

Randall G. Shelden

It's More Profitable to *Treat* the Disease than to *Prevent* it: Why the Prison Industrial Complex Needs Crime

"While arrests and convictions are steadily on the rise, profits are to be made - profits from crime. Get in on the ground floor of this booming industry now!"^[1]

It's like a hotel with a guaranteed occupancy.^[2]

A business comes in and a year or two it can't support itself... (a prison) is something you know is going to be there for a long time.^[3]

The opportunities and options in the field are endless.^[4]

"There are no seasonal fluctuations, it is a non-polluting industry, and in many circumstances it is virtually invisible."^[5]

"If crime doesn't pay, punishment certainly does..."^[6]

Introduction

During the past couple of decades one of the emerging perspectives in criminology is that of "restorative justice" (Sullivan and Tifft, 2001). Seeking to find alternatives to the usual punitive response to crime, restorative justice places emphasis on the needs of the victims, the offender and the community. Since the start of a "restorative justice movement" in Canada (with a case of two teenagers who went on a vandalism spree, which was handled via a direct meeting between the victims and the two teenagers), efforts to seek "peaceful" and "non-punitive" solutions have evolved all over the world (Bonita et al., 2002).

While marked by some success, restorative justice has apparently not had that much of an impact on the punitive tendency within modern American society. There are many reasons for this, but one that I'd like to explore here is the fact that there are many institutions (both public and private) that have a vested interest in maintaining a "get tough" approach to crime control. If we are serious about seeking restorative justice on a wide scale, we must know what we are up against, and what we are up against is a very large and powerful industry. What many have called the "crime control industry" (e.g., Christie, 2000; Shelden and Brown, 2000) is, I would maintain, part of a much larger global network of social control (more about this below). This article is concerned mostly with one crucial component of this industry, the "prison industrial complex," but first some problems of terminology should be addressed.

My idea is similar to what Lilly and Knepper, in a 1993 article, called the "correctional-commercial complex," which they describe as a sort of "sub-governmental policy-making"

system consisting of an alliance between government and private enterprise. Lilly and Knepper noted that this system is quite similar to the "military industrial complex," since it consists of patterns of interrelationships known variously as "policy networks," "subgovernment" or the "iron triangle." They argued that such a system may not be legally a form of government, but nevertheless may exert greater influence than more formal structures of the government. In comparing this system to the military equivalent they note that within the military subgovernment there is an "iron triangle" of the Pentagon, private defense contractors, and various members of Congressional committees (e.g., armed services committees, defense appropriations committees). They noted further that the decision-making within any given policy arena "rests within a closed circle or elite of government bureaucrats, agency heads, interest groups, and private interests that gain from the allocation of public resources" (Lilly and Knepper, 1993: 152).

Viewed in this manner, I think the term *criminal justice industrial complex* is a much more preferable term than the "crime control industry," since the latter is too narrow, since it includes agencies *directly* involved in responding to crime (namely, the police, private security, courts and prisons). The *criminal justice industrial complex* can be defined as a symbiotic relationship between the formal criminal justice agencies and various businesses and other governmental agencies and institutions. More importantly, however, as the more popular phrase "military industrial complex" suggests, the existence of a crime problem has created a tendency for all sorts of interests to benefit from the study of and response to the problem (Shelden and Brown, 2000; Shelden and Brown, 2003).

Examples include the educational system, with more than 3,000 thousands of criminal justice programs within colleges and universities. Educating people for occupations in criminal justice is a big business, given the large number of those majoring in "criminal justice" or "criminology" and planning on a career in this field. There are numerous examples of various businesses that may receive profits because of crime, such as hospitals and insurance companies (hospital emergency room visits, doctor's fees, insurance premiums on auto and other insurance covering crime, etc.) and the salaries of those who deal with the victims of crime (e.g., doctors, nurses, para-medics, insurance adjusters). Then, too, there are the profits from the sale of books (e.g., college textbooks, trade books), magazine and journal articles, newspaper coverage (and the advertisers who profit from crime stories), television crime shows (and their advertisers) and movies about crime (with the enormous salaries paid to actors and actresses who star in them). There is also the money collected by courts through various fines (especially traffic tickets), special courses defendants can enroll in as a condition of (or in lieu of) their sentence (e.g., traffic schools, petty larceny programs), plus a totally separate industry involved in the setting of bail (bail bondsmen and the insurance companies involved). Finally, we have to consider the private security industry, with profits almost impossible to estimate (ranging from companies that provide security guards to the makers of all sorts of security devices like locks and barbed wire, not to mention the security provided to gated communities). As you can clearly see, there are many different entities profiting in some way from the existence of crime.

Taking a Larger View: the Globalization of Crime Control

In order to better understand the criminal justice industrial complex, I think it is necessary to take a much broader view, one that encompasses the entire world. Thirty years ago Richard Quinney made the following observation: "The legal system at home and the military apparatus abroad are two sides of the same phenomenon: both perpetuate American capitalism and the American way of life" (Quinney, 1974: xxvi). Today these two systems are larger than

ever and they spread themselves literally into every corner of the globe.^[2] The “criminal justice industrial complex” encompasses more than just the criminal justice system and the private security industry. We need to visualize this entire system from a global perspective, as the same technology and world view helps shape both crime control at home and military control abroad, as Quinney suggested.

In many ways the control of crime has taken on many of the characteristics of the military, or what Kraska and others have called the “militarization of criminal justice” (Kraska, 1999; Haggerty and Ericson, 1999; Simon, 1999; Caufield, 1999; Arrigo, 1999). Echoing Quinney, Kraska makes the point that there is an underlying ideology of militarism that clearly has been borrowed in the “war on crime” (not to mention the “war on drugs”), which he defines as “a set of beliefs and values that stress the use of force and domination as appropriate means to solve problems and gain political power, while glorifying the means to accomplish this – military power, hardware, and technology.” This also involves a “blurring of external and internal security functions leading to a more subtle targeting of civilian populations,” plus an ideology that places emphasis on the efficient solving of problems that require the use of state force, the latest and most sophisticated technology, various forms of intelligence gathering, the use of “special operations” (e.g., SWAT) in both the police and within the prison system, the use of military discourse and metaphors (e.g., “collateral damage,” “under siege”) and last, but not least, collaboration with “the highest level of the governmental and corporate worlds, between the defense industry and the crime control industry” (Kraska, 1999: 208).

How big is this network of social control? One way to answer this question is to borrow the popular phrase, “follow the money,” for the money involved is truly staggering, and look at employment figures. To begin with, expenditures on the criminal justice system came to \$147 billion in 1999, the latest year available.^[3] One writer estimated that by 2005 annual expenditures will be more than \$200 billion (Chambliss, 1999: 5). Taking the average annual percentage increase over the past five years (8.4%), currently (2004) the expenditures would come to around \$208 billion; therefore this figure will be used for the estimates given here. Over two million are employed in the criminal justice system (as of March, 2000; Beck et al., 2002). Then there is the truly vast private security industry, which includes more than 15,000 firms with annual revenues totally about \$40 billion (www.freedoniagroup.com). How many are employed in this industry is not known, but a *USA Today* report (2003) noted that there are more than 1 million security guards nationwide, also noting that this is a \$12 billion industry. Also included is the recently formed Department of Homeland Security, with a budget of \$41 billion (Government Security, 2003). Homeland Security includes several different departments, including the Border Patrol, Immigration and Naturalization Services, the Coast Guard, Secret Service and many more (www.dhs.gov). According to one estimate about 165,000 are employed within this department (Fox News.com, Jan. 23, 2003). Finally, there’s the Pentagon budget, reaching an all-time high of a proposed \$401.7 billion in fiscal 2005 (Government Executive Magazine, 2004). The total expenditures for all of the above come to about \$663 billion. The total number employed in these components is almost impossible to calculate. As for the military, there were about 1.4 million on active duty in fiscal year 1999 (Johnson, 2004: 102).

The above total leaves out a lot. For instance, we have no idea how many businesses are involved in providing various kinds of products and services to agencies of the criminal justice system, Homeland Security and the military. Concerning the military, not counted in the Pentagon budget is the cost of the current war in Iraq. The latest count comes to around \$104 billion (<http://www.costofwar.com>). It is not possible at this time to provide anything more than

crude estimates of the number of people employed in private businesses that provide products and services to the various agencies of social control, nor the extent of the revenues obtained from such services. It would be safe to assume, however, that revenues come to several billions of dollars.

The above estimates come to at least \$767 billion in expenditures and revenues. As for estimating the number employed, if we take the estimated 15,000 firms in the private security industry and assume an average of about 100 employees per firm, we have about 1.5 million in the private security industry (more than the above-referenced 1 million security guards). This would bring the total employed to more than 5 million. (Also missing from these estimates are the public school security police officers, for which there are no national data available; Wallace and Pullman, 2004) Table 1 illustrates these estimates.

At a minimum, we have a society that employs over 5 million people (probably more) whose main job is connected in some way with the social control of literally billions of citizens both here and abroad, with expenditures that are at least three-quarters of a trillion dollars. Given the money and the number employed, it is safe to say that *the control of crime and related security concerns is one of the most important industries in the world.*

Table 1. The Scope of the Social Control Network (crime control and the military).

Component	Expenditures (in \$billions, 2004)
Criminal Justice System	\$208
Private Security Guards	12
Department of Homeland Security	41
Pentagon (defense budget, FY 2005)	402
Iraq War	104
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Total	\$767

Component	Employment (in millions, 2004)
Criminal Justice System	2.0
Private Security Guards	1.5
Department of Homeland Security	0.165
Military (active duty)	1.4
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Total	5.065
Sources (see text).	

It is probably impossible to estimate the total number of people who, on any given day, are subject to the control functions of the modern American state, whether it is the criminal justice system or the military. We do have, however, some fairly accurate numbers for those under the direct control of the American criminal justice system, especially prisons and jails.

