

Submission
No 420

**INQUIRY INTO THE PRIVATISATION OF PRISONS AND
PRISON-RELATED SERVICES**

Name: Name suppressed

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Partially Confidential

The arguments for and against the privatisation of our Prison system has been said, written, distributed and debated through various Média channels.

The main reason the Department of Corrective Services is due to the insurmountable amount of overtime created that has surpassed the budget set down by the Department. And that the likelihood of a Private Company running the prison system may eventually save money.

According to a U.S. Study on privatised prison system (www.correctionsproject.com), the public is less likely to benefit from the privatisation of prisons. Public money spent in the public sector tends to reinvest itself within that sector, ie. from one social service to another, as many as eight times more than the original investment. Although Private Companies show a much lower expenditure on paper than a government run institution, once that money is spent in that company, it is no longer ours, the public. Private Companies rarely spend on public facilities.

Corruption is also another subject that may come under scrutiny within privatised goals. Many wealthy businessmen and women, along with government and Law officials, who are aware of profits that can be made in the privatisation of the prison system, may profit by buying stocks in these private correctional companies. The Law makers can evidently profit from the laws they make. Private Companies also have an obligation to their shareholders to provide a better return for their investment every financial year by reducing expenses and maximising revenue. This means a reduction of essential services such as medical care, security, clothing and food available to inmates and staff alike, in order to maximise profit. This can only endanger the public, the inmates and staff.

As Private prisons work on a bed occupancy basis, there is an incentive not only to imprison more inmates, but also for a longer period of time. This can lead to a distortion of sentencing handed down to prisoners.

We need to ask ourselves the following:

Is it our right to profit from human incarceration?

Would the incentive to make profit be able to adequately prepare an inmate for life after prison?

Who will pay for the social services we provide the families of the imprisoned? The private Companies or the public?

Who will benefit financially from this exercise, the public and the community from the so-called "savings" or the few who run the private companies?

Let us bring some common sense into this argument and avoid any personal agendas in dealing with this matter. The ultimate goal of any Correctional facility is security, safety and rehabilitation. We lose sight of all these important factors when money becomes the main objective. Let's not compromise the safety and well being of the community by allowing the single-mindedness of the few who believes that we are not important enough to be considered.