

stuff, where I may go into Prince George's County and wind up in an emergency room over there. But that's the kind of resources that need to be here, to look at what is happening, what is the trend, where people seek the services, what will be the impact of all these changes on where people will go to get services. If everybody is going to be covered under the PBC or a managed care plan, will that be an attractive kind of mechanism to have people come in? They may be homeless and establish themselves as homeless in the District. They may say: Hey, over here we can get three meals and health care. Not that you want to be cruel against the homeless, but that can really put [a strain] on your system, if the package is too attractive. Those are the questions that are up in the air.

EIR: I read an interview in the *City Paper* with Dr. Abramson, who runs the Zacchaeus Clinic. She said that because of the cuts at D.C. General, she doesn't necessarily refer people there anymore, because they can't get things done there. A patient who needed a gastroscopy couldn't get it done over there—that's the kind of thing you're beginning to run into—**Terry:** That's right. What are we going to do about it? That's something that is going to have to be addressed.

EIR: There is a big problem with accountability in this: Who is minding the store? Who sees to it that with these changes, for everything you remove, you put something in its place that is as good or better? Who is there to make sure that actually happens?

Terry: Or, at least to make sure that the people have adequate access to something as good or better. Now, one could argue that it's the Health Department or that it's the "office of the mayor's something something," but who is the responsible entity to make sure that the question of access, as well as the question of quality, is dealt with? Because it's one thing to have access to a program, but will the program have the quality that the person deserves, with or without the ability to pay?

EIR: This is a bit dizzying. It sounds as though you have a chaotic process, putting it mildly. What does this situation do to the individual physician? How does this affect the individual working in this environment?

Terry: I think it's affecting health care workers, whether they're inside the hospital or not. You have to remember that we've come to "downsizing." Hospitals are downsizing, government is downsizing. Individuals who heretofore were providing health care services will find themselves without health care coverage, because *they* are no longer employed. So it's having a rippling effect, both on the employee, as well as the residents of the District. The question is, how do you turn that around? You've had a lot of people who have taken early outs [early retirement], so that they could remain within a system where they could still have some form of health benefits as they retire. These are the doctors and nurses who are themselves no longer being employed.

Privatized prisons: a travesty of justice

by Dennis Speed

Over 1,500 Washington, D.C. residents are currently incarcerated in Youngstown, Ohio, at a torture-chamber operated by the Corrections Corporation of America (CCA). There, prisoners are not only unable to maintain contacts with close relatives, as well as legal counsel, but they are also abused, mistreated, and denied medical care and reading materials. They are treated like dogs.

Under the guise of "tough justice," the D.C. City Council has, as of an Aug. 29 vote to contract with CCA, become complicit in a gross violation of the rights, not only of these prisoners, but of their families. Two years ago, the 39th Police District of Philadelphia made headlines, when it was discovered that its officers had engaged in the frame-up of hundreds of African-American citizens, including a grandmother who was forced to spend several years in jail for a crime she did not commit. The "prison industry," worth \$30-40 billion, with only 4% of the system privatized so far, is now selling stock on Wall Street. In July, CCA formed a holding company, CCA Realty Trust, which sold every share it offered on the New York Stock Exchange, for \$400 million. Its chief executive officer, Mike Quinlan, once ran the D.C. Federal Bureau of Prisons. He was also the head of the U.S. Bureau of Prisons, during the Bush administration, heading it while Lyndon LaRouche was incarcerated.

The issue of criminal abuses of prisoners in privatized facilities is a dire one for the District of Columbia. With the impending closing of the Lorton Correctional Facility, by 2001, the intent is that all D.C. felons will be dispersed to prisons around the country, and that many—at least 50% of those currently in Lorton—must be placed in privatized jails by 2003, according to sources.

Not just a D.C. problem

With the frenzied drive to make America's number-one construction industry—the building of prisons—yield as great a profit as possible, it will become a lucrative business to supply as many "employees" as are necessary for the slave-labor army of America's poor and illiterate. In a 1996 report entitled "Unhealthy Choice: How New York State Is Sacrificing Education for Incarceration," New York State Sen. Alton R. Waldron revealed that the 16 districts with the worst-performing schools in New York City, are identical to those from which 46% of juvenile criminals hail. Is it possible, that disciplinary problems, and "juvenile delinquents," will be

sentenced to work-camp detail, contracted through the privatized prison system, as a way of “removing disruptive elements from the classroom,” and swelling the non-unionized low-wage labor pool?

