
PRIVATE CORRECTIONS INDUSTRY NEWS BULLETIN

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Reporting on Prison Privatization and Related Issues

November 1998

Follow-Up on Quadruple Escape from CCA Facility

PCINB reported last month that four prisoners escaped from the CCA-operated South Central Corr. Center in Wayne Co., Tennessee on October 12. All of the escapees have since been captured.

Inmate Donald Wallace, 56, was caught the same day of the break-out near the prison perimeter. Escapees Benjamin D. Underwood and Charles Hayes waylaid Wayne Co. farmer Bernis Hardin, 86, and stole his truck. Despite being duct-taped and hog-tied, Hardin said his assailants were "nice" to him and "aren't as mean as people with the prison say they are." Underwood and Hayes were apprehended in Nashville on October 19 and 20, respectively.

William T. Caldbeck, serving a life sentence for aggravated rape and armed robbery, stole a truck the day after the escape; the vehicle was found abandoned in Thornton, Colorado. Caldbeck was caught on Oct. 29 in San Fernando, California and is awaiting extradition.

According to Tennessee Dept.

of Correction spokeswoman Pam Hobbins the escape occurred during an afternoon recreation period when the inmates cut through two fences and slipped into the surrounding woods. Motion alarms and sensors that should have detected the security breach did not immediately alert prison officials of the escape, nor did guards in perimeter patrol vehicles immediately notice the cut fences.

Officers from the Tennessee Highway Patrol, Clifton Police Dept., Wayne County Sheriff's Dept. and two state prisons assisted in an intensive search for the escapees that involved three canine teams and two helicopters. The FBI also participated in the multi-state manhunt. No law requires CCA to reimburse law enforcement authorities for the cost of the search.

Dwight Walker, a supervisor at the South Central facility, was fired in connection with the break-out. Said CCA Warden Kevin Myers, "I wouldn't say he facilitated the escape, but he may have done some-

thing that allowed the escape to occur." Prisoners at South Central said they weren't closely watched on the yard; Myers acknowledged that only one officer was on duty in the outside recreation area instead of the usual two. The escape is being investigated by the Tenn. Bureau of Investigation.

The October 12 break-out came less than a month after a previous attempted escape at the facility. On Sept. 14 CCA officers prevented inmate Timothy Hickman, who had hidden on the prison grounds before the evening count, from escaping over the perimeter fence. At that time Warden Myers had stated, "I think our staff are well-trained to handle incidents like this ... I believe the staff at South Central does that as well as any prison staff elsewhere." □

Sources: *The Tennessean*, Oct. 17, 20-22, 1998; *Commercial Appeal*, Oct. 20, 1998; *The Jackson Sun*, Oct. 30, 1998; *Knoxville News-Sentinel*, Oct. 23, 1998; *Wayne Co. News*, Sept. 23, Oct. 14, 21, 28, 1998.

ADMINISTRIVIA

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WANTED

Articles, clippings and news reports regarding the private corrections industry — please include the source and date of all materials submitted.

Prison Companies Court Nebraska

Three private corrections companies have expressed an interest in building and operating facilities in two Nebraska communities.

Officials in Kimball are talking with CCA about placing a privately-run prison in the Panhandle city. According to Mayor Darlene Kiefer the discussions are still in the preliminary stages; Wackenhut also has contacted Kimball officials.

Gov. Ben Nelson endorsed the idea. "I'm very supportive of their efforts to try and attract a prison industry to their city," he stated. While he could not guarantee the state would send prisoners to a private prison, no law prevents inmates from being brought in from elsewhere.

The state corrections department was less enthused. "Quite frankly the only difference that I see with these [private prison] operators is that they can build faster" than state agencies, remarked Harold Clarke, director of the Nebraska Dept. of Correctional Services. Clarke stated his department would neither support nor oppose privatization.

The Florida-based Correctional Services Corporation has presented a private prison proposal to officials in Hall County; the county's 100-bed jail is 50% over capacity, which the company says it can help alleviate. "We're definitely going to look into this private thing," stated Richard Hartman, chair of the County Board. However, he noted that many questions would have to be answered before deciding whether a new jail should be privately operated. □

Sources: *The Omaha World-Herald*, Sept. 10, 1998; *The Lincoln Journal Star*, August 21, 1998.

