

## THE SELF-FULFILLING PROPHECY

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Somewhere in Texas a criminal has been released from prison and into your neighborhood; needing to commit a crime before the day is out; in order to survive. The victim will report the crime and the local police and politicians will stand before the news cameras bemoaning the fate of the victim while talking about the revolving door of recidivism and how criminals should be locked up and the keys to their cells thrown away. The local politicians will promise to do away with the revolving door, if re-elected, but in truth they will never eliminate it because it is a Frankenstein of their own design that was created to give them their "Willie Horton, tough on crime political platforms;" which lofted them to political power.

For one; Texas has failed to create effective release programs for those discharging their sentences or being released on parole. An ex-convict or parolee who has been released from prison cannot collect social security or unemployment benefits and they are released with insufficient funds to secure housing, food, clothing and transportation to look for employment upon release, and employment is even more difficult to secure right now with some 16.8 million Americans unemployed; due to the Covid19 pandemic. But yet, Texas releases inmates into Texas neighborhood with only the clothes on their back and with \$50 in their pockets. Thus, prisoners are being released into Texas neighborhoods needing to commit a crime to survive.

Secondly; Texas is one of only six states in the United States which refuses to pay prisoners for the labor they perform in prison maintenance jobs and for manufacturing goods which the Texas Correctional Industries Program (TCI) sells for a profit on the open market. They have created a plantation system which ensures the revolving door will continue to spin; where they release prisoners to the streets without employment, with only \$50 release money, and only the clothes on their backs. This ensures that the releasee needs to commit a crime to survive.

Most states and the Federal government pay prisoners for the labor they perform in prison. An example is the State of Oklahoma; which pays a nominal amount of money for prison job assignments; usually 20¢ to 65¢ an hour and they require inmates to work Forty hours a week. Twenty percent of what the inmate is paid is placed into a mandatory savings account, which is to be given to the inmate upon release. [If an inmate averages 50¢ an hour that would give the inmate \$16 a week to utilize for purchasing writing materials, snacks from the prison commissary, and hygiene items; while also providing \$4 a week to mandatory savings for release. After a 10 year prison term the releasee would be given \$2,080 upon release. Which would be enough money to purchase a bus pass, a cheap motel room for a month, a change of clothing, and a little food; to last until he could get food stamps to survive on while he looks for employment.] This is quite unlike the system in the State of Texas, where a releasee has not been paid for his labor in prison and is released with only the clothes on his back and \$50 in his pocket. At least the inmate being released from the Oklahoma Department

of Corrections had enough money upon release to survive for a little while and had a chance to get on his feet without having to commit a crime to do so.

Furthermore, the State of Texas gives the releasee a bus ticket back to the town in which his original crime was committed. Thus, he is known to police in the area, he is on his own turf and knows potential victims, as well as his old connections/friends to assist in criminal activity.

Yes, a criminal has been released into a neighborhood, somewhere here in Texas, and you or someone you know may become the victim of crime before the day is through. However, what most people in the State of Texas don't know is: chances are the person who committed the crime, as well as the victim, have each been victimized by the Texas Legislature and the Texas Board of Criminal Justice who promulgated the rules, laws, and procedures which created the self-fulfilling prophecy of the revolving door of recidivism.