

**PRIVATE PRISONS HISTORY**

Private Prisons in the U.S. date back to the 19th century, but their modern iteration began in the 1980s during the War on Drugs. Companies like Core Civic (formerly Corrections Corporation of America) and GEO Group emerged, capitalizing on skyrocketing incarceration rates. By 1984, the first modern private prison opened in Tennessee. Today there are hundreds of facilities in the U.S.

● Mass imprisonment generates profits as it devours social wealth, and thus it tends to reproduce the very conditions that lead people to prison.

- Angela Y. Davis  
"Are prisons obsolete?"

Private prisons are a symptom of a broken system that prioritizes profit over people. By understanding their impact and advocating for change, we can work toward a more just and equitable society.

**LOCKED IN: The truth about PRIVATE PRISONS in the United States**

BY LME

**PROFIT OVER PEOPLE: HOW CORPORATIONS PROFIT FROM INCARCERATION.**

**The School-To-Prison Pipeline**

Private prisons benefit from policies that push students, particularly Black and Latino youth, out of schools and into the criminal justice system. Zero-tolerance policies and the presence of police in schools contribute to this pipeline.

ACLU - School-to-Prison Pipeline

70% of students arrested in school are Black or Latino.

**alternatives to private prisons**

Many advocates call for the abolition of private prisons, and investment in alternatives like community-based rehabilitation, education, and mental health services. This is very successful abroad.

Norway's recidivism rate is 20%, compared to 76.6% in the U.S.

Iceland's recidivism rate is 27%.

**Conditions on the INSIDE**

Reports of abuse and neglect are common in private prisons. Inmates often face violence, inadequate health care, and unsanitary conditions. A 2020 report by the Marshall Project found that private prisons had higher rates of assaults and contraband than public ones. 21% of inmates report being assaulted by prison staff.

Private Prisons are driven by profit, not rehabilitation. To maximize revenue, they cut costs on healthcare, staffing, and inmate programs. A 2016 report by the Department of Justice found more incidents of safety and security incidents.

**CORECIVIC** REPORTED \$1.9 billion in revenue in 2020.

Source: U.S. DEPT OF JUSTICE, OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL

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# How do Private Prisons WORK?

Private prisons are contracted by state and federal governments to house inmates. These contracts often include "lock up quotas," which guarantee a minimum number of prisoners or require taxpayers to pay for empty beds. For example, Arizona's contract with CoreCivic requires the state to maintain a 90% occupancy rate.

IN 2020, PRIVATE PRISONS HELD 115,428 INMATES, ACCORDING TO THE BUREAU OF JUSTICE STATISTICS

Coven Print

Private Prisons are a booming business in the United States, but at what cost? These for-profit institutions house nearly 8% of ALL incarcerated people in the States, generating billions in revenue while critics argue they prioritize profit over rehabilitation and public safety. This zine explores the history, impact, and controversies surrounding private prisons and shedding light on this.

# CALL TO ACTION!

1. EDUCATE YOURSELF AND OTHERS.
2. SUPPORT ORGANIZATION'S LIKE THE SENTENCING PROJECT, VERA INSTITUTE OF JUSTICE, RACE FORWARD, PRISON POLICY INITIATIVE, ABOLISH PRIVATE PRISONS, AND MORE.
3. ADVOCATE FOR POLICY CHANGES AT THE LOCAL, STATE, AND FEDERAL LEVELS.
4. BOYCOTT COMPANIES WHO PROFIT FROM PRIVATE PRISONS. SEE THEM AT THE CORRECTIONS ACCOUNTABILITY PROJECT

CHECK OUT OPENSECRETS.ORG TO SEE IF YOUR ELECTED OFFICIALS RECEIVE DONATIONS FROM THE PRISON INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX.

# HUMAN COST

In 2012, an uprising at a CoreCivic prison in Mississippi exposed severe understaffing and mismanagement.

BEHIND THE STATISTICS ARE REAL PEOPLE. FAMILIES ARE TORN APART AND INDIVIDUALS ARE SUBJECTED TO DEHUMANIZING CONDITIONS. STORIES OF ABUSE, NEGLECT & DEATH HIGHLIGHT THE HUMAN COSTS.

# IMMIGRATION DETENTION

PRIVATE PRISONS PLAY A SIGNIFICANT ROLE IN DETAINING IMMIGRANTS. COMPANIES LIKE GEO GROUP AND CORE CIVIC OPERATE ICE DETENTION CENTERS, WHERE CONDITIONS ARE OFTEN CRITICIZED AS INHUMANE. DETAINEES REPORT OVERCROWDING, POOR MEDICAL CARE, AND ABUSE. ICE FACILITIES WERE RESPONSIBLE FOR MORE THAN 245,000 COVID-19 CASES IN COMMUNITIES. LA SALLE CORRECTIONS HAS BEEN ACCUSED OF FORCED STERILIZATION OF DETAINEES.

2019 70% of ICE DETAINEES WERE HELD IN PRIVATE PRISONS

# RACIAL DISPARITIES IN PRISONS

The private prison industry disproportionately impacts communities of color. Black and Latino people are overrepresented in the prison population, and private prisons often exploit this disparity. For example, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) contracts with private prison companies to detain immigrants, most of whom are people of color.

5X the rate of white people.

SOURCE: NAACP CRIMINAL JUSTICE FACT SHEET

# WHY?

Private prison companies spend millions of dollars on lobbying and campaign donations to influence criminal justice policy. They have supported harsher sentencing laws and opposed immigration reform to ensure a steady flow of inmates.

CoreCivic and GEO GROUP spent \$2.3 MILLION on lobbying in 2020. they spent \$1.7 million directly to campaigns, mostly to Republicans.