CCA Cancels Contract Over Fiscal Dispute

CCA has notified Texas Dept. of Criminal Justice officials that the company will no longer operate the Cleveland Pre-Release Center in Liberty County after Dec. 31.

According to CCA spokesperson Laurie Shanblum the company's decision was due to "a difference of opinion between CCA and the Cleveland Independent School District regarding the annual amount of money to be paid in lieu of taxes to the school district."

Three years ago the school district filed suit against CCA after the company reduced its \$180,000 tax payment by \$100,000 without prior permission. "We were trying to be very competitive and keep costs as low as possible so as not to lose the bid to another company," said Shanblum. "We thought we had an understanding with everyone — including the school district. But then the board membership changed and they were not willing to go with it."

The school district settled its suit against CCA last August and the company agreed to pay an outstanding debt of \$300,000 with interest. However, CCA was unwilling to retain the contract. "Our facility could not continue to operate at a loss," said Robert Lacy, warden at the pre-release center. CCA has received a 50% tax abatement from city and county authorities since 1995.

School board president Walter Stovall said he was simply enforcing the company's tax obligation and was willing to negotiate — CCA is one of the county's largest private employers. □

Source: *The Houston Chronicle*, September 3, 1998.

Other Private Corrections Industry Resources

Corrections and Criminal Justice Coalition (CCJC), Route 2, Box 1144, Harpers Ferry, WV 25425 (888) 315-8784; www.ccjc.com. A consortium of anti-privatization correctional employees unions.

Corrections USA (CUSA), P.O. Box 394, Newton, NH 03858 (603) 382-9707; www.cusa.org. A non-profit association affiliated with correctional officers' unions; opposes prison privatization.

Prison Reform Trust, 15 Northburgh Street, 2nd Floor, London, EC1V 0JR England; phone: 011-44-171-251-5070; e-mail: prt@prisonreform.demon.co.uk. Publishes the *Prison Privatisation Report Int'l (PPRI)*, which covers news about the private corrections industry in the U.S. and abroad.

Private Corrections Project, Center for Studies in Criminology and Law, Univ. of Florida, Gainesville, FL 32611 (352) 392-1025; web site: web.crim.ufl.edu/pcp. Conducts research into prison privatization. Note: the Project receives funding from the private corrections industry; Prof. Charles W. Thomas, director of the Project, is a board member of Prison Realty Trust.

Reason Foundation, 3415 S. Sepulveda Blvd. #400, Los Angeles, CA 90034 (310) 391-2245; www.reason.org. A libertarian think-tank that favors prison privatization; publishes the *Privatization Watch* newsletter, which includes advertising for prison companies.

"Questionable" Medical Deaths at Youngstown Prison

Most of the attention focused on CCA's Northeast Ohio Corr. Center in Youngstown relates to stabbings, murders, and the escape of six inmates from the troubled prison last summer. But a report by the Ohio Correctional Institution Inspection Committee released on Oct. 7 (see p. 9) also mentions "questionable" medical-related deaths at the CCA prison, which houses prisoners from the District of Columbia.

Stanley R. Rice, 42, an inmate at Youngstown, died on June 4. The cause of death was reportedly multi-organ failure, systemic blood infection and ketoacidosis. "We ruled this a death of natural causes," said Dr. Jesse C. Giles, a pathologist with the Mahoning Co. coroner's office, "but whether he would have died if he had gotten medical attention earlier I can't say."

Rice was taken to St. Elizabeth's Hospital June 2. His family said they weren't notified by prison officials until more than 24 hours later, and by the time they arrived at Youngstown he had already died. Dr. Giles said Rice exhibited symptoms of new onset diabetes; however, his mother and sister stated he had never been diagnosed with or treated for that disease, and family members said he seemed to be in good health when they spoke with him less than a week before he died.

"It's awfully suspicious," observed Annette Speakes, Rice's sister. "How can an individual just die like that overnight?" Speakes said she examined her brother's body at the hospital and found bleeding from the back of his head. She also stated that CCA had refused to release her brother's medical records.

Rice's family requested an autopsy, but two months later the hospital told them it still was not complete. "They did something to him up there," said Elizabeth Rice, Stanley's mother. "I didn't hardly recognize him. His face was all swollen. The blood vessels in his eyes were all burst. That is a terrible thing for a mother to see."