Under Control of the Criminal Justice System

At the end of 2002, there were more than 2 million prisoners in the United States, which translates to an incarceration rate of 701 (Harrison and Beck, 2003). Both of these statistics are all-time highs and highest in the world. Not included in these figures are those detained under the jurisdiction of the Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (formerly the INS), which totaled 21,065 on December 31, 2002. This number represented a 46% increase over 1995. Additionally, there were 2,377 prisoners held under military jurisdiction, plus 16,206 prisoners held in the custody of correctional authorities in U.S. territories. These numbers together add up to 39,648 (Harrison and Beck, 2003). The total number of prisoners comes to 2,072,979.

It should be noted that our incarceration figures do not include all of those in various community-based facilities (e.g., work-release centers) and incarcerated juveniles. Exact number of those in these various community-based facilities are not available, but as of 2002 there were more than four million on probation and parole, up from about 1.3 million in 1980 (see Table 3). The number of juveniles incarcerated was about 109,000 as of 1999 (Chesney-Lind and Shelden, 2004).

Finally, there is the rather astonishing figure of 47 million American citizens (about one-fourth of the adult population) who have criminal records on file with some state or federal agency! This is a truly amazing statistic (Travis, 2002: 18). (Incidentally, the police made about 13 million arrests in 2002, according to FBI figures.) That brings the total of current and previous criminal justice “clients” to more than 65 million people, not counting juveniles on probation, parole or under some other form of supervision! It might be said without much exaggeration that *the criminal justice industrial complex reaches into every nook and cranny of American life*.

Looking more carefully at the past 30 years we find that while there have been some fluctuations in the overall crime rate, at this time the official crime rate (“index crimes”) is about the same as it was in the early 1970s, yet the incarceration rate went up by about 500 percent. The rate of violent crime actually increased slightly during this period, but the rate of property crime had declined to offset that increase. During this same period of time, expenditures on the criminal justice system increased by 1500 percent (Shelden and Brown, 2003). Only one conclusion can be reached: increasing rates of incarceration and expenditures on the criminal justice system has had no impact on the crime rate. The absolute failure of the conservative, hard-line approach to crime is evident.

It is not much of a stretch to conclude that both the “war on crime,” the “war on terrorism” and the invasion of Iraq all illustrate the failure of the “might makes right” or “get

tough” mentality. Writing on the first anniversary of the invasion of Iraq, two writers with the *Los Angeles Times* observed:

When the United States invaded Iraq a year ago this week, the action transformed American foreign policy in the Middle East and around the world — but not always as its strategists intended. The fall of Baghdad after only 21 days of combat gave the world a vivid lesson in the scope of U.S. military might. But the difficulties that followed in Iraq — a year of uphill battles against political chaos, economic collapse and a stubborn insurgency — provided an equally striking lesson in the boundaries of American power when it comes to waging peace (McManus and Efron, 2004).

However, to borrow Jeff Reiman’s phrase, “nothing succeeds like failure” (Reiman, 2004). For the people who benefit from the “criminal justice industrial complex” and more specifically the “prison industrial complex,” this has been a huge success.

The Incarceration Boom: Expanding the Prison Industrial Complex

The *prison industrial complex* represents an interconnection among the criminal justice system, the political system and the economic system - just like the military represents a connection with the political and economic system. Politics and economics go hand in hand - how do you think politicians get elected and whose interests do they serve? Think also of the large number of lobbyists in the nation=s capital (not to mention the same thing at the local and state level - try to see your senator, congressman, city councilman or other representative and chances are you will have to wait in line until they see corporate lobbyists).^[2] Think for a moment about the building of prisons, jails, courthouses, police departments and furnishing them with everything they need to keep going (construction costs, electrical, furniture, toilet paper, etc.) and you get an idea of what I am talking about.

Let’s start first with some recent trends in the incarceration rates in the United States. Presently, this rate is higher than any other country in the world. Table 2 shows changes in America's prison system during the past 75 plus years. Note that the most significant increases have occurred since 1975, roughly coinciding with the onset of the "war on drugs." We are way ahead of other industrial democracies, whose incarceration rates tend to cluster in a range from around 55 to 120 per 100,000 population, with some well below that figure, like Japan's rate of 36, with an average incarceration rate for *all countries of the world* of around 80. Thus, America's incarceration rate is almost nine times greater than the average country (Currie, 1998:15). The Norwegian criminologist, Nils Christie, in the third edition of his ground-breaking book on the crime control industry, noted that there is a huge difference between the United States and our northern neighbor Canada. Canada=s incarceration rate is about 129, about one-fifth our rate. He notes, by the way, that these two countries are essentially the same (in terms of the economic and political systems) except for one important exception: Canada has more of a “social safety-net” (various welfare benefits) than in the United States (Christie, 2000: 31).

Table 2. The Growing Prison Population, 1925-2002(rates per 100,000 in state and federal prison).

Year	Number	Rate
1925	91,669	79
1935	144,180	113
1945	133,649	98
1955	185,780	112
1965	210,895	108
1975	240,593	111
1985	480,568	202
1995	1,085,363	411
2002	1,440,655	476

Source: Maguire and Pastore, 1997: 518; Harrison and Beck, 2003.

For comparative purposes, Table 3 shows the increases in the four major components of the criminal justice system: prisons, jails, probation and parole. As noted here, between 1980 and 2002 each of these segments grew by over 240 percent. Prisons, of course, led the way, having increased by 315 percent, with jail populations not far behind with an increase of 306 percent. The number on probation went up by 257 percent, while the number on parole increased by 242 percent. All four together increased by 267 percent. What is perhaps most interesting from Table 2 is the fact that the overall adult population increased by just 18 percent during this period. Also, the number of arrests went up by only 41 percent, compared to an overall *decrease* in reported index crimes.^[10] What this clearly shows is that there has been a significant increase in the number of less serious offenders being arrested, with a corresponding increase in the number being convicted and sent to prison or jail.

Table 3. Adults on Probation, in Jail or Prison, and on Parole, 1980-2002.

Year	Total	Probation	Jail	Prison	Parole
1980	1,832,350	1,118,097	163,994	329,821	220,438

1985	3,011,500	1,968,712	254,986	487,593	300,203
1990	4,348,000	2,670,234	403,019	743,382	531,407
1995	5,335,100	3,077,861	499,300	1,078,545	679,421
2002	6,732,400	3,995,165	665,475	1,367,856	753,141
% increase (1980-2002)	267	257	306	315	242

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, A Key Facts at a Glance: Correctional Populations, @ July 27, 2003. Online: www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/

The rising incarceration rate has done considerable damage to racial minorities and their communities. Justice Department figures show an incredible racial gap in incarceration rates. About 12 percent of black males between 20 and 39 were either in prison or jail, compared to only 4 percent of Hispanic males and a mere 1.6 percent of white males. A few years ago, the Justice Department estimated that the average black child born in 1991 had a 28 percent chance of going to prison someday, compared to only a 4 percent chance for a white child. An updated survey found that a black male child born in 2001 had a 33% chance of going to prison someday (Younge, 2003). Back in 1995, the Sentencing Project estimated that about one-third of all black males in their 20s was somewhere in the criminal justice system, either in prison, jail, on probation or on parole, up from 25 percent in 1990. Estimated for specific cities put the percentages even higher, for instance, about 60 percent in Washington, D.C. and Baltimore (Miller, 1996). Taking a longer view, whereas in the 1930s about 30 percent of all prisoners were racial minorities, by 2002 this percentage had climbed to 70 (Welch, 2003).

The overall incarceration rate for African-Americans now exceeds that for whites by a ratio of 8 to 1 (Harrison and Beck, 2003). The latest numbers (December 31, 2002) show that African-Americans constitute more than half of the prison population; between 1980 and 1999 their rate of incarceration increased by 240 percent, compared to a rise of 155 percent for whites. Moreover, African-Americans comprise about one-third of those on probation and half of those on parole (Austin et al., 2001).

The incarceration rate for women has increased the most in recent years, going from a mere 8 per 100,000 in 1975 to 60 by mid-2002, a jump of more than 700 percent, compared to an increase of 400 percent for males. Not surprisingly, race enters the picture here, as African-American females have an incarceration rate that is almost eight times higher than their white counterparts (Shelden and Brown, 2003; Beck et al., 2002; Harrison and Karberg, 2003; Austin, 2001: 26). Much of the increase in women's incarceration rate comes from the impact of *mandatory sentencing* laws, passed during the 1980s crackdown on crime. Under many of these laws, mitigating circumstances (e.g., having children, few or no prior offenses, non-violent

offenses) are rarely allowed. One survey found that just over half (51%) of women in state prisons had none or only one prior offense, compared to 39 percent of the male prisoners (Donziger, 1996:152). It should also be noted that drug convictions account for the bulk of these increases, as has been the case for all prisoners, as I will note below. What is of critical importance for women offenders is the fact that more than 80 percent of them have children and in most of these cases the women have sole responsibility to take care of them (how this has happened is another story and beyond the scope of this report; see Chesney-Lind, 1987 and Owen, 1998, for further discussion of this issue).

Finally, 13% of all adult African-American men are disenfranchised as a result of a felony conviction (1.4 million; one-third of all disenfranchised adults); in some states the percentage is more than 30 (e.g., Alabama and Florida), while in many more states over 20% are disenfranchised (The Sentencing Project/Human Rights Watch, 1998). No wonder some are calling imprisonment the "new American apartheid" (Shelden, Brown and Listwan, 2004).

