

BEYOND REFORM

AFTER THE TSUNAMI OF ARREST, JAIL, CONVICTION AND SENTENCING RECEDED LEAVING BEHIND THE TANGLED SEA-WEED OF MY LIFE I BEGAN TO IMAGINE THAT PRISON MIGHT BE A NEW BEGINNING, AN OPPORTUNITY TO RADICALLY CHANGE, AN EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE.

IT MOST CERTAINLY IS BUT NOT IN ANYWAY THAT WHICH I EXPECTED.

THE FIRST DISCOVERY WAS THE MAGNITUDE OF THE RESISTANCE TO CHANGE INHERENT TO THE SYSTEM.

EXAMPLE: THE PROPERTY RULE SAID "ONE GUITAR - ONE HARMONICA..." SO NOT BEING A PICKER I BEGAN TO COLLECT HARMONICAS, IN DIFFERENT KEYS, AND TO KYTE THE RULE MAKERS.

THE RULE WAS NOT OPEN TO DISCUSSION NOR WAS IT UNIFORMLY ENFORCED.

THIS IS THE WAY IT HAS ALWAYS BEEN AND WILL ALWAYS BE, THE MANTRA IS CHANTED.

A SMALL THING PERHAPS, HARMONICAS AND NO THREAT TO THE INSTITUTION BUT DID REVEAL THIS RESISTANCE. THE WORD NO WAS NEVER USED AS THAT WOULD INVOLVE MAKING A DECISION, HOWEVER A THOUSAND ILLOGICAL

DISMISSIVES WERE OFFERED,
A BASIC THEME BEING: "IF THIS
WERE ALLOWED SOMETHING BAD MIGHT
HAPPEN". THE TRUE SITUATION IS THAT
A FEW INMATES ARE UP TO SOMETHING
ANYWAY WHILE THE MAJORITY IS
DENIED AN OPPORTUNITY FOR CHANGE.

ANOTHER: "IF THIS IS DONE FOR
YOU THEN IT WOULD HAVE TO BE DONE
FOR ALL." WHY IS THAT A NO?

I PUSHED THIS ISSUE FOR 3 1/2 YEARS
UTILIZING EVERY LINE OF THOUGHT AND
ISSUE RATIONAL POSSIBLE ALL TO NO
AVAIL.

PROGRESS CAN BE MADE OVERTIME
WITH CONSTANT EFFORT IN SOME CIRCUM-
CIRCUMSTANCES. A MUSIC DEPARTMENT
FOR BANDS AND MUSIC LESSONS WAS
ALLOWED AFTER 12 YEARS. THE NA
GROUP GOT A NEWS LETTER AFTER 8
YEARS. I WAS FORTUNATE TO BE THE
EDITOR WHICH ALLOWED COMPUTER ACCESS
BUT SUCH ACCESS FOR GENERAL USE,
~~NO WAY~~, NOT CONNECTED TO ANYTHING
WAS FORBIDDEN.

WITH MY PROJECTS AND GROUP
INVOLVEMENTS I HAVE OPPORTUNITY FOR
RADICAL CHANGE. ANY ONE CAN DO THIS
GIVEN SUFFICIENT DESIRE TO OVERCOME
THE DEFICIENCY OF PROGRAMS OFFERED.

THE SECOND DISCOVERY WAS THE NUMBING BOREDOM THAT PERMEATES THE INSTITUTIONAL SETTING, I SUSPECT THAT A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF THE BAD BEHAVIOR IS A REACTION, AN ATTEMPT TO MAKE SOMETHING HAPPEN. DRAMA AS ENTERTAINMENT, AND YES THERE ARE GANGS, EXTORTION, FIGHTS, ALL THOSE THINGS OF FILM LAND.

ONE TRULY KNOWS THE MEANING OF DOING TIME.

BY MOST INMATES THE PASSING OF TIME IS DEALT WITH BY WATCHING T.V., A DRUG, SLEEPING, GOING TO MED LINE FOR OVERLY PRESCRIBED PSYCHMEDS. THE INSTITUTION PSYCHIATRIST ADMITS "THE SYSTEM IS BROKEN."

THE STATUS QUO IS REVERED BY NEARLY ALL OF THE DENZINS OF THE CONCRETE DEED, INMATES AND GUARDS.

THESE TWO QUALITIES DEFINE CURRENT PENOLOGY.

- 1) NO CHANGE IS ALLOWED
- 2) NO CHANGE IS WANTED

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TO DEVELOPE A LARGER PICTURE
USE WILL BE MADE OF 2007-8
DEMOGRAPHICS FROM THE OREGON DEPARTMENT
OR CORRECTIONS. THE NUMBERS ARE
ROUNDED UP TO APPROXIMATE THE CURRENT
SITUATION AND TO SIMPLIFY THE PRESENTATION.

THE PRISON POPULATION IS 15,000 TOTAL
WITH 20,000 ON PROBATION AND 15,000 ON
POST PRISON SUPERVISION, 50,000 IN THE
SYSTEM FROM A STATE OF 3.4 MILLION.

BREAKING THIS DOWN WITHIN THE
D.O.C. PRODUCES AN INTERESTING NUMBER;
10,000.

THE NUMBER OF INMATES REGARDED
AS NOT DANGEROUS NOR SEX OFFENDERS

THE NUMBER OF INMATES WITH
DRUG AND/OR ALCOHOL PROBLEMS,

THE NUMBER OF INMATES WITH
EDUCATIONAL NEEDS, WITHOUT HIGH SCHOOL
DIPLOMA OR GED.