Among Rice's possessions returned to his family was a letter addressed to D.C. Mayor Marion Barry that described difficulties in obtaining medical treatment at the CCA facility. The letter, dated two days prior to Rice's death, had not been mailed.

Youngstown inmate Perry Clay, 25, died on March 21. Although Ohio records attribute his death to respiratory problems and pneumonia another report indicates he died due to complications from AIDS.

A third prisoner at the CCA facility, Michael Cephus, 42, died Dec. 31, 1997. He had been admitted to a local hospital with a sore throat, evaluated and returned to the prison, and later succumbed to fatal septic shock. The coroner's office determined his death was natural; Dr. Giles described it as "a weird chest infection."

Rice, Clay and Cephus were all D.C. inmates, and their deaths are being investigated as part of a class-action suit filed against CCA and the District of Columbia. Among other issues the suit alleges CCA failed to provide adequate medical care at the Youngstown facility. □

Sources: *The Washington Post*, Oct. 8, 1998; *The Common Denominator* (DC), August 10, 1998.

Ex-CCA Officer Accuses Company

A former correctional officer at the CCA-operated South Central Correctional Center in Wayne Co., Tennessee has accused the company of wrongdoing at the facility. The officer's name was withheld while he attempts to attain immunity from prosecution for performing potentially criminal acts upon the orders of his supervisors.

An affidavit from the former CCA officer was made available by Citizens Against Political Corruption in Tennessee, a watchdog group. In his affidavit the former officer made the following allegations:

- He was ordered to destroy incoming mail addressed to inmates so prison staff would not have to work overtime to sort it.
- He and another officer cooked at a fund-raising event for Gov. Don Sundquist in 1994 or 1995, which was paid for by CCA. The fund-raiser allegedly was held at the Aqua Yacht Harbor in Mississippi.
- In 1992 and 1993, officers from CCA's Winn Correctional Center in Louisiana visited South Central to deal with "problem inmates." These officers reportedly beat and abused prisoners at South Central.
- Two inmates who escaped from South Central and were later caught were severely beaten. [Note: Larry Garrison, a correctional officer at South Central, was fired in August 1992 following accusations that he beat two captured escapees].
- In 1993 CCA built a house for then-warden John Rees (who is now a corporate vice president), and inmates routinely were used to mow the grass at his residence. Another inmate with electrician's training was taken from the prison to perform electrical work on the house.

Readers should note that no formal charges have been brought against CCA or officials at South Central in reference to the former officer's accusations. He is expected to name six other former CCA employees who have first-hand knowledge of events at South Central and who can verify his claims. □

Source: *The Buffalo River Review* (Linden, TN), October 7, 1998.

Candidate Challenges Private Prison Law

John Jay Hooker, unsuccessful Democratic candidate for governor in Tennessee, has filed a lawsuit challenging the legality of a 1986 statute that allows the state to contract with private prison companies. The suit, filed October 27, claims the Private Prison Contracting Act is unconstitutional.

"I don't think they have any more right to privatize prisons than they do to privatize the highway patrol or mental hospitals or the school system," said Hooker. "These are functions of government and are created for the common benefit under the Constitution, and can't be sold for the benefit of profiteers."

Named as defendants in the lawsuit are Gov. Don Sundquist, Hooker's Republican gubernatorial opponent; Attorney General John K. Walkup; Department of Correction Commissioner Donal Campbell; and Comptroller William Snodgrass. The lawsuit was filed in Davidson Co. Chancery Court.

Hooker has criticized Governor Sundquist for accepting campaign contributions from CCA.

Article I, Section 32 of the Tennessee Constitution states, "That the erection of safe prisons, the inspection of prisons, and the humane treatment of prisoners, shall be provided for." Hooker contends in his

suit that contracting the care and custody of prisoners to private for-profit companies violates the Constitutional delegation of such authority to the state.

Presently only one state prison is privately operated pursuant to the 1986 statute: the South Central Correctional Center in Wayne Co., which is managed by CCA. If the Private Prison Contracting Act is determined by the courts to be unconstitutional the company's contract to operate South Central would be declared null and void. □

Source: *The Tennessean*, October 28, 1998.

Wackenhut Prison a "Work in Progress"

Inmates at Wackenhut's newly-opened Lea Co. Correctional Facility in Hobbs, New Mexico say conditions at the privately-operated prison are harsher than in the state system. Several hundred New Mexico prisoners were returned from a private facility in Arizona when the Hobbs prison opened last May.

