation, using environmental racism to further subjugate communities of color.

Based upon the Testimony taken herein and the Findings of Fact, this Tribunal makes the following recommendations:

1. Shut down this center and all other immigrant detention centers in the country.
2. Provide clear and transparent records that reflect all of the abuses that have taken place and continue to take place inside each detention center as well as who has profited from them.
3. Release all people who are currently detained immediately.
4. Provide reparations in the form of medical care for both physical and emotional needs for survivors of detention, their families and communities as well as lost wages, lost homes, etc.
5. Dismantle ICE, CBP, and all other entities that militarize and terrorize communities of color across the country.
6. Stop the harassment, persecution, and repression of all immigrants and their families.
7. Once all detention centers are shut down, return this land to their rightful owners, the indigenous communities they were taken from.

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**We, The Tribunal, indict the capitalist, economic model that incentivizes
and privatizes this inhuman facility and others like it.**

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Isabella Jaravata, Anakbayan Seattle

KL Shannon, NAACP and People's Party

Asha Abena, Ending the Prison Industrial Complex (EPIC)

Bárbara Suárez Galeano, Detention Watch Network

February 4, 2018