THE NUMBER OF INMATES WITHOUT
A SOLID WORK HISTORY OR MARKETABLE
JOB SKILLS,

ALL 10,000 OR 67%

JUST 50% OF THE INMATE POPULATION
HAS SOME FORM OF MENTAL HEALTH ISSUE,
PERHAPS A RESULT OF INCARCERATION FOR SOME
WHILE A EXACERBATION FOR ALL.

THE D.O.C. ALSO BOASTS A 31.3%
RECIDIVISM RATE.

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THE COST PER DAY PER INMATE IS \$ 77.78 AND MOST INMATES ARE NOT NEW TO THE JUSTICE SYSTEM.

SO 67% , 10,000 INMATES ARE POTENTIAL RECIPIENTS OF SOCIAL SERVICES, EDUCATION, MENTAL HEALTH, JOB SKILLS, AND THE SINGLE MOST SIGNIFICANT FACTOR ALCOHOL AND/OR DRUG TREATMENT.

THE FOLLOWING STATISTICS ARE FROM THE STATE'S OFFICE OF BUDGET ANALYSIS. (2007-2009 BENCHMARK)

51% OF THE DAILY COST TO THE TAXPAYERS, OREGON IS NOT IN THE PRISON INDUSTRY, IS LABELED SECURITY + HOUSING, STAFFING NOT THE BUILDINGS,

AND IN DECREASING ORDER:

15% = 12% + 3% HEALTH AND PHARMACY

9% PHYSICAL PLANT, WATER + LIGHT BILLS

6% FOOD

5% INSTITUTION MANAGEMENT?

AND NOW THE INTERESTING PART:

3% SOCIAL SERVICES

3% EDUCATION

3% MENTAL HEALTH

2% INMATE WORK

AND 1% FOR ALCOHOL AND DRUG PROGRAMS

THE LEAST AMOUNT FOR THE GREATEST NEEDS,

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THE SYSTEM IS MORE THAN
BROKEN, IT IS BEYOND REPAIR.

CHANGE IS NOT COMING FROM WITHIN.
THE PUNISHMENT/DETERRENCE PARADIGM IS
COUNTER PRODUCTIVE, MERELY SELF-PERPETUATING
AND VASTLY EXPENSIVE.

A TOTAL RE THINKING IS REQUIRED,
WHAT IS THE CAUSE OF THE CRIMINAL
PROBLEM?

TO GO INTO THE GENERAL MALAISE
OF SOCIETAL/ECONOMIC/ENVIRONMENTAL
CONDITIONS IN THE WORLD TODAY IS FAR
BEYOND THE SCOPE OF THIS PAPER BUT NOT
BEYOND THE NEED FOR INVESTIGATIVE THOUGHT,

TO BE SPECIFIC AND USING THE
OBSERVATIONS ABOUT CLEARLY REVEALED IS:

THAT ALCOHOL AND DRUGS ARE THE
MAJOR FACTOR IN SOCIAL JUSTICE SYSTEM,
AND THAT EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS
MUST BE MET,
AND THAT REALISTIC TRAINING IN JOB SKILLS
MUST BE PROVIDED.

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THE PROPOSAL IS THIS:

CLOSE AND RECYCLE AT LEAST 70%
OF THE D.O.C. A JOB LOSS OF 4,000 WITH
A SAVINGS OF \$1 BILLION DOLLARS.

RETAIN THE NEWEST INSTITUTION(S)
FOR THOSE PERSONS THAT REQUIRE, FOR
THEIR OWN GOOD AND THAT OF OTHERS,
INCARCERATION FOR EXTENDED TIME FRAMES
AND TO IMPROVE IN A HUMANITARIAN
MANNER THE CONDITIONS FOR RESIDENTS
AND THE STAFF. ABOLISH THE DEATH
PENALTY FOR A START.

IN THE LOCAL COMMUNITIES,
WHERE THE OFFENSES OCCUR, GREATLY
INCREASE THE ALCOHOL AND DRUG TREATMENT
OPTIONS, PROVIDE LONG TERM RESIDENTIAL
SITES WITH REAL OUT-SIDE WORK INCENTIVES,
THERE ARE PLENTY OF ENVIRONMENT PROJECTS,

CREATE JOB TRAINING WORK RELEASE
CENTERS, FORMER TAX LIABILITIES NOW
WORKING AND PAYING TAXES, IMAGINE THAT
WITHIN THE COMMUNITY SUPPORT
EXISTS IN MANY FORMS, IN PRISON VIRTUALLY
NONE, FAMILY TIES ARE STRENGTHENED, NOT
RENT ASUNDER.

A COST/BENEFIT ANALYSIS OF THIS
NEW MODE OF OPERATION HAS ALREADY BEEN
DONE IN OTHER COUNTRIES, WESTERN EUROPE
FOR EXAMPLE.

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ALTHOUGH THIS PAPER IS
FROM THE PERSPECTIVE IN THIS STATE
I'M SURE THAT THE SITUATION IS VERY
SIMILAR IN OTHER TAX-PAYER SUPPORTED
D.O.C.'S THE PRISON INDUSTRY STATES ARE
ANOTHER MATTER, THE PROFITEERING BY
STATE SPONSORED PRIVATE PARTIES IS
MORALLY REPREHENSIBLE.

IT IS MY CONCERTED OPINION
FROM CLOSE OBSERVATION THAT TWO THIRDS
OR MORE OF THOSE INCARCERATED WOULD
AND COULD BENEFIT FROM SUCH AN
OPPORTUNITY; A CHANCE FOR RADICAL
CHANGE, REAL AND LASTING AND GROWTH
SUPPORTED ORIENTED, SUPPORTED BY
THE COMMUNITY AND NOT TO REMAIN
IN LIMBO SUFFERING MORAL, SPIRITUAL,
MENTAL AND PHYSICAL DEGRADATION.