Inmates at the Wackenhut-run facility are not permitted to watch T.V. in their cells, must walk single file within a three-foot space between the wall and a yellow stripe on the floor in the hallways, and cannot talk while moving about the prison. Overhead fluorescent lights in the two-man cells stay on at night. "They treat us like kids," griped inmate Lorenzo Martinez.

Beyond complaints about living conditions there have been teething

problems at the facility — including stabbings, lockdowns and an incident involving misuse of force (see p. 6). "With any startup prison, whether it's public or private, there are inmate-adjustment issues," stated Al Parke, warden at the facility.

Prisoners aren't the only ones complaining, however. Inmate advocates claim the facility does not provide sufficient vocational training and industry programs. Only one vocational course is presently available. Although the prison has been praised by state officials for its advanced computer class, the class has just 17 computers. There are 574 inmates at the Hobbs facility, which will hold 1,200 after construction is completed in mid-December. "It's a work in progress," said New Mexico Corrections Department spokesman

Michael Toms.

Wackenhut plans to add additional vocational and educational programs; the company also intends to start a prison industry in which 100-200 inmates will assemble computer components, including motherboards. The industry is expected to begin March 31, 1999.

Wackenhut is building another prison in Santa Rosa — the 600-bed Guadalupe Co. Correctional Facility — which will open by the end of the year. The Hobbs prison will be expandable to 2,200 beds and the Santa Rosa facility expandable to 1,200 beds. □

Sources: *The Hobbs News-Sun* (NM), November 8, 1998; *The Denver Post*, October 3, 1998; Wackenhut press release, September 9, 1998.

Opposition to CCA's D.C. Prison Grows

CCA is a leading contender for a Federal Bureau of Prisons contract to house 2,200 District of Columbia inmates at a privately-run facility. The company has acquired 42 acres of District land in Ward 8 on which it plans to build the prison (see *PCINB*, Sept. 1998, p.5); however, some local residents and public officials object to the proposed facility.

"CCA is trying to buy the good will of the people of Ward 8," said Eugene D. Kinlow, leader of a coalition that opposes the prison. "It isn't going to work."

Ward 8 Councilwoman Sandra Allen agrees: "I will be speaking out at the zoning hearing, to Congress if necessary and, if it gets that far,

lobbying my colleagues in council to vote against the facility." Allen said eight of ten neighborhood commissioners voiced opposition to the prison plan. She previously had endorsed the CCA facility.

Other community members expressed support for the proposed prison, noting that it would be better to incarcerate D.C. inmates close to their families than to send them to facilities in other states.

At least one outspoken advocate for the CCA prison, Rahim Jenkins, is being paid by the company — he has a contract to recruit and train employees for the CCA-operated Corr. Treatment Facility. Jenkins said he initially opposed the Ward 8 prison

but changed his mind after speaking with Joseph Johnson, a CCA board member who later helped him obtain the contract.

The D.C. Zoning Commission will hold a public hearing Nov. 12 on CCA's request to zone its Ward 8 property for a prison. Maryland Gov. Parris N. Glendening has announced his opposition to the planned facility, which would be located just over the border from Prince George's County. County officials previously had rejected an offer by CCA to build a private prison in their community. □

Sources: *The Washington Post*, Oct. 8, 1998; *The Common Denominator* (DC), August 10, 1998.

Peaceful Protest Quelled by Force

On Aug. 30 Alaskan prisoners housed at the CCA-operated Central Arizona Detention Center (CADC) in Florence staged a peaceful sit-down demonstration to address grievances allegedly ignored by the prison administration.

According to an inmate present at the facility during the incident, 50 Alaskan prisoners refused to leave the exercise yard until the warden responded to their complaints. Approximately half returned to their cells after Assistant Warden Luna issued an order to disperse.

The remaining inmates reportedly were rushed by CCA officers in riot gear who used tear gas, batons and stun shields to subdue them even though they offered no resistance. Alaska Corrections Commissioner Margaret Pugh was quoted as saying "It does look like an isolated, spontaneous incident." It was not clear whether she referred to the prisoners' peaceful protest or the violent response by CCA staff.

The sit-down demonstration reportedly concerned issues related to quality of food, recreation, medical care, and educational programs at the facility. The prisoners were seeking the establishment of an inmate council or another representative process where they could meet with prison officials to discuss their problems and concerns.