Ironically, our Aget tough@ policies, which have included the so-called Aend of welfare,@ have resulted in another form of welfare: instead of taxpayer money going to provide some subsistence for the poor, the money is going for taking care of them in prison, and at a cost far greater than ordinary welfare expenditures. The number of children with a mother in prison almost doubled during the 1990s. Currently, African-American children are almost nine times more likely to have a parent in prison than white children. There are about 6 million children with parents in prison or jail (Austin et al., 2001: 27-28; Braman, 2002; Richie, 2002).

Added to this problem is the fact that the majority of prisons built during the past two decades are located in remote rural areas (mostly put there for economic and political reasons) and hence making it difficult for children to visit their mothers (more on rural prisons in a later section). One byproduct for this state of affairs is the fact that one of the variables most strongly related to chronic delinquency are having one or more parents in prison. Moreover, the vast majority of women in prison (and men too) were living in poverty at the time of their arrest. The so-called "end of welfare" (supported by both democrats and republicans alike) has, ironically, not ended dependence upon the state - in fact, it has increased dependence and it is costing taxpayers billions of dollars a year (it costs about \$20,000-\$40,000 per year to house one prisoner; Shelden and Brown, 2003:272).

Prisons as a "Market" for Capitalism

Within a capitalist society there tends to be an insatiable desire to continue "converting money into commodities and commodities into money." Everything, it seems, is turned into a "commodity" - from the simplest products (e.g., paper and pencil) to human beings (e.g., women's bodies, slaves). Indeed, within a capitalist society "daily life is scanned for possibilities that can be brought within the circuit of accumulation," since any aspect of society that can produce a profit will be exploited (Heilbroner, 1985:60). Life itself has been "commodified."¹¹¹

The amount of money that flows into the coffers of the prison industrial complex from tax dollars alone is quite substantial. The budget for both state and federal correctional institutions came to \$34.1 billion in fiscal year 2000, which represents an increase of almost 80 percent over 1992. The budgets for probation and parole have also been increasing. While in fiscal year 1992 the average budgets for both systems came to \$23 million, in the year 2000 the average was \$71 million, an increase of 209 percent. What is most interesting about the budgets for probation and parole is that the largest increases went to the parole system, with their average budgets going from \$25.5 million in 1992 to \$43.1 million in 2000, compared to a very modest increase for probation budgets from \$55.7 million to \$56.3 million. The total budgets for both

probation and parole came to just over \$1.7 billion in fiscal year 2000 (Camp and Camp, 2000: 84,186). The costs per prisoner per day have been steadily increasing during the past decade, going from about \$49 in 1991 to about \$58 in 1999. That's about \$21,170 per prisoner per year (Camp and Camp, 2000:88).

Literally thousands of companies, large and small, are seeking profits in this booming industry. Employment in this industry offers careers for thousands of young men and women, many with college degrees in "criminal justice" programs at more than 3000 colleges and universities. The criminal justice system alone provides a steady supply of career possibilities, as police officers, prison guards, probation officers and many more. Most of these jobs offer not only good starting pay, but excellent benefits and a promise of future wage increases and job security. Many have formed unions, some of which have become stronger than any other union heretofore (see below).

As I have previously reported (see "Invest in Prisons: It's Good for Business"), one illustration of the "cashing in" on incarceration is the large and growing number of advertising done in journals related to this industry. Several major journals and periodicals, plus web sites, serve the correctional industry. Examples include *Corrections Today* and *The American Jail*, plus the American Correctional Association's annual *Directory*.

This is a small sampling, for there are at least two web sites that list company ads aimed at the prison market. One is "corrections yellow pages" (<http://www.correctionsyellow.com>) and another one is simply "corrections.com" (<http://www.corrections.com>). Together these contain more than 1000 different ads. Corrections.com organizes its web page by categories of vendors. For example, under the heading "cleaning/sanitation" there are twenty companies, including Americhem Enterprises (they supply products like industrial degreasers, floor finishers, disinfectants, bowl cleaners, etc.), Champion Industries (specializing in "dishwashing machines for prison applications"), and Somat Corporation ("waste reduction systems for the correctional foodservice industry"). This web site also claims to be "Home to the Industry's Leading Organizations" and provides a list of 34 different organizations, including both the most popular national groups (e.g., American Correctional Association) and lesser-known regional groups (e.g., Kentucky Department of Juvenile Justice).

The American Correctional Association (ACA) is one of the largest national organizations in the country. Their annual meetings draw hundreds of vendors, usually taking up an entire floor of a hotel or convention center. On the ACA web site it mentions the \$50 billion or so spent each year on prisons and jails and says to companies, "Don't miss out on this prime revenue-generating opportunity."

The trade journal of the American Correctional Association, *Corrections Today*, has a special issue every July in anticipation of the upcoming annual conference in August. There are more than 200 pages in this special issue. I have a copy of the July, 1999 issue, which includes descriptions from more than 200 different companies, selling everything imaginable. The list includes locks and other security devices, food service, hygiene kits, bedding, blankets, ceiling systems, communications equipment, clothing, weapons, and a wide assortment of architects, engineers and consultants used to build and maintain prisons and jails.

One section of this issue of the journal is devoted to advertising for the famous ACA Exhibit Hall, which they cleverly call the "County Fair Specialty Break." This ad was telling members about the previous winter meetings (these are held every January at various locations around the country) and reads as follows:

The excitement of an old-fashioned County Fair was in the air in the Exhibit Hall Tuesday morning for the **1999 Winter Conference Exhibit Hall Specialty Break**. Attendees took a chance for prizes at **Correctional Healthcare Solutions, Inc.**'s Wheel of Fortune and at **Sverdrup Facilities, Inc.**'s Coke bottle ring toss. **Kenall** hosted a dart game for prizes and **HKS** provided a clown juggler who formed balloon animals. **Aramark Correctional Services'** tarot card reader foretold attendees' fortunes as did the palm reader **Norment Detention & Security Group** supplied.

The page shows photos of all sorts of people (including children) having a grand old time, just like an old fashioned "County Fair." While of course humorous, we must not forget that the bulk of the prisoners who make all this fun possible are poor blacks who, unwittingly, are providing their masters with entertainment, just as they did in the not too distant past, with shows like "Amos 'n Andy" and the like. There's some improvement, however, in that white-owned corporations provide the entertainment, while the mostly black prison population supplies the profit margins in their role as a sort of "clientele."

Not surprisingly, prison construction itself has become a booming business. During the 1990s a total of 371 new prisons opened. (About 92,000 new beds were added each year.) In 1999 alone, 24 new prisons were opened, at a total cost of just over \$1 billion. The average cost of building a new prison came to \$105 million (about \$57,000 per bed, more than the starting salary of public school teachers and newly hired Assistant Professors and even some Full Professors). Also, in 1999 a total of 146 prisons were adding or renovating beds at a cost of \$470 million (about \$30,000 per bed)). As of January, 2000 a total of 29 new institutions were under construction and another 137 institutions were being renovated or adding new beds. Most of the new beds will be in either maximum or medium security institutions, where the costs are the highest. The total estimated costs of these new building projects come to more than \$2.2 billion (Camp and Camp, 2000: 76).

The construction of new prisons has become such a big business that there is a special newsletter called *Construction Report*, just to keep vendors up to date on new prison projects (Dyer, 2000: 13). A Google search on the Internet turns up dozens of companies advertising for prison construction. One example, among many, is Kitchell (<http://www.kitchell.com>) which, according to their web site, "has successfully delivered over 110,000 correctional beds, including over 130 criminal justice projects in 17 states." These projects include 42 state prisons, 29 adult jails, and 30 juvenile facilities. They also build police stations, courts facilities and camps.

Also found on this search was the web site for the North Carolina Department of Corrections (<http://www.doc.state.nc.us/DOP/prisons>) and here I found a chart showing the prisons recently opened or about to open in that state. Between 1989 and January, 2004 a total of 22 correctional facilities (including a youth center and two work farms) were opened. Currently three are under construction, with two due to open in April, 2004 and construction on another prison is set to begin in January, 2005. As of December 31, 2002 North Carolina had 28,772 prisoners and an incarceration rate of 345, a rate considerably below the national average of 476 (Harrison and Beck, 2003). It appears as if this state is hoping to catch up with the rest of the country.

Corporate Interests: the Role of ALEC

A little known fact about the prison industrial complex is an organization known as the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC). The mere existence of this organization demonstrates the classic connections between politics, economics and the criminal justice system. The membership consists of state legislators, private corporation executives and criminal justice officials. More than one-third of state lawmakers in the country (2400) belong and they are, not surprisingly, mostly Republicans and conservative Democrats. It was started in 1973 by Paul Weyrich (who also co-founded the Heritage Foundation and now is the head of a group called the Free Congress Foundation, a far right conservative group). Their mission is to promote “free markets,” along with small governments, “states’ rights” and, of course, privatization. Corporate membership dues range from \$5,000 to \$50,000 annually. Corrections Corporation of America is a member of this group, which is not surprising. However, members also include a veritable “who’s who” of the Fortune 500, such as Ameritech, AT&T, Bayer, Bell Atlantic, Bell South, DuPont, GlaxcoSmithKline, Merck & Co., Sprint, Pfizer, to name just a few. Among the companies that have supported ALEC through various grants include Ameritech, Exxon Mobil, Chevron and several corporate foundations, including the Proctor and Gamble Fund, Exxon Educational Foundation, Bell Atlantic Foundation, Ford Motor Company Fund, among many others (<http://www.capitalresearch.org>).

The web site of ALEC is an educational experience in itself. It proudly lists some of the bills it has been involved in getting passed, plus indicates some very important keynote speakers during the past three annual meetings. Among the notables giving speeches include Attorney General John Ashcroft, Secretary of Health and Human Services Tommy Thompson (see below), Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Mel Martinez, President and CEO of American Home Products Robert Essner, Chairman and CEO of Pfizer, Hank McKinnell, Florida Governor Jeb Bush, Secretary of Labor Elaine Chao and ultra conservative syndicated columnist Cal Thomas (<http://www.alec.org>). This organization also puts together papers and policy statements on a wide variety of issues reflecting conservative ideas, including one about the “myth of global warming.” Bill Berkowitz, who carefully follows conservative trends, has noted that ALEC sponsored more than 3,100 pieces of legislation between 1999 and 2000, with more than 400 of these bills passing (Berkowitz, 2002).

