

Study: Immigrants mistreated at detention center

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SEATTLE (AP) — From excessive strip searches and overcrowding to a lack of due process, an immigrant advocacy group alleges detainees are being mistreated at the Northwest Detention Center in Tacoma, which houses illegal aliens in the process of deportation.

The study — released by Seattle-based OneAmerica and the International Human Rights Clinic at Seattle University's law school — the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's operation at the Tacoma detention center is harshly criticized.

The report contains anecdotes in which detainees describe what they call degrading treatment by guards and subpar conditions at the jail.

"Probably the most striking, stark fact is that there's no accountability around conditions and standards, which is only made even more stark when you think of detention as being the fastest-growing form of incarceration in the United States," Pramila Jayapal, executive director of OneAmerica, said Monday.

Immigration officials denied the report's contentions, saying the detention facility complies with industry standards. The Geo Group, the Boca Raton, Fla.-based private contractor that runs the facility, declined comment Monday.

"The information contained in the report has numerous inaccuracies and vague references that could not be corroborated or independently verified," Immigration spokeswoman Lorie Dankers.

Most of the accounts come from 46 interviews between 2007 and 2008. Detainees were interviewed, as were family members and immigration lawyers. In some cases, researchers did not disclose names or dates in the accounts. The researchers also had sessions with ICE officials and tours of the facility.

One account in the 42-page report alleges that U.S. marshals denied some detainees access to restrooms for seven hours during flights from Seattle in 2007, leading some of the immigrants to defecate in their seats.

Melissa Middlesworth, a federal Justice Department spokeswoman based in Washington, D.C., said she could immediately comment on that allegation without closer examination of the report.

Another woman cited in the report said she was strip searched several times after visits with her lawyer. Dankers said thorough strip searches are uncommon and only done when officers think there's probable cause to conclude that inappropriate contact took place between a detainee and a visitor.

The report also alleged that many immigrants were pressured to sign documents they did not fully understand and faced verbal abuse from guards if they delayed. Also, a lack of meeting rooms for detainees and lawyers led to hurried meetings lacking privacy.

The detention center opened in 2004 and has been expanded twice. Dankers said the center typically runs near capacity, which is about 1,000 detainees. It houses detainees mainly from Alaska, Oregon and Washington.

OneAmerica included recommendations in its report for better treatment, including better attorney access, improved officer training, increased privacy and improved medical care.

The report came a few days after ICE announced an increase of nearly 40% in deportations out of Washington, Oregon and Alaska over the first nine months of the fiscal year. More than 7,300 people have been deported from the region in that period, immigration officials said.

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TX teacher (1 friends, send message) wrote: 7/15/2008 12:17:57 PM
I don't care if these criminals are "mistreated."
The stories of "mistreatment" come from the illegals and their families. What else would they say...hey, man, gracias for putting us in the Marriott?
So they had to hold it for 7 hours on a plane and poop in their pants. Bet it's not the first or last time.
If they don't like their reception in this country, they should certainly opt to stay in their own!
Enough is enough.
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americanguy68 (1 friends, send message) wrote: 7/15/2008 10:55:01 AM
OneAmerica included recommendations in its report for better treatment, including better attorney access, improved officer training, increased privacy and improved medical care.
oneamerica ?? guess they are not hiding what they want... maybe if mexico and other countries help pay the bills of their citizens illegally here.
improved medical care? maybe they havent heard how many legal americans do not get medical care at all? its in the millions including our own kids. they want better health care let them call mexico for the money or have their country send drs and nurses (at their expense not ours) to the usa to treat them on the way home.
conditions musy not be too bad in detention centers . illegals are still coming in and coming back over and over again. conditions in the detention centers certainly hasnt stopped them from coming or from them going home on their own.
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Marxist87 (4 friends, send message) wrote: 7/15/2008 10:16:16 AM
FairTaxSetUFree:
Ron Paul?
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justanotherjoe (5 friends, send message) wrote: 7/15/2008 9:58:37 AM
Wow! Anecdotes about mistreatment and subpar conditions in a jail? USAtoaday ..you left off the term "illegal" in the headline, but no matter as you often do stuff like that. I'd like to see the measurements for the woman who was stripped searched numerous times, if she was 54-76-72 or 38-28-38, that might tell the world something! To be sure, either way it would be too funny! IMHO I'm sure the ICE would rather search the later, lol! A 42 page report based upon claims from 42 ppl out of 7,300! Come on, that's pretty petty and a bit more than somewhat pathetic.
For Captshine .. I agree with most of what you posted but, the sad truth is, America WILL change to their liking! You have to know it's what Bo is running on and what we've come to do best.
If you live in the USofA and don't already speak it, I suggest you brush up on your espanol!
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FairTaxSetUFree (0 friends, send message) wrote: 7/15/2008 9:42:09 AM
"Make no mistake about it: the Latino community holds this election in your hands. Some of the closest contests this November will be in states like Florida, Colorado, Nevada and New Mexico - states with large Latino populations.
I know how powerful this community is. Just think how powerful you could be on November 4th if you translate your numbers into votes. And I'm not taking a single Latino vote for granted in this campaign. We're meeting with Latino leaders across the country. We're reaching out to Latino organizations to get input on my policy proposals. We've got a nationwide Hispanic media strategy. We're recruiting and training Latino organizers. We're holding Latino voter registration drives across America. And when I'm President, I'll be asking many of you to serve at every level of government." - Obama to La Raza
Replace the word "Latino" with "White"...how would the black, asian and latino people in the country feel about these statements.
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FairTaxSetUFree (0 friends, send message) wrote: 7/15/2008 9:38:00 AM
Obama to La Raza:
"Well, I don't know about you, but I think it's time for a President who won't walk away from something as important as comprehensive reform when it becomes politically unpopular."
Lets see...IT ISNT THE WILL OF THE PEOPLE (legal)! That is why it is unpopular!
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FairTaxSetUFree (0 friends, send message) wrote: 7/15/2008 9:34:43 AM
Obama's speech to La Raza:
"When communities are terrorized by ICE immigration raids - when nursing mothers are torn from their babies, when children come home from school to find their parents missing, when people are detained without access to legal counsel. When all that's happening, the system just isn't working."
Let's see Obama, when illegals cross our borders, break our laws and do not respect the language or culture of this country, the system isn't working and neither are you catering to these people. Read the speech at: http://www.realclearpolitics.com/articles/2008/07/obamas_remarks_to_la_raza.html
If this speach was given to a group of white people, it would be declared racist. Also, La Raza means "The Race".
McCain is no better. They both must go. I plan to vote Libertarian! If you want to vote for change, change the way you vote!
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