Alaska has been sending inmates to privately-operated rent-a-jails since 1995 due to overcrowding in the state corrections system. □

Sources: *The Anchorage Daily News*, Sept. 2, 1998; *Prison Legal News*, Dec. 1998 (inmate correspondence).

Wackenhut Officers Lose Jobs at New Mexico Facility

Three officers at the Wackenhut-operated Lea Co. Correctional Facility in Hobbs, New Mexico have lost their jobs amid allegations of misuse of force. Two lieutenants resigned rather than face discipline, the associate warden of security was removed (but not fired) and four other officers received reprimands following an internal investigation by the company.

According to a report by Dept. of Corrections monitor Joe Strunk, the investigation resulted from an Aug. 13 incident in which a lieutenant kicked an inmate in the groin. The prisoner, Tommy McManaway, was in handcuffs and leg shackles and lying face down on the floor at the time. Wackenhut Lt. Paul Runkles, who was not involved in the incident, said that he heard Assistant Warden O'Roarke tell other prison employees he "wanted to hear a thump" when they took McManaway down, and to "stick to their stories and he would back them up."

The DOC report contained de-

tails that Wackenhut did not make public. Wackenhut spokesperson Pat Canaan stated last September that McManaway had been struck once in the groin; he didn't disclose the inmate was subdued and restrained when kicked. The company also refused to identify the staff members involved, and did not reveal the attempted cover-up.

Canaan said he had no comment on the report and nothing more to say about the August 13 incident. Strunk, the DOC contract monitor at the Hobbs prison, has been hired by Wackenhut as a deputy warden at the company's Santa Rosa facility.

The Hobbs Police Department investigated the misuse of force allegations but the district attorney's office declined to press charges. Dept. of Corrections spokesman Michael Toms commended Wackenhut for its quick response to the incident. □

Sources: *The New Mexican*, Nov. 24, 1998; *The Hobbs News-Sun*, undated.

Inmate Shot, Killed at Cornell Prison

A grand jury in Howard Co., Texas has declined to indict a Cornell guard following an investigation into the shooting death of a prisoner who tried to escape from the company's Interstate Unit in Big Springs.

On August 8 inmate Lesario Alvarez-Cubillos, a Mexican national, was spotted climbing over the fence at the prison. He reportedly failed to comply with orders to stop, both in Spanish and English, and ignored a warning shot. Cornell officer Vincente

Bustamante then fatally shot him in the back as he attempted to flee.

Alvarez-Cubillos was serving a seven-month sentence for illegal entry into the country and violating terms of supervised release. "We feel real confident that our staff did exactly what they were supposed to do," stated Cornell regional director Dale Brown. "It was an unfortunate situation." □

Sources: *Abilene Reporter News*, Oct. 3, 1998; *Odessa American*, undated.

CCA Launches Ad Campaign

In late October the Nashville-based Corrections Corp. of America began placing full-page promotional advertisements in Tennessee newspapers. The ads appeared in *The Tennessean*, the *Commercial Appeal* (Memphis) and *The Jackson Sun*, among other in-state publications. In November CCA started airing commercials on a local T.V. station.

The company's advertisements tout CCA as being equivalent to the nation's sixth largest corrections system, with 78 prisons, jails and detention centers under contract in 26 states and three countries. The ads also profess:

- That CCA has a lower rate of violence at its facilities. Comparable rates are not provided. However, according to Tennessee officials the rate of serious incidents at the CCA-operated South Central Corr. Center, ranging from assaults to drug possession, was 28% higher than the rate at state facilities in 1997.
- That CCA has a lower staff turnover rate than in state prison systems. Comparable rates are not provided. But a 1997 study by the Tenn. Dept. of Correction found the turnover rate at CCA's South Central Corr. Center was 77% — more than twice the rate at state facilities. CCA disputed the study's methodology.
- That on average it costs approximately \$11.00 per inmate per diem less to house prisoners in CCA facilities than in publicly-operated prisons. This ignores the fact that unlike state and federal corrections systems, CCA manages very few maximum-security prisons, women's

facilities and prison medical centers, which have the highest operating costs. Also, CCA can reject inmates who are expensive to incarcerate, such as those with HIV/AIDS.

- That CCA prison officers meet American Correctional Association (ACA) training standards. Not mentioned is that the ACA requires only 40 hours of training. According to the 1997 Corrections Yearbook, the national average for public correctional officers is 229 hours of pre-employment training.