D.C. residents have been shocked at the fact, that Board of Education member Linda Moody, who also chairs the Correctional Facilities Fact Finding Task Force, had high praise for two CCA sites, in Tennessee and Louisiana, which she visited. According to the *Washington Informer*, when more than 200 of the residents of Ward 8 gathered to ask questions regarding the “new trends in D.C. incarceration,” one resident commented, “I’m terribly surprised that we have city officials sitting here, talking about putting the incarceration of our children first, rather than putting their education to the forefront. A lot of us simply cannot understand why our Board of Education member is sitting on a task force on the prisons, when our schools are in disarray, and we’re not even sure if some of them are going to be opened next week.”

This warped priority reflects a national direction. *Emerge* magazine reporter Joe Davidson reported in an article entitled “Caged Cargo” that, “according to a report by Warren Fox, executive director of the California Post-Secondary Education Commission, ‘The cost of incarcerating a felon is approx-

imately \$22,300 a year — more than the state’s general fund cost of educating two students at the University of California, three students at the California State University, or seven students at the California Community Colleges.’ ”

The direct impact of privatization on the justice process itself, however, may be its most devastating effect. In testimony submitted to the D.C. City Council on Aug. 27, Jonathan M. Smith, executive director of the D.C. Prisoners’ Legal Services Project, stated of the transfer of prisoners outside the region, “These transfers will make it difficult for prisoners to communicate with their lawyers or to meaningfully participate in the preparation of appeals or collateral attacks on their convictions. If lawyers are required to travel hundreds or thousands of miles to meet with their clients, they will be reluctant to do so” — an added incentive to infractions by the privatized prison “pseudo-police.” “As a result, prisoners will receive a poorer quality of representation when seeking review of their convictions.”

Smith also quoted Attorney General Janet Reno, who stated, in a March 16, 1995 letter, “Housing large numbers of inmates great distances from their families and attorneys is contrary to sound correctional principles, and the value, if any, of the additional ‘punishment’ thereby imposed on in-

‘Caged cargo’ in Texas

Devastating material on the situation in the nation’s prisons was compiled in an article by Joe Davidson in *Emerge* magazine’s October issue. Entitled “Caged Cargo: African-Americans Are Grist for the Fast-Growing Prison Industry’s Money Mill,” the article covers the Brazoria County Texas scandal, familiar to readers of *EIR* and *New Federalist* newspaper because of the intervention of Missouri Democratic State Rep. Charles Quincy Troupe (see interview with Troupe in *EIR*, Sept. 5, 1997). Troupe has also signed the call for the exoneration of Lyndon LaRouche and his associates.

“Texas . . . captured negative national attention in August,” Davidson reports, “when Brazoria County sheriff’s deputies and guards at a privately run prison facility were shown on video brutally beating and kicking Missouri prisoners in their groin while making them crawl on the floor and allowing guard dogs to bite them. The tape of the September 1996 incident was being circulated as a training video. The brutality shocked many in the country, but confirmed what Missouri state Rep. Charles Quincy Troupe (D) says he’s known all along about correctional facilities — public or privately run.

“ ‘This is the Rodney King tape of corrections,’ says Troupe, who since 1995 has been lobbying for investigations into the treatment of Missouri prisoners in Texas facilities. ‘But most of America thinks prisoners are no longer human. . . . Right now even Black people are saying, ‘I don’t care what you do with the Crips and Bloods, just get them out of our neighborhood.’

“ ‘But the thing that frightens me most is when you start having prisons for profit and Wall Street is intricately involved in prisons, then the politicians are going to change all of the criminal codes in the country to fill every prison that Wall Street builds.’

“Within days of the video’s release, Missouri retrieved its 415 prisoners from Brazoria County, near Houston.”

In the case of Washington, D.C., however, where the intent is, according to sources, to have all felons dispersed throughout the country by 2001, without a rollback of the Congress-instigated Financial Control Board Coup, a life-saving action in the interest of inmates, like Troupe’s, would become impossible.

Representative Troupe believes that the entire trend toward privatization must be reversed. Those who are interested in contacting Troupe, to work on rolling back the abuses in the prison system, as well as exploring the human rights abuses under way, may contact him at his legislative office, (573) 751-2851, or call Rochelle Ascher, of the Schiller Institute, at (703) 771-8390.

mates so separated is greatly outweighed by the increased security and other measures necessitated when inmates' contact with their families on the outside is minimized."