Within ALEC there is a “Criminal Justice Task Force.” Among the duties of this group is to write “model bills” on crime and punishment. Among such “model bills” they helped draft include “mandatory minimum sentences,” “Three Strikes” laws, “truth in sentencing” and the like. One member boasted that in 1995 alone they introduced 199 bills, including “truth in sentencing” bills, which passed in 25 states. Tommy Thompson, former Wisconsin Governor and current head of Health and Human Services in the Bush Administration, was once a member of ALEC. He was recently quoted as saying that “I always loved going to these meetings because I always found new ideas. Then I’d take them back to Wisconsin, disguise them a little bit, and declare that ‘It’s mine’.” Edwin Bender of the National Institute on Money in State Politics, says that: “Bayer Corporation or Bell South or GTE or Merck pharmaceutical company sitting at a table with elected representatives, actually hammering out a piece of legislation – behind closed doors, I mean, this isn’t open to the public. And that then becomes the basis on which representatives are going to their state legislatures and debating issues” (www.americanradioworks.org). As everyone knows by now, these kinds of laws were a big reason for the swelling of the prison population, which in turn added new “markets” for capitalist profits.

Reach Out and Touch Someone

The old telephone company ad that advised customers to “reach out and touch someone” has new meaning, since long-distance phone companies have entered into the prison system.

Speaking of Bell South and other long-distance phone companies that have supported ALEC, this industry has entered into the prison system. Such industry giants as AT&T, Bell South, Sprint and MCI have found prisons to be an excellent market for long distance business. Indeed, this makes sense because inmates all over the country spend countless hours on the telephone talking with relatives. Of course this requires a collect call, which brings these companies into prison for the huge profits to be made. AT&T has an ad that reads (in upper case letters): "HOW HE GOT IN IS YOUR BUSINESS. HOW HE GETS OUT IS OURS." MCI, not wanting to miss out, went so far as installing, for free, pay phones throughout the California prison system. They levy a \$3 surcharge for each phone call made, the cost of which is paid for by the prisoner's relatives. MCI offered the Department of Corrections 32 percent of the profits (Schlosser, 1998: 63).

This has led to a great deal of controversy in California and elsewhere. Two years ago an investigation by the *Los Angeles Times* found that phone charges benefited the state of California by about \$35 million a year as a result of an agreement with long-distance phone companies. Phone charges to relatives of those locked up in the California Youth Authority resulted in about \$85 million in revenue for the state in 2001. After several years of pressure, an agreement reached in January, 2001 that lowered the charges by 25 percent. A three-year contract was signed with WorldCom and Verizon that cut rates for adult prisoners by 25% and for juveniles by 78%. As a result of this agreement, the average 11 minute phone call to a family member outside the immediate area will be just over \$5 dollars (Warren, 2002).

Brother Can you spare a Bed?

Finally, there are people known as *bed brokers*. These individuals act like travel agents, only in this case they help locate jail and prison beds, rather than hotel rooms! An example is a company known as Dominion Management, of Edmond, Oklahoma. They will search for a correctional facility with an empty bed for a fee, a sort of “rent-a-cell” program. Areas suffering from overcrowding are often in desperate need for additional space, the cost of which can run from \$25 to \$60 per “man-day.” These bed brokers will earn a commission of around \$2.50 to \$5.50 per man-day (Schlosser, 1998: 65-66). In the 1980s, the state of Texas began to use county jails to provide temporary housing to ease overcrowding in the prison system (the District of Columbia began the same thing). They began calling county jails looking for beds. A company known as N-Group Securities in Houston saw a profit. Texas towns were short on jobs and developers began to approach these towns with plans to build more jails. Such Wall Street investment firms like Drexel Burnham Lambert offered to underwrite some "junk bonds" for the project. However, soon the state of Texas started building prisons - \$1.5 billion worth - and the hiring of about 12,000 guards. Thus they now had a *surplus* of beds and these small towns with new jails were desperate for inmates. So they called other states and began renting their cells, resulting in business from 13 states, from Hawaii to Massachusetts! (Pens and Wright, 1998).

Institutions for young offenders are also a profitable industry. A report by Equitable Securities Research in 1997 is illustrative. The title tells it all: AAt-Risk Youth: A Growth Industry.@ And growing it is with around 10,000-15,000 private juvenile-justice service providers. They provide everything from education programs to wilderness camps - a \$50 billion per year market! (Dyer, 2000: 17). A cursory review of a trade magazine called *Juvenile Offenders* provides many examples of these programs. One of the biggest specific markets relates to the “war on gangs.”

I could go on and on with numerous examples and give some more reasons why we are in this state of affairs, but we will close with one glaring example of why spending seems to be constantly increasing for the criminal justice system. Two words sum it up: politics and economics. Politics in the sense that elected officials want to be reelected and sounding tough on crime gets votes. Economics in the sense of not only the money to be made by businesses, but also the number of jobs created. Protecting those jobs is often done by strong unions representing criminal justice workers.

The California Correctional Officer's Union: More Prisons Means More Jobs and Benefits

California is a good example of union influence. The California Correctional Peace Officer's Association (the union representing prison guards) has become a potent political force in that state. In 1992 alone this group was the second largest contributor to Political Action Committees, as they contributed just more than \$1 million to various candidates. In 1990 they gave almost \$1 million to Pete Wilson's successful campaign for governor. The total contributions given in 1990 were 10 times that given by the California Teachers' Association (Schiraldi, 1994). They contributed \$101,000 toward Proposition 184, which created the "Three Strikes and You're Out" law (Pens and Wright, 1998).

That this particular union has a vested interest in growing prison populations is reflected in the following figures. In 1980 California had 22,500 prisoners, while the average salary of a prison guard was \$14,400, and the budget for the California Department of Corrections was \$300 million. By 1996 there were more than 140,000 prisoners, the average salary of the guards stood at \$44,000, 58 percent above the national average (more than \$10,000 above teachers - a very telling statistic), while the budget was \$3 billion. (Prison jobs constituted almost half of the growth in state jobs during this time.) The union had only 5,600 members in 1980; currently they have around 28,000 members, collecting about \$8 million in dues annually and have a budget of around \$17 million (Pens and Wright, 1998; Cockburn, 1999). Just recently the governor of California approved rather large salary increases for correctional officers (no doubt a reward for the generous contributions to his race for governor), which would bring their starting salaries up to around \$70,000 in five years, twice the money paid to teachers!

The most recent example of the power of this union is their stance toward a program that allows prisoners to earn college credits at Ironwood State Prison in Blythe (Warren, 2003). This program is one among many examples demonstrating that the more education a prisoner receives while in prison, the lower the recidivism rate. But apparently lowering recidivism rates is not on the agenda of this union. In typical exaggerated conservative language, the union complains that it is not right for taxpayers to fund college courses for rapists, murderers and the like. A union memo complained about a similar program at another prison, saying that it is wrong to provide education to prisoners rather than offering tuition assistance to people in the community who pay taxes and may benefit from these services. A flyer sent to union members working at the Ironwood prison urged them to boycott all management functions and urged them to Just Say No to taxpayer-funded college education for inmates, suggesting that rapists, some of who [sic] are rapist [sic], molesters and murders [sic] receiving a free college education. (Given the poor grammar used in this memo, it might be a good idea that the person who wrote it, the president of the Ironwood State Prison chapter of the union, would enroll in some college-level English courses offered at some prisons.) College officials countered this charge, saying that with this program they were able to expand some of the programs, hire new faculty and increase opportunities for disadvantaged students not in prison. National figures cited by the *Los*

Angeles Times show that such programs are successful and a program in Arizona resulted in a recidivism rate of only 10 percent, compared to about 60 percent nationally (Warren, 2003).¹²¹

Recycling Prisoners: the "Perpetual Prisoner Machine"

The police, the courts and the prison system have become huge, self-serving and self-perpetuating bureaucracies with a vested interest in keeping crime at a certain level. They need victims, they need criminals, even if they have to invent them, as they have throughout the "war on drugs" and "war on gangs" or "recycle" them via the modern system of parole (Baum, 1997; Gordon, 1994; Sheldon, Tracy and Brown, 2004).

In a sense, private industry and the criminal justice system cannot afford to put a large dent in the crime problem, because it would have such a negative impact on the economy. The traditional reasons for putting people in prison - incapacitation, retribution, rehabilitation - may be giving way to another reason: increasing the profits of big business and providing economic uplift in rural communities. (Also, taxpayers are subsidizing private industry in that tax dollars pay for prisons and jails, which in turn contract with businesses for various supplies.)

To guarantee a steady supply of Aclients@ requires a lot of work. The criminal justice system seems to be in the business of merely processing as many cases as possible and especially to sort of Arecycle@ previous cases. A good analogy that describes the American criminal justice system is a phrase from an old television series called *Rawhide*, which was on in the early 1960s (this was Clint Eastwood=s first appearance on a television series). This was a show about a cattle drive and at the end of each show the Atrail boss@ yelled out to all the cowboys Ahead >em up, move >em out!@ So it is with the criminal justice system: keep them Adoggies@ moving. Even casual observation of any courtroom will show the process in action. You will see one case after another processed through, only to make room for another day and another busload of prisoners coming into court from the local jail and then another busload heading to the state or federal prisons several hundred miles away.