- That more than 12 independent studies indicate prison privatization can save up to 28% over publicly-run facilities. No information is provided regarding when, where and by whom the studies were conducted. But according to a report released earlier this year by the Council of State Governments, "60% [of the Departments of Correction reporting] saved less than 5% through privatization none saved more than 15%." This reflects an analysis of all areas of prison privatization, including transportation, medical and food services, and facility operation.

CCA's media blitz began just before the November 3 elections; several state lawmakers, including Sen. Pete Springer, strongly opposed prison privatization. Springer's opponent was endorsed by Gov. Don Sundquist, who has business and political ties to CCA co-founder Tom Beasley. CCA C.E.O. Doctor R. Crants donated \$40,000 to the Republican Party last September, which was used to fund "issue ads" against Senator Springer and other

Democratic candidates.

The company's T.V. and print ads depict stern-looking correctional officers and adorable children, and bear the corporate slogan, "Quickly going about the business of public safety." There is no mention of the multiple escapes, beatings, stabbing deaths, riots and assaults on prison staff that have occurred at various CCA facilities over the past several months. □

Sources: WPSD Channel 6 News, Oct. 27, 1998; ads published in *The Tennessean*, *Commercial Appeal* and *The Jackson Sun*, Oct. 25 - Nov. 3, 1998; *The Knoxville News-Sentinel* (undated).

Third Quarter Earnings Up

In Oct. CCA announced third-quarter revenue of \$179.1 million — an increase of 41% from last year's third quarter — with \$21.1 million in net income, up 54% from 1997. CCA's stock rose almost 10% following the announcement.

Wackenhut Corrections Corp., the nation's second-largest private prison company, posted third-quarter revenue of \$78.3 million, an increase of 42% from \$55.1 million in 1997. The company's net profit was \$4.46 million, up from \$3.19 million the previous third quarter. □

Sources: *The Tennessean*, Oct. 23, 1998; Wackenhut press release, Oct. 23, 1998; *PPRI*, Nov./Dec. 1998.

OK Not O.K. with CCA

Last September the Oklahoma Corrections Board decided to cancel a contract with CCA to house inmates at the company's North Fork Corr. Center in Sayre. The contract termination followed a dispute over the per diem rate paid by the state; the Board felt it had been overcharged by about \$858,000 a year. The privately-run facility holds both Oklahoma and Wisconsin prisoners (see *PCINB*, July 1998, p.5).

Gov. Frank Keating asked the Corrections Board to reconsider its decision. Some board members criticized his request, as CCA C.E.O. Doctor Crants and Patrick McCoy, the company's liaison with the state, had each donated \$5,000 to Gov. Keating's election campaign.

A CCA spokesman denied that the company had asked Governor Keating to intervene on its behalf. Oklahoma still has contracts with other CCA prisons in the state, including the Davis Corr. Center and the Cimarron Corr. Facility. □

Source: *PPRI*, Nov./Dec. 1998.

Rebound Rebounds?

Last April Colorado officials closed the Rebound, Inc.-operated High Plains juvenile facility in Brush after an investigation found abuse, sexual misconduct, mismanagement and deficient mental health care. The investigation was initiated after 13-year-old Matthew Maloney hung himself at the prison in February. Following an appeal, a judge later upheld the state's decision to suspend Rebound's license.

Now a new company, Youth Education Corp., has applied to reopen the High Plains facility. Youth Education Corp. has the same chief operating officer and C.E.O. as Rebound and shares the same address; the company intends to use the same treatment program with the same psychiatrist, psychologist and doctor originally employed at High Plains by Rebound.

Youth Education Corp. proposed renaming the facility the Salt Creek School. □

Sources: *U.S.A. Today*, November 9, 1998; *PPRI*, Nov./Dec. 1998.

CCA Officers Injured

An October 19 incident at the CCA-operated South Central Corr. Center in Wayne County, Tennessee sent three correctional officers to a local hospital for treatment of minor injuries.

According to Warden Kevin Myers, two prisoners started a fistfight in the inmate dining area following an argument. After they left to continue the fight outside three officers arrived and attempted to separate them; during a brief struggle, which was joined by a third inmate, the officers suffered abrasions and bruises. One received stitches for minor cuts.