In an interview with Smith, *EIR* asked him to amplify on his Aug. 27 City Council testimony, as well as to describe a May 1997 incident in Youngstown, in which the CCA's warden, Willis Gibson, had used tear gas against the inmates without warning, and without any physical threat posed to prison personnel by the inmates (see interview, below).

At the end of his testimony, Smith pointed out, "There is no act more profound than for the state to deprive a person of her or his freedom through incarceration. Given the solemn nature of this responsibility, is it appropriate to turn over the execution of a sentence of incarceration to a private entity on a profit-making basis? . . .

"Each of the three branches of government are involved in the operation of the criminal justice system: The legislature proscribes the conduct that is deemed to be criminal, the executive prosecutes crime, and the courts rule on guilt and decide on punishment. Because the liberty of an accused is at stake, our legal system requires that enormous care be taken at every stage. . . . For most public functions there is a private sector analogue and the privatization question turns on where the line is drawn between the public and the private activity. Thus, it is a different question when we discuss the privatization of public schools . . . [and] the construction of public buildings. . . . Only the state confines persons to prison. . . . It is unseemly at best to turn this key component of the criminal justice system over to private parties to operate for private gain."

The dehumanization of America

The privatization of prisons can be seen, in this context, as a most terrifying application of Bernard de Mandeville's (1670-1733) notion that "private vices" foster "public virtue." Increasingly, the nation is assuming, through the "privatization"—that is, *dissolution*—of the public welfare, the features of a criminal enterprise. Legalized gambling, the decriminalization of drugs, the virtual legalization of prostitution, have all been tolerated. Why, therefore, not profit from crime? On the one hand, various "entrepreneurs" promote addictions of all types. The individual who is so seduced, loses his powers to resist the impulse of addiction, termed by the pro-vice-legalization proponents, both ideological and "profit-motivated" (such as the fascist monetarist Milton Friedman), as morally indifferent "choice." The victim's addiction secured, he commits an "illegal" act to support his habit, and lands in a jail, now converted to a non-unionized slave-labor camp, with paltry to non-existent health or rehabilitation facilities. Then, there are those who are imprisoned for their political beliefs, as occurred with LaRouche and his associates, or imprisoned for no reason, other than convenience or bias. A few of the most resilient will fight back, but the rest will be broken, ground up into

an involuntary army of slave laborers.

The breaking of the will, however, is not only aimed at the potential leaders. D.C. prisoners who were afraid of being assaulted or killed by other prisoners at the Youngstown facility, were given the choice of transferring to the maximum security facility known as "Super-Max." "These prisoners are confined to cells all but a few hours a week," Smith said. "They are held in their underwear and kept in shackles, belly chains, and handcuffs at all times when outside their cells, even in the shower. The lights are on in their cells 24 hours a day, visits are limited to one hour a month, and phone privileges to one 10-minute call every 15 days."

The dehumanization is extended to the families as well. "Visiting family members are treated rudely and sometimes subjected to humiliating searches. Several women report being required to disrobe partially in an area visible to other visitors, prisoners and staff."

Lyndon LaRouche, himself a victim of the criminal abuses of the prison system, has stated that, when one reflects that the U.S. rate of incarceration is, by all available indicators, the highest in the world, that, outside of those imbeciles who believe in Nazi "race-science," rational people must conclude that, either America's population is the most criminal in the world, or that there are drastic inequities in our penal system. Nowhere is this clearer than in Washington, D.C., a city where 50% of the African-American male population is either in jail, on parole, or awaiting action in a law-enforcement dispute. That fact, betrays a great injustice, which, with the Control Board Coup of 1996, has been, not corrected, but compounded.

Interview: Jonathan Smith

An eyewitness report from CCA-Youngstown

Mr. Smith is the executive director of the D.C. Prisoners' Legal Services Project.

On July 10 and 11, he visited the Corrections Corporation of America (CCA) facility in Youngstown, Ohio, to investigate client complaints filed with the D.C. Prisoners' Legal Services Project. "I learned of very disturbing allegations of abuse, of a dysfunctional classification system and of inadequate medical and mental health care," he says.

Smith interviewed close to 50 inmates, and spoke with staff members and the warden of the facility. He attempted, without success, to persuade the D.C. City Council, which