Something else has been happening and making a huge contribution to our crowded prisons, namely, the Arecycling@ of prisoners through the system of probation and parole. A recent study demonstrates that rather than assist released prisoners in their adjustment to the outside world and help them Ago straight,@ the probation and parole system almost guarantees failure (Richards, Austin and Jones, 2004). Increasing proportions of new commitments to prison are parole violators. Nationwide, in 2001 more than one-third (36%) of new prison commitments were parole violators, up from 29% in 1990 (Harrison and Karberg, 2003). In California, however, the percentages are even higher at 54% (Macallair, 2003). It is interesting to note that the recidivism rate is higher for prisoners released on parole than for those released outright, after serving their entire sentence (Richards, Austin and Jones, 2004; Austin and Hardyman, 2004). However, one must wonder if it is really a Afailure@ in the true sense of the word. It almost seems like those controlling the criminal justice system view Asuccess@ as providing a steady stream of convicts. This writer once heard the director of a state parole system say AWe train our parole agents to catch violators.@ A sign on the wall of one parole agent in California summed up this system very well. The sign read ATrail >em, surveil >em, nail >em, jail >em@ (Miller, 1996: 131).

Just to give you an idea of the impact of probation and parole violations a recent survey by the Department of Justice found that almost 40 percent of those sent to prison in 1997 (latest figures available) were parole violators. At least half did *not* commit a new crime, but instead were sent back on what are called Atechnical violations,@ the most common being testing

positive for drugs. Drug testing, by the way, has become a huge business. Let's explore this in more detail.

Peeing for Profit: the Drug Testing Industry

Consistent with what seems to be a national obsession over drugs. A report called ADrug Monitoring and Abuse Testing Business@released in January, 1997 (produced by Business Communications Company, Norwalk, CT), noted that revenues for drug testing businesses grew as much as 15 percent annually during the first half of the 1990s. In 1996, the drug testing market took in around \$628 million in revenues, increasing to about \$737 million in 2001 (Hawkins, 2002).

It has been estimated that about 61% of all major businesses test their employees, plus more than 500 school districts test their students. An estimated 20-25 million Americans are tested for drugs each year, compared to around 7 million in 1996 (Hawkins, 2002). One method of drug testing is the ADrug Alert@ tester, of SherTest Corporation, which targets family members. This device, the company claims, can be used to increase love and care between parents and children by Abreaking down the barriers of denial between parent and child.@ Another company, Barringer Technologies, Inc., makes Aparticle detection devices@ for the police, claiming it has sold Athousands@ of \$35 Atesting kits.@ Psychometrics Corporation introduced a new kit, selling for \$75, and the day after it hit the market, the value of the company=s stock tripled! (Staples, 1997: 97)

A cursory examination through the Internet of various companies in the drug testing business is quite revealing. Top begin with, drug testing is part of a much larger market. A company that does market research (www.marketresearch.com) reports that there is a "point-of-care (POC) diagnostic test market" which is "expected to reach revenues over \$900 million in 2008." A "fact sheet" from a company called Beckman Coulter says that there is a \$35 billion marked in biomedical testing alone. This market includes research and development, clinical research testing and patient care testing. Presumably, testing for illegal drugs falls within the latter category (patient care testing), which totals around \$21 billion. According to the publication "Cannabis News" (www.cannabisnews.com) home drug testing has become a "cottage industry" with ads all over the Internet that meet "the needs of parents who fear that their teens are using drugs – and also of teens that are afraid of getting caught. Home drug test kits, along with sometimes wacky methods of circumventing them, are available online, and many sites sell both." Searching the Internet myself, I found some interesting examples such as:

- Mrs. Test (www.mrstest.com) - features home drug testing kits (e.g., "10 Panel Multi Drug Urine Test Kit," "1 Step THC Marijuana Urine Drug Test Cassette," "Cocaine Cassette Drug Urine Test," plus about 30 more similar kits);
- Drug Test Systems (www.drugtestsystems.com) – "The Professional Choice for affordable drug and alcohol testing supplies" that includes the "Drug Check "No-Step Drug Test Cups";
- Test Country (www.testcountry.com) – the "Home Test Kit Superstore"; such products as the "PDT-90 Confidential Hair Testing Kit";
- Meth Test Source (www.lowvoltsource.com/drugtest/meth) – "are you an employer who needs to conduct random or

comprehensive drug testing on a regular basis? Checkout our 10-packs for great value on quantity purchases.”

Thousands of parolees, most of whom have trouble kicking their drug habit (due in large part to the dearth of treatment available, both inside and outside of prison), fail their drug test (a test that has become an important part of the parole and probation system and an important method of controlling them; see Terry, 2003 for a good description of prisoners and drug addiction). Those on parole are constantly being tested, so naturally some companies have sought this unique market in order to make a buck. A report entitled *AParolees Foil Drug Testing* notes that many federal parolees who have drug problems have figured out a way to use *Afake penises and laboratory-cleansed urine* in order to cheat on their urine tests (typically given to virtually every parolee). Apparently these ex-cons bought the kit from some California-based suppliers. The kits often include a *Aprosthetic penis* connected to a *Apouch of battery-warmed reconstituted urine concentrate*, and have caused much concern to prison officials and parole agents. Further investigation revealed that one of the kits is called the *AWhizzinator* and is made by a company called Puck Technologies of Signal Hill, California (near Long Beach). It sells for \$150. A testimonial on their web site boasted that a man passed the tests *Aover 100 times* (www.thewhizzinator.com). A Canadian company called Clear Test distributes a product called *AThe Urinator*. Their web site claims that the product can be used *Ahundreds of times* and that clients even *Arent it out to their friends*.

Another company, known as “Clear Choice of New York” (www.clearchoiceofny.com) claims that “We are positive you will test negative.” (This is another example of the beauty of capitalism: if there is a demand for a product, someone willing to take the risks - including aiding in some illegal activity - will provide it.)

Drug testing has come under much criticism because many of the tests are not very effective. A study by the American Civil Liberties Union (2002) challenges the effectiveness of drug testing, charging that it is a “pseudo-science.” They note that drug testing is not effective as a deterrent to drug use among young people and that it is “expensive, taking away scarce dollars from other, more effective programs that keep young people out of trouble with drugs.” They also note that drug use “does not pose significant productivity or safety problems in the work force.” The ACLU cites a 1994 study by the National Academy of Sciences which concluded that the data collected by several studies “do not provide clear evidence of the deleterious effects of drugs *other than alcohol* on safety and other job performance indicators.”

The growth in the building of prisons during the past couple of decades has had several unintended consequences, both political and economic. A close look at *where* most prisons have been built is revealing.

Rural Prisons: Uplifting Rural Economies?

In this country there are more prisoners than there are farmers. It would not be too much of an exaggeration to say that rural America has been pretty much destroyed by factory closings, corporate downsizing, the shift to service occupations and the build-up of chain stores like Wal-Mart. Many rural towns have become “dependent on an industry that itself is dependent on the continuation of crime-producing conditions” (Huling, 2002: 198).

Much of the building of American prisons during the past two decades have been in rural areas, largely because of the promises of economic stimulus to these areas coupled with the cost savings of the states. These figures tell the story: whereas during the 1960s and 1970s an average of four new prisons per year were built in non-metropolitan areas, during the 1980s this

average increased four-fold to about 16 per year and during the 1990s went to an average of 24.5 per year. During the 1990s a new prison was opened about every 15 days. During this decade, 57 percent of all new prisons were in non-metropolitan counties, which have only 19 percent of the total population (Clement, 2002; Huling, 2002). By the end of the 1990s, there were about 235,000 prisoners and 75,000 workers in the new rural prisons built that decade. Between 1980 and 2000, "more than half of all rural counties added prison work to their available employment mix." Prisons, along with casinos and animal confinement units for raising or processing hogs and poultry have become the three leading industries in rural areas (Huling, 2002: 199).

There are many states that have several prisons built within a few miles of one another, described by one critic as "penal colonies." Tracy Huling reports that in the town of Ionia, Michigan (pop. 10,569) there are six state prisons, which ties it with Huntsville, Texas (pop. 35,078) for the most prisons in any city in the country (Huling, 2002: 206-207). Speaking of Ionia, a story in the *Detroit News* was called *AIonia [Michigan] Finds Stability in Prison: Lockups Provide Fast Growing Community with Jobs@* (Street, 2002: 40).

There are plenty of other examples. In the Wisconsin town of Stanley (population 1,898) a "spec" prison was completed in the year 2000, built by a company called Dominion Venture Group. The state finally purchased the facility for \$75 million in October, 2001. The mayor of Stanley, David Jankoski, stated that "we needed something to bring back vitality to the community..." (Clement, 2002). An article in the *Chicago Tribune* (March, 2001) was titled: "Towns Put Dreams in Prisons," referring to many small towns in the southern part of Illinois, areas short on jobs.

In the rural "heartland" of Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Montana, North and South Dakota spending on prisons skyrocket during the past 20 years. Per capita spending in North Dakota, for instance, went from about \$25 to about \$75 between 1980 and 2000, while Michigan=s per capita spending went from less than \$50 to almost \$200 during this time. The number of prisoners tripled in Montana and South Dakota and quadrupled in North Dakota and Wisconsin during these two decades. Incarceration rates for these states increased at about the same rate, with Michigan=s rate going from about 150 to almost 500 and the rates in both Montana and South Dakota going from under 100 to more than 300 (Clement, 2002).

County and local leaders in these rural areas often engage in a vigorous campaign to get prisons built in their area. In Texas some towns "bombarded the [Texas Department of Prison] with incentives that range from country club memberships for wardens to longhorn cattle for the prison grounds" (Donziger, 1996, p. 94). In Rush City, Minnesota (pop. 2,102), civic leaders raised \$700,000 in donations and another \$40,000 from the city to buy the acreage for the site of the new prison. Tiny Shelby, Montana (pop. 3,216) used a \$500,000 block grant and another \$800,000 in federal grants to pay for the infrastructure so that Corrections Corporation of America (CCA) could build its prison, the Crossroads Correctional Facility (Clement, 2002).