The facility was put on temporary lockdown following the altercation, which Warden Myers said is being investigated; the prisoners involved in the fight were placed in segregation pending disciplinary charges. The incident occurred one week after four inmates escaped from South Central (see p. 1). □

Source: *Wayne County News* (TN), October 21, 1998.

Wackenhut Wins Jail Contract

Wackenhut Corrections has been awarded a contract by the San Diego County Board of Supervisors to renovate and manage an eight-story former county jail located in downtown San Diego. The company will lease the facility for an initial term of fifteen years.

Said Wackenhut C.E.O. George C. Zoley, "This project represents a very important expansion of our company's presence in the southern

California market." Wackenhut beat out CCA, which also was vying for the contract bid. Both companies may have the opportunity to do business with the state: Earlier this year Governor Pete Wilson signed a bill that will allow the California Dept. of Corrections to contract with private prison operators for up to 2,000 beds.

Following renovations the San Diego jail is expected to open Jan. 1,

2000; it will house 750 to 900 inmates, most likely from federal agencies such as the INS or the U.S. Marshals Service. Wackenhut anticipates annual revenue of around \$20 million from the facility. Zoley noted that the jail will provide income to the county in the form of lease payments, taxes and utilities. □

Source: Wackenhut press release, November 11, 1998.

In the News

Rhode Island correctional officers oppose prison privatization so strongly that they rejected a contract offer with retroactive 13% pay increases because the state also wanted to privatize medical and food services at adult facilities. The proposed collective bargaining agreement also included the possibility of privatizing other prison functions. A revised contract is being negotiated with the Rhode Island Brotherhood of Correctional Officers. Sources: *The State Gazette* (TN), Oct. 17, 1998; *PPRI*, Nov./Dec. 1998.

New Mexico inmate Joshua McCann was found beaten and unconscious in his cell at the CCA-run Torrance Co. Detention Center on Sept. 10. More than a week later he remained in critical condition. State officials are investigating a delay of several hours before McCann was found by CCA staff, who were alerted to the beating by a phone call from a local radio station. Source: *Hobbs News-Sun* (NM), undated.

A Wackenhut-run juvenile facility in Jena, Louisiana is scheduled to open in December following a three-month delay. Last August U.S. District Court Judge Frank Polozola postponed the opening of the 276-bed prison after finding deficiencies at the facility. The Jena prison has been mentioned in a federal investigation of former Governor Edwin Edwards; Edwards' niece, Wanda Edwards, is a Wackenhut lobbyist. Sources: *U.S.A. Today*, November 2, 13, 1998; *The Dallas Morning News*, undated.

Ohio Gets Tough on Private Prisons

On Oct. 7 the Ohio Correctional Institution Inspection Committee released a 23-page report recommending that additional restrictions be placed on privately-operated prisons within the state. "I still do not believe that private prisons are good for Ohio," said Senator Rhine McLin, chairwoman of the committee. "We need to take these steps to make them safer."

The report was largely the result of an investigation into the July 25 escape of six Washington, D.C. inmates from CCA's Northeast Ohio Corr. Center in Youngstown, which has been criticized for high levels of violence and improperly housing maximum-security prisoners.

The committee recommended that private prisons not be allowed to accept out-of-state inmates classified above medium security, that employees at privately-operated facilities meet Ohio's minimum training requirements, that state officials be granted access to inspect privately-run prisons and inmate records, that private prisons pay for annual state

audits, that private corrections companies not receive incentive tax breaks from contracting government agencies, and that all private prison contracts be reviewed by the Ohio Attorney General's office.

As a result of the Youngstown escape the committee further recommended that prisoners at privately-operated facilities be required to wear state-approved uniforms instead of street clothes and that escapes from private prisons be promptly reported to local law enforcement authorities. The committee report also sharply rebuked CCA and D.C. corrections officials in connection with problems at the Youngstown prison.

The recommendations were attached to pending legislation and submitted to the Senate Judiciary Committee on Oct. 14. The Judiciary Committee is expected to approve the bill and send it to the full Senate during the next legislative session. □

Sources: *The Columbus Dispatch*, Oct. 15, Nov. 14, 1998; *The Akron Beacon Journal*, Oct. 8, 1998.

Colorado Convicts to Come Home

Approximately 1,000 Colorado prisoners incarcerated at a contract facility in Minnesota are expected to return to their home state by December, where they will be housed in two privately-operated prisons.

According to the Colorado Dept. of Corrections the state has contracted for 600 of 1,200 beds at a prison in Olney Springs and all 760 beds at a facility in Burlington. The Olney Springs prison also is expected to

house 600 inmates from Hawaii and has agreed to hold 97 Wyoming prisoners on a temporary basis.

The Burlington facility is being built by CCA, which operates two other prisons in the state — the Bent Co. Corr. Facility and the Huerfano Corr. Facility. The Olney Springs prison is being built by Dominion Correctional Properties of Edmond, Oklahoma and will be managed by the Correctional Services Corp. □

In the News

An unnamed inmate was stabbed at the Wackenhut-run Lea Co. Corr. Facility in Hobbs, New Mexico on Sept. 13; he was treated at a local hospital and returned to the prison, which was put on partial lockdown. According to Warden Al Parke the facility has been locked down at least ten times since opening last May. Source: *The Hobbs News-Sun* (NM), September 15, 1998.

Immigration detainees at a Wackenhut-operated INS facility in Queens, New York went on a hunger strike from Oct. 5 to Oct. 8. At least 35 detainees took part in the protest over their lengthy confinement while awaiting hearings for political asylum. Source: *Workers World*, Oct. 22, 1998.

A private prison hospital in Richland County, South Carolina is open for business, though it's nearly empty. Backers expect the 326-bed facility to be at or near capacity by July 1999; the Columbia Care Center, operated by Alabama-based Just Care, Inc., presently has just two imprisoned patients. Source: *U.S.A. Today*, November 10, 1998.

CCA announced it has completed plans to remove 205 "high medium" security inmates from the company's Youngstown, Ohio facility. Sixty-three prisoners were returned to the Federal Bureau of Prisons by the end of September, and 80 more were transferred to other CCA prisons. Source: *The Akron Beacon Journal*, October 8, 1998.

Tennessee to Regulate Prison Privatization

Although Tennessee's General Assembly passed the Private Prison Contracting Act to regulate state facilities operated by private corrections companies, there is no law that regulates privately-run prisons that house out-of-state inmates. According to lawmakers this may change.

On October 22 a meeting of the Select Oversight Committee on Corrections heard recommendations for keeping a closer rein on private prison operators, from requiring them to pay the cost of capturing escapees to limiting the kinds of inmates they can bring into the state. "We should be proactive on this issue," said committee chairman Sen. Jim Kyle, who expects to introduce a regulatory bill during the next legislative session.

The committee heard from consultant Don Stoughton and Assistant Attorney General Andy Bennett, who described statutory restrictions on the private corrections industry in other states. They said Arizona requires private prison contractors to inform state officials of the number, names and security levels of inmates brought in from other jurisdictions. Oklahoma does not accept out-of-state inmates convicted of sex-related offenses, who have histories of escape, or who are classified as maximum-security. Earlier this year Idaho enacted a law to regulate the construction and operation of privately-run prisons (see *PCINB*, June 1998, p. 4). "I think you'll see state governments revisit all that has been thought of as basic issues on [prison] privatization and re-evaluate," said Sen. Kyle.

Currently there are three privately-run facilities in Tennessee that house out-of-state prisoners, all operated by CCA. Assistant Attorney

General Bennett noted that state law as presently written does not apply to private prisons that house non-Tennessee inmates. He said the only state oversight of such facilities includes zoning approvals, fire marshal regulations and building codes.

Although some committee members expressed concern about private corrections companies importing inmates into Tennessee, Governor Don Sundquist supported the practice. "I don't have a problem with somebody being in the prison business and bringing prisoners in from other states, as long as prisoners fit the prisons that is [sic] built for them," he said. Governor Sundquist has received at least \$33,000 in campaign donations from CCA-related sources since 1994. □

Sources: *The Tennessean*, Sept. 3, Oct. 17, 23, 1998.

Recommended Reading

"Should Crime Pay?" A report about the private prison industry available from AFSCME Corrections United, 1625 L St. N.W., Washington, DC 20036-5678 (202) 429-1215; web site: www.afscme.org.

"The Prison-Industrial Complex." An article that discusses profit-motivation in the criminal justice system, including the private corrections industry. Published in the Dec. 1998 issue of *The Atlantic Monthly*, 745 Boylston Street, Boston, MA 02116 (617) 536-9500; (800) 234-2441.