Typical of such growth and overall impact can be seen in Michigan=s "Upper Peninsula" where there are nine prisons and four minimum security prison camps; all but two of these were opened during the past two decades. While only 2 percent of the state's population lives there, about 18 percent of its prisoners are housed there (Clement, 2002).

In Newberry, in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, a prison replaced a mental health center in 1996, which resulted in the county (Luce) having the one of the highest ratios of prisoners to total population (13% of the population are in prison). One supporter, a local businessman, said that "the \$12 million payroll coming into the community was just a big plus." (The author once drove through Newberry and saw some of the changes, noticing the new

“chain” companies like Days Inn and Pizza Hut. On the other hand, several stores in the small downtown area were boarded up. Driving along state route 28 I noticed signs for about a half a dozen prisons.) In Chippewa County (pop. 38,543) there are five state prisons. In Kinross Township, a town of about 6,000, the prisons employ over 1,000 people, making it the second largest employer. Many in Kinross were looking forward to the possibility that McDonald’s would open a restaurant, partly because prisoners are allowed to buy food once a month from local restaurants - an obvious “captive market” (Clement, 2002).

Another example that can be cited is the Pelican Bay State Prison in Crescent City, California (pop. 4,006). Built with a cost of \$277 million, it has become the largest employer in the county. Before it was built, Crescent City was a dying town, with most of its population living in poverty or near-poverty (20% unemployment rate). Of the county’s 17 sawmills, only four were operating, while the fishing industry was dead. During the 1980s a total of 164 businesses went broke. In typical corporate-welfare fashion, local supporters, seeing a way out of their predicament, practically gave away land, water and power to get the prison built. The prison now provides around 1,500 jobs, a payroll of over \$50 million and a budget of more than \$90 million. The prison also indirectly created more business, such as a \$130,000 contract to haul the garbage, a new hospital, a K-Mart and a new Safeway market. Housing starts doubled since then, as did the value of real estate, while collecting \$142 million in real estate taxes, up from \$73 million ten years earlier (Parenti, 1999: 212).

Politicians often seek assistance from private enterprise when it comes to building prisons. Faced with severe overcrowding in the 1980s, New York Governor Mario Cuomo found that real estate prices were far too high near the city of New York, where the majority of inmates are from. So he received help from a Republican state senator from the northern part of New York, who in turn arranged for low prices on land for prisons. What has been the result? While 25 years ago this area had only two prisons, today it has over 20. One prison now occupies land formerly used for the Olympic Village at Lake Placid, while others have opened in abandoned factories and sanatoriums (Schlosser, 1998: 57-58; Dyer, 2000: 17). A total of 36 prisons have been built in this state since 1980 (Duke, 2000). This recent prison boom "has provided a huge infusion of state money to an economically depressed region." These prisons bring in about \$425 million in annual payroll and operating expenses - in effect, an annual "subsidy" of more than \$1,000 for each person in the area! The annual salary is around \$36,000 for a correctional officer in this area, more than 50% higher than the average salary (Schlosser, 1998: 57-58; Dyer, 2000: 17).

In yet another small town in upstate New York called Malone in the far northern end of the state (pop. 6,025), a \$180 million Asupermax@ prison was recently built. According to one report, prior to its opening, the plan called for holding around 1,500 prisoners in a 14 by 8 2 foot cell for 23 hours per day. (A return to the days of the “Pennsylvania System.”) The prison ostensibly was to create about 500 badly-needed jobs in this part of New York in order to replace the 750 jobs lost at a local shoe factory because of downsizing. And it’s not that Malone needed more prisons, for they already had two medium-security institutions! The new prison will bring the prison population in Malone to around 5,000 (of a total population of 6,025). One writer notes that Aprisons have become the North Country’s largest growth industry...@ New businesses also tend to follow the building of new prisons - in the case of Malone, four new drugstores and eight new convenience stores (Wray, 2000: 52). A story in the *Washington Post* noted that “If crime doesn’t pay, punishment certainly does, at least for isolated towns like Malone.” (Duke, 2000).

A look at the web site for the New York State Department of Corrections (<http://www.docs.state.ny.us>) shows that there are five prisons in Franklin County (pop. 51,134) where Malone is. According to this web site, New York currently has 18 maximum security prisons, 37 medium security prisons, 13 minimum security prisons (4 are designated as “shock prisons”), three minimum security camps and one drug treatment “campus” (in Willard, pop. 600 in western New York, on the shores of Seneca Lake); the total is 72. A recent report notes that less than 40 percent of the population of New York State lives in what is considered the “upstate” area; over 70 percent of the prisoners are from the New York City area, while about 90 percent of the prisoners are incarcerated in upstate prisons (Prison Policy Initiative, 2003).

Most of the boom in upstate New York stems from the “Rockefeller drug laws” passed in the 1970s which set severe punishments for drug offenders. Prisons sentences have tripled since the passage of these laws and almost two-thirds (62.5%) were nonviolent drug offenders (Duke, 2000).

One downside to building all these prisons in upstate New York, however, is the fact that hundreds of families of inmates have to make the long bus ride in order to visit their relatives. Ironically, this fact has created yet another business, begun in 1973 by an ex-convict, who founded Operation Prison Gap, which operates a bus service for these families. They now have 35 buses and vans traveling on weekends and holidays (Schlosser, 1998: 58).

Some rural residents have protested the locating of a prison in their counties. In the town of Braham, Minnesota (pop. 1,276), citizens rejected putting a prison there, with one local critic saying they would have to change their motto from “Homemade pie capital of Minnesota” to “Prison capital of Minnesota.” The prison was located in nearby Rush City, over the objections of a few in that town. In Pembina County, North Dakota, local citizens are protesting the proposed building of a prison there. Opponents are concerned about the negative changes the prison would bring, such as impeding tourism; proponents talk about the jobs that would be created. One supporter hopes that a 500 bed prison will be built, claiming that the impact would be “tremendous,” adding that “it=s pretty much recession-proof” (Clement, 2002). Not all are “recession-proof” as it turns out. In Boone Terre, Missouri (pop. 4,039), a new prison was opened in 1995 (the most expensive in the state) and by 2001 the city was in debt with new businesses almost broke because state budget shortfalls delayed the opening of the prison, with an estimated loss of several million dollars (Huling, 2002: 204-205).

Another negative point is raised by University of Missouri economist Thomas Johnson, who has said that “prisons generate very few linkages to the economy,” by not generating associated industries, like, for instance, an auto plant would - delivery companies, radio assemblers, electronic harness makers, etc. Another critic, a county prosecutor, claims that having a prison nearby has doubled the number of felonies he has had to handle, mostly arising from within the prison (Clement, 2002). An identical experience was reported in Bent County, Colorado (located in the far southeastern part of the state, with a population less than 6,000), as court filings jumped up by 99 percent after the opening of a private prison in Las Animas (pop. 2,758) (Huling, 2002: 204).

Also, contrary to the expectations of many, most cases the prison jobs do not go to locals, but rather they tend to go to those with seniority and educational backgrounds within the correctional field. Moreover, many prison workers drive long commutes from large urban areas. A study of rural prisons in California revealed that less than one-fifth of the jobs were filled by locals (Huling, 2002:201). Despite the fact that the country where Malone, New York is (Franklin) has five prisons in the area, the planned food-processing plant was never built. Also,

a \$4.5 million sewage-treatment plant that was paid for by the state in order to prepare for one of the prisons increased the amount of nitrate dumped into the Salmon River, described as “a beautiful trout stream treasured by the community.” The loans used to build the plant came from the village’s bowering capacity, rather than the state, and therefore its taxes have risen, with payments estimated to be more than \$1 million in the year 2000 (Huling, 2002: 206).

There is some discrepancy in reports of job growth in Malone. One report said that the 750 jobs that opened in their new prison went mostly to people from elsewhere (Huling, 2002: 201, citing a source in the *Albany Times Union*). Another report said that the three prisons in Malone “brought 1,600 well-paying jobs to Malone,” noting that one-third of these workers live in the town and the rest from somewhere else in the county. The payroll is around \$67 million and one source in the town said that a few small businesses have moved there from Canada, plus there are “new and expanded pharmacies, discount stores and fast-food outlets. Also, there has been an expansion of the hospital and a doubling of the golf course (Duke, 2000). This rosy picture is not repeated everywhere, however.

In many places where prisons have been built, most of the locally-owned businesses have closed, giving way to Wal-Marts, McDonald’s and the like. This is what happened in Tehachapi, California, a small town of just under 11,000 between Mojave and Bakersfield along route 58. Two prisons are located there and 741 local businesses went belly up during the past decade, while being replaced by chain stores (Huling, 2002: 202).^[13]

Prisoners have become valuable “commodities” - bringing us back in time to the days of the “convict lease” system in the southern states following the Civil War. It is telling that the impact of such a system has hit African-Americans especially hard, as did the convict lease system. Once again, the profit motive takes advantaged of cheap, slave labor - only today= “slaves” are African-American prisoners (Hallett, forthcoming).

This leads me to consider another aspect of the growth in rural prisons, a rather sinister and perhaps even fraudulent development. I am referring here to the use of prisoners to alter census counts in rural areas thereby allowing them to bring in federal dollars.

Exploiting Prisoners to Enhance Rural Populations

It was noted earlier that the increase in the number of prisoners has resulted in the disenfranchisement of large numbers of citizens, especially affected African-Americans. Even though prisoners cannot vote in almost every state, they are counted and this count is translated into federal dollars pouring into small towns all over the country. This is what one report called the “phantom” population of rural prisoners (Prison Policy Initiative, 2003). What is happening is that rural communities that have prisons are allowed to pay the U.S Census Bureau money to include prisoners in the census count, thereby adding substantial numbers to the local population.

A *Wall Street Journal* report details how this has happened in the small Arizona town of Florence, which has an “official” population of 17,054 according to the 2000 census (Kulish, 2001). What this census figure does not reveal is that 11,830 of these “residents” are prisoners, since Florence, like many other small towns with where prisons have been built, is looking to the census count to help them in these financially-strapped times.

This began in Florence back in the 1980s and since then has expanded its borders no less than three times. On two occasions the town has paid the Census Bureau for special recounts. This is because for each dollar generated by local taxes and fees, they get \$1.76 more because of the prison population. Florence now has “new town offices, a new park and a new senior center...The rebuilt little-league facilities boasts a digital score board and dugouts. New police

and fire facilities are under construction, and officials are planning a \$1 million community center with a pool – all without a local income tax or any substantial increases in sales or property taxes” (Kulish, 2001). In 2001 about \$4 million additional federal funding was expected to be received by the end of the year, according to the *Wall Street Journal* report.

Not surprisingly, Arizona has one of the highest incarceration rates in the country (513 in 2002, ranked 10th in the country), with almost half being either black (14.7%) or Hispanic (33.7%) (Harrison and Karberg, 2003; Camp and Camp, 2000). After Corrections Corporation of America began housing prisoners from Washington, DC in its prison in Florence, the African-American population of the town more than doubled to more than 1,500. Florence now has two state prisons, three private prisons, plus the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service detention center. This little town can now brag about having “the highest percentage of prison inmates of any U.S. town of more than 10,000” (Kulish, 2001).

Florence is not the only small town to reap such benefits. Calipatria, California has an “official” population of 7,289, thanks to 4,095 prisoners; Ionia, Michigan has a population of 10,569 that includes 4,401 prisoners – they used some of the federal money to install laptop computers in the town automobiles and turn a National Guard armory into a community center (Kulish, 2001). Sussex County, Virginia appears to be the fastest growing county in the country, thanks mostly to the fact that between 1998 and 1999 two new prisons increased its population by 23 percent. According to the 2000 census, there are 12,504 “official” residents. Similarly, Coxsackie, New York received an increase in federal funding because its 1990 population was 27.5 percent prisoners. With a 2000 population of 2,895 it is no doubt set to receive more. Two small Arizona towns, Gila Bend (pop. 1,980) and Buckeye (pop. 6,537) competed to get both adult and juvenile prisons placed in their district. Buckeye won and stands to receive more than \$10 million in federal subsidies (Huling, 2002). Malone, New York (mentioned above) has also benefited. The town may gain more federal dollars because one-third of the total population of 15,000 consists of prisoners (Duke, 2000).

Another benefit of adding prisoners to the Census count is that it places many of these communities under the official poverty level, thereby qualifying for even more federal funds! Gatesville, Texas (pop. 15,591) qualified for poverty status with its 9,095 prisoners, resulting in the town receiving \$4.2 million in state grants, which it used to upgrade water lines and build new roads. Another irony to all of this is the fact that while these prisoners are helping towns qualify for large sums of federal dollars, they are not included in the official unemployment figures. According to one recent study, by including African-Americans in the official unemployment figures, the unemployment rate for them increases to almost 40 percent (Western and Beckett, 1999), while adding about 2-3 percent to the official unemployment figures.

This is a form of “robbing Peter to pay Paul” since these federal dollars are following these prisoners from their original communities. One recent report noted that during the first decade of the 21st century about \$2 trillion in federal funds will be distributed based upon the 2000 census count, so that a lot of money will be transferred from poor urban areas to small towns with prisons. Minnesota’s state demographer Tom Gillaspay estimates that the census “directs \$2,000-\$3,000 per person counted to any given community each decade, *not including additional census-based funding distributed to poor communities*” (Maynard, 2000, emphasis added).

Finally, mention should be made of the impact rural prisons have had on redistricting. One result of the “phantom” increase in rural populations is in an increase in the voting power of rural districts, many of whom have added additional congressional seats, mostly Republican.

The Prison Policy Initiative has argued that by allowing mostly white rural districts “to claim urban black prisoners as residents for purposes of representation resembles the old three-fifths clause of the Constitution that allowed the South extra representation for its slaves...” Such a policy also means that legislators in rural areas “can devote more attention to their ‘real constituents’” while at the same time those who support building new prisons in their rural areas have additional clout in state legislatures (Prison Policy Initiative, 2003). The state of Florida, already infamous for the 2000 election fraud, will soon have a significant redrawing of political boundaries, thanks to 79,144 (according to the Florida Department of Corrections web site) prisoners (over half are African-American). Gulf County has two prisons that contribute to its population numbers (13,332). The attorney general of Florida issued opinions in 2001 that said county commissions and school boards “*must* include prisoners when redistricting.” One effect is that voting, in Florida and the other 48 states where prisoners are denied a vote, the voting power of large numbers of mostly minority urban communities are transferred to rural, mostly white areas – also, by the way, heavily Republican (Huling, 2002: 212, emphasis added). A statement from a former New York State legislator sums up the feelings of many politicians: “When legislators cry ‘Lock ‘em up!’ they often mean ‘Lock ‘em up in my district’” (Huling, 2002: 213). I am tempted to conclude that locking up so many urban minorities is one part of a much larger conservative strategy to take over the country!

Todd Clear has noted that the increasing tendency to house prisoners in far-away rural communities amounts to what he calls “coercive mobility” that has a negative impact on informal methods of social control in poor communities. In many poor neighborhoods, up to 25 percent of the adult males are behind bars on any given day. This results in the removal of both *human capital* and *social capital* from these communities (Clear, 2002). Elsewhere he has estimated that as much as \$25,000 per year leaves the community for every man who is incarcerated and this money goes directly to the communities that have the prisons (Rose and Clear, 1998; Clear and Rose, 1999).

Before leaving the subject of rural prisons I’d like to share a recent news item appearing in the *Los Angeles Times* on March 28, 2004. The story was about the small town of Clintwood, Virginia (pop. 1,549), tucked away in a relatively remote area of the far western edge of the state, close to the Kentucky border. The story is familiar in that a company called Travelocity (where you can make airline reservations), which was the largest employer in the area (250 jobs) and replaced the dying coal industry, was closing up shop and moving its operations to India by the end of the year.

In the middle of this article, which tells of the potential impact of the job losses that have typified the recent trend of “capital flight” to foreign countries, there’s a passing reference to a prison in the area. The writer of the article notes that there is a joke around the town “that the only secure jobs are at the new state prison, because they are not going to be shipping the convicts to India anytime soon. There are several new lockups around the county, which a lot of people have mixed feelings about.” The director of the local Chamber of Commerce stated, with somewhat bitter irony, “It’s not quite as bad as being a nuclear waste dump site. But we’re the dumpsite for human misery” (Streitfeld, 2004).

A check of the Virginia Department of Corrections web site reveals that there is a prison in the small town of Pound (about 10 miles from Clintwood, with a population of 1,089). The name of the prison is Red Onion State Prison which has an average daily population of 985 (<http://www.vadoc.state.va.us/facilities/institutions/redonion.htm>). This is a maximum security institution opened in August, 1998.

There is still another way that businesses profit from the existence of prisons, one which has a long history, and this is the use of prison labor or what is normally called Aprison industries.@ This can be traced back as far as the early 19th century with the emergence of the Acongregate labor@ system, otherwise known as the *Auburn system*.^[4]

Prison Labor - A Captive Labor Force

Currently there are many so-called "joint ventures" between private companies and the state prison system which have made millions in profits through prison labor. It is especially tempting for the state of California which, because of "Three Strikes You're Out" legislation will see prison costs exceed \$5.5 billion annually. Convict labor is alive and well throughout the country. Many private companies are taking advantage of cheap inmate labor and the tax breaks provided by California's Joint Venture Program. With the passage of Proposition 139 in 1990, private companies were allowed to use inmates to make products to be sold on the open market. One company employs 18 inmates at San Quentin to do data entry work for firms such as Chevron, Bank of America and Macy's. Inmates in Ventura make phone reservations for TWA at \$5 an hour; on the outside with unionized labor, this would pay \$18 per hour. Low wages are common. In Arizona, 10% of the inmates work for private companies and make less than the minimum wage. Many benefits accrue to private companies, including the fact that they don't have to pay benefits. In Oregon, \$4.5 million worth of "Prison Blues," a line of jeans, were sold (Parenti, 1995). Other companies using prison labor include Microsoft, Honda, Kaiser Steel, Victoria=s Secret, and Lee brand jeans (Wray, 2000: 41).

There are at least 25 states where private businesses have set up shop inside prisons, all under the guise of prison Areform@ - making prisoners pay for their room and board and/or paying restitution to victims and, of course, the old standby rationale: it will give them new skills.

Take the Seattle-based Boeing Corporation, for instance. While making more money than ever before, in 1996 the largest aviation manufacturer in the world (always, of course, taking various subsidies from taxpayers) decided to reduce its workforce of unionized workers and instead take advantage of the growing number in the Acaptive work force@ in the state of Washington. MicroJet, a leading manufacturer of aircraft components (with Boeing a major customer) uses the Washington State Reformatory to make these parts; a nice rent-free factory on prison property (Wright, 1997).

They are not alone in taking advantage of this captive labor force. Other firms doing business there include: Redwood Outdoors (which makes clothes for such famous brands as Eddie Bauer, Kelly Hanson, Planet Hollywood, and Union Bay); Elliot Bay (makes crab pots and fishing industry equipment); A & I Manufacturing (makes blinds); Washington Marketing Group (a telemarketing company). Paying minimum wages, with no benefits, no unions, no regulations to worry about, and these companies are able to get maximum profits, while the prisoners who work get little in return, after all the various deductions are taken away. One prisoner told Paul Wright (a prisoner who edits the *Prison Legal News*) that he grosses \$240 per week, but takes home only \$60 after all the deductions. Wright concludes that prison industries in America constitute a AThird World labor model@ (Wright, 1997).

In Texas, at the Lockhart Correctional Facility, about 180 prisoners assemble circuit boards for Lockhart Technologies, with a take home pay of about 50 cents an hour. In 1993, this company closed its plant in Austin and simply moved to the prison about 30 miles away. Another company in Washington, Omega Pacific, decided to move its plant from Redmond, Washington, to the Airway Heights Corrections Center near Spokane. The owner of the

company, Bert Atwater, was quoted as saying that one of the benefits is that he doesn't have to deal with employee benefits or workers' compensation, plus worry about workers taking vacation (Wright, 1997).

As already suggested, the profits from the existence of prisons are dependent upon the continued increase in prison admissions. What if prison admissions begin to decline? We are already seeing some evidence of this. For instance, in New York state there has been a recent downward trend in the number of prisoners, resulting in the reduction of prison staff at many prisons. Specifically, the New York Department of Corrections has frozen hiring at 36 of the state's prisons, with the expectation that they will eliminate just over 600 jobs. One facility in upstate New York is illustrative (Rhode, 2001). A \$90 million jail was built in tiny (pop. 2,400) Cape Vincent (near the St. Lawrence River) in 1988. Now with recent downward trends in prison populations they are worried that what they thought was a recession-proof industry may come to an end. One prison worker said, "Who ever thought crime would go down? Who ever thought we would run out of inmates?"

And worry they should, as about \$2.4 billion per year goes into the state prison system, with millions of dollars going into the upstate economy each year. Salaries for correctional officers start at around \$33,000, with raises to \$44,000 after 20 years. Not bad in rural areas where the cost of living is so much lower than in the cities.

Still another example comes from the state of Mississippi. According to a report in the *Wall Street Journal*, a prison operated by Wackenhut in Holly Springs ran into trouble finding prisoners to fill about 130 beds. In fact, recently the state found itself with 2,000 more beds than prisoners! The same is happening in South Carolina, with more than 1,000 empty beds. These developments are bad news for corporations like Wackenhut, who depend upon a steady supply of prisoners. In Mississippi, a state representative who was touring one of their prisons, pointed to a prison guard and said "If we don't get [more inmates], she might get laid off." Many who previously support building prisons in Mississippi are now changing their minds. A former police chief who is in charge of the state corrections department, who never had any qualms sending people to jail, now complains that for too many people the only reason to build prisons is to "make money off inmates" and he said that this has "gotten a little too skewed for my liking" (Gruley, 2001). A check of the Mississippi Department of Corrections web site revealed that as of the end of February, 2004 there were 20,899 inmates, up from 18,299 as of January 1, 2000 (<http://www.mdcc.state.ms.us>; Camp and Camp, 2000). South Carolina's prison population has increased recently, going from 20,979 in fiscal year 2000 to 23,428 in fiscal year 2003 (<http://www.state.sc.us/scdc/>). Apparently these two states are no longer as concerned as they were when the report by Gruley was written.

Conclusion

We live in times of great uncertainty as millions just barely eke out a living while a small minority become richer and richer, especially with Bush's latest round of tax cuts, not to mention the negative effects of the most recent attack on Iraq (Sklar, 2003; Piven and Cloward, 1997). We now find more and more of our citizens relegated to the ranks of what Marx once described as the "surplus population," a population rendered unneeded or "superfluous" as far as creating profits are concerned. Along with more and more corporate "downsizing" there is the ominous disappearance of semi-skilled and unskilled jobs once filled by urban minorities, especially African-American males. But this group is still very much with us and, from the point of view of those in power; they need to be "managed" in some way. One way that has been used

to manage or control this population is to confine them to inner city ghettos, while another way is to use the prison system as a mechanism of this form of "management."

In a new edition of his *Crime Control as Industry*, Christie makes perhaps one of the strongest arguments in support of our own interpretation of the functions of the prison industrial complex:

Societies of the Western type face two major problems: Wealth is everywhere unequally distributed. So is access to paid work. Both problems contain potentialities for unrest. The crime control industry is suited for coping with both. This industry provides profit and work, while at the same time producing control of those who otherwise might have disturbed the social process.

Compared to most other industries, the crime control industry is in a most privileged position. There is no lack of raw-material; crime seems to be in endless supply. Endless also are the demands for the service, as well as the willingness to pay for what is seen as security. And the usual industrial questions of contamination do not appear. On the contrary, *this is an industry seen as cleaning up, removing unwanted elements from the social system* (Christie, 2000: 13).

It is especially ironic that we are experiencing what politicians are calling the "end of welfare as we know it." This is true. We previously had a welfare system that patronized the poor, we now have a welfare system that can be described in a single word *B mean*. The irony is that a component of this new form of welfare is called the prison system. And since there has not been a significant rise in the kinds of crimes that have historically resulted in prison sentences (burglaries, larcenies, robberies, murder, etc.), and we cannot use the crude techniques of control common in totalitarian societies (e.g., torture), we have invented new "crimes" and new "criminals" to justify prison expansion, namely drugs. But of course only certain kinds of drugs, used by certain classes of people are targeted (Gordon, 1994; Reinerman and Levine, 1997).

Part of the problem we are talking about here can be summed up by way of a parable, which originated with the famous social reformer and agitator of the early 20th century, Saul Alinsky (reported in Bartollas, 2003:354). Imagine a large river with a high waterfall. At the bottom of this waterfall hundreds of people are working frantically trying to save those who have fallen into the river and have fallen down the waterfall, many of them drowning. As the people along the shore are trying to rescue as many as possible one individual looks up and sees a seemingly never-ending stream of people falling down the waterfall and he begins to run upstream. One of his fellow rescuers hollers Awhere are you going? There are so many people that need help here.@ To which the man replied, AI=m going upstream to find out why so many people are falling into the river.@

Now imagine the scene at the bottom of the waterfall represents the criminal justice system, responding to crimes that have been committed and dealing with both victims and offenders. If you look more closely, you will begin to notice that there are more people at the

bottom of the stream, that they work in relatively new buildings with all sorts of modern technology and that those working here get paid rather well, with excellent benefits. And the money keeps flowing into this area, with all sorts of businesses lined up to provide various services and technical assistance. If you look upstream, you will find something far different. There are not too many people, the buildings are not as modern, nor are the technology that they use. The people working there do not get paid very much and their benefits are not as good as those provided down below, while the turnover is quite high.

Neither do they find businesses coming their way with assistance. They constantly have to beg for money. Moreover, you will often find more women working upstream, since their work in this culture is not as valued as the work men do (men are in charge downstream).

A researcher, writing about our health care system, observed that our economic system of capitalism finds it more profitable to treat illness rather than prevent it. He notes that preventive care measures, such as decent sewage and water systems, draining swamps near cities, education, regulated food handling, and universal vaccinations bring little in terms of profit for pharmaceutical companies or the larger capitalist system” (Engler, 2003: 34). The American medical industry has a financial stake in treating rather than preventing diseases.

If we pretend for a moment that crime is a disease (in a way it is), then this analogy makes perfect sense. Simply put, reacting to crime is far more profitable for business and other interests than preventing crime. Our criminal justice is designed to fail to reduce crime, because, although citizens would be greatly benefited from less crime (just as citizens would be greatly benefited from fewer health problems), the criminal justice industrial complex (and the prison industrial complex that is part of it) would not benefit. If you want a lower crime rate, then you must spend more money upstream, so to speak. In order to do this, however, the interests that now control the criminal justice system would have to be convinced that there is a larger profit to be made from investing upstream, rather than downstream.

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Notes

[1]. An advertising brochure from an investment firm called World Research Group, cited in Silverstein (1998: 156).

[2]. Ron Garzini, Private prison booster, quoted in Parenti (1999: 211).

[3]. Town supervisor of Chesterfield, New York, quoted in Welch (1999: 24).

[4]. Advertising brochure for the University of Phoenix, which claims that you can Aearn your degree in 2 to 3 years, in most cases.@ It offers courses in many different locations, with classes starting almost every month. On the brochure it is noted that AAccording to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the field of criminal justice will expand faster than most other occupations through 2008.@ Courses are taught by Aexperienced lieutenants, police chiefs, and captains@ and Acovers the latest theories, techniques, and technologies being used in criminal justice today.@ A business reply card is included in this brochure.

[5]. A California Department of Corrections official explaining some of the benefits of putting a prison in a rural area. Quoted in Huling (2002: 200).

[6]. Duke, 2000.

[7]. For more detail on the American "empire" abroad see Johnson (2004).

[8]. The source cited here is the best we could find on an Internet search. It seems incredible to find that the latest figures are five years old, given the technology available today.

[9]. For documentation see Parenti, 2002.

[10]. A fascinating slant on this process is described as the "McDonaldization" of American society. This has been defined as "the process by which the principles of the fast-food restaurant are coming to dominate more and more sectors of American society as well as of the rest of the world." See Ritzer (1996: 1).

[11]. California prison guards have not been without their own share of controversies, including criminal conduct ranging from having sex with prisoners, running drugs into prison and even manslaughter. One story, which appeared the day before the article about complaints against prisoner education programs, cited numerous criminal incidents against some guards, noting that several who are under investigation are collecting their full salary plus benefits while on paid leave. An estimated 109 prison guards were on paid leave for at least 30 days during the past year, mostly while under investigation. The costs to taxpayers are estimated to be Ain the millions@ (Morain, 2003).

[12]. I have been to Tehachapi on numerous occasions over the years and have seen this development first-hand (my parents once lived there).

[13]. Space does not permit a complete discussion of this topic. See Sheldon, 2001, chapter 4.