

Testimony of Frank Smith, Private Corrections Working Group
Huntington, Pennsylvania
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After decades of disastrous privatization of corrections in the 19th Century, the practice had all but disappeared by a hundred years ago.

Thirty eight years ago, political and correctional insiders revived the discarded model, keen on making huge profits on an explosively expanding inmate population. Over the last three decades, the number of inmates held by for-profit operators has expanded to 10% of the nation's prison population.

This initiative was soon followed by subcontracting other services including the provision of canteens, food, pharmaceuticals, medical and treatment programs.

There has been a persistent notion that such privatization of jails and prisons by executives and lawmakers, as well as subcontracting of services, could be accomplished at substantial less expense to the taxpayers. These expected savings, however, were confined almost entirely to non-peer reviewed, often industry generated research, or resided entirely in the minds of proponents, though not in actuality. Reason gave way to ideology. Weighty and crucial decisions were propelled, rather than by logic, instead by fantasies, campaign contributions, poorly conceived contractual procedures, revolving door bureaucrats, and even bribes.

Rarely, if ever, was consideration given to a due accounting for the externalization of costs. Such calculations never anticipated the expenses, for instance, of suppressing riots, apprehending and prosecuting escapees, and defending and paying for claims arising from endless litigation that shoddy practices chronically generated. Paying for these situations as they arose, generated huge but hidden losses to the public treasury. Escapes from secure custody, have been estimated at 20-30 times as frequent as from public institutions.

Riots have often required intervention by multiple public jurisdictions as poorly trained, poorly paid, high turnover, for-profit corporation guards frequently ran away at the first sign of trouble. Such incidents were often followed by mass resignations from operator employ.

Another hidden, though ubiquitous cost in privatizing existing jails, prisons and detention centers is a failure to calculate the true value of the current workforce. Considering that the average Pennsylvania prison nursing professional has eleven years on the job, such tenure represents a substantial investment in training and continuing education of nurses, likely tens of thousands of hours accomplished at considerable public expense.

Employees comprising prison nursing staff, even more so than other "total institutions," requires possession of far broader expertise than do that of professionals in non-custodial situations. The most prominent of these areas of skill applies to competence in preserving the integrity and security of the institution as well as abiding by principles that will insure basic self-protection.

Prison nurses typically perform triage functions. They are the gatekeepers to medical services within the walls or wire. A great deal of stress is generated by their engagement in such a capacity. They are often seen by prisoners as the personification of a system, a focus of their feelings about the criminal justice system in general.

Prison nurses work daily with a high risk population. Safety in their interactions with inmates is of prime concern. There is a constant potential for violence, so they are perennially in jeopardy of suffering even fatal personal assaults.

The population with whom these personnel work possesses extraordinary reservoirs and levels of communicable infection with blood borne, airborne and contact diseases. These include such as HCV, HIV, drug resistant TB, and MRSA. Perhaps the majority have compromised immune systems, thanks to chronic exposure to drugs, alcohol and systemic infections.

The enormous expansion of prisoner population in recent decades has been in no small part a result of the deinstitutionalization of the mentally ill. Individuals with marked psychological or psychiatric difficulties are much more likely to run afoul of the criminal justice system than more stable members of society. If they receive inadequate treatment from providers who are unfamiliar with their cases, or if nurses are unaware of their symptoms and courses of their illness, situations could easily have tragic consequences.

A great many inmates in the close and medium facilities at Huntingdon and Smithfield, and similar institutions around the state, would risk their lives and jeopardize those of others, if they believed that lowered vigilance presented an opportunity for escape.

Another situation that is more difficult in a prison setting is the ability to competently analyze whether inmates are presenting with symptoms or complaints are possibly generated from malingering or hypochondria, or conversely if they are genuinely ill and if therapeutic intervention is truly needed.

In order for prison nurses to be effective, there is a prerequisite of an aptitude for working in custodial situations. This can be determined in part by aptitude testing and background checks, to include credit histories to rate vulnerability to engaging in smuggling, but also by guidance from experienced personnel who supervise training processes for new recruits. Those who by attitude or ability appear to be a poor fit for the complex and difficult work environment can be evaluated and screened out early in the process, or good money will be thrown after bad.

The current staff possesses a dedication to their jobs that cannot be easily replicated. These nurses have an ongoing investment in their careers and their eventual retirement. They have pride in their work. Their skill sets are truly quite remarkable.

If they are let go, they will be replaced by a parade of contractor workers, drawn from registries, from a pool of those nurses who do not necessarily keep stable employment at regular job sites, it is easy to envision the potential disasters that may occur.

When it becomes clear to anyone paying attention that such a decision, if made, will need to be reconsidered, that well trained workforce is not likely to be available for rehire. Nurses are in short supply and those who have shown a stable employment history will be at a premium. Few can be expected to remain on the job, working for contractors that are aiming to maximize profits at the expense of professional medical practices, and who are willing to jeopardize security in the pursuit of the same goal. This is a genie that cannot be stuffed back in the bottle.

In addition to the above issues, any decision to contract out must be informed by a realistic appraisal of the history of such correctional privatization initiatives in the past.

It is, I'm afraid, an endless and likely inevitable succession of failures. At the core of all of them is an overarching, single minded dedication to the profit motive.

Here in Pennsylvania, the state was given a black eye four years ago when it became known that two judges, in collusion with a court clerk and operators of two juvenile detention facilities in Luzerne County, were essentially treating adolescents as fodder for a privatized detention system. Over a thousand kids who might have been better served had they been kept after school, were victimized and commodified. Besides the incalculable damage to these children and their families, the state was victimized as well. It paid enormous sums for the supposed "treatment" of juveniles who truly required little or no services at all.

This was hardly the first time such a disgraceful situation had occurred. In Berks County, the New Morgan Academy owned and operated by the former Cornell Companies charged equally outrageous sums for keeping juveniles in a venue that providing next to nothing in treatment, education or security. When the state eventually investigated it confirmed at least sixteen cases of gratuitous and severe physical abuse and fifteen cases of sexual assaults. Teachers were chronically in short supply and most worked only long enough to gain enough experience to allow them to be hired elsewhere. When intervention by the state to rectify the situation became imminent, Cornell surrendered its license and was empty for years. It was finally allowed, under Abraxes, to reopen on a very limited basis and strict monitoring, to preclude any repetition of such a disgraceful situation in the future.

The profit motive produced similar results when Delaware County privatized its county jail, turning over operations to GEO Group. This was followed by a large number of tragic deaths in custody, quite often to due medical negligence and inattention. When the GEO president and CEO, Wayne Calabrese, tried to sell the community of Mt. Bethel in Northampton County a massive, speculatively constructed prison/detention center, he misinformed residents that the corporation had only dropped the contract at its term because of lawsuits for strip searching prisoners at intake. He never mentioned all the deaths and the resulting litigation. He went on to say that the contract had been turned over to another "competent provider," the previous year. I pointed out that there had been six escapes and mistaken releases by the new operator, and he said he was unaware of that fact. (There was still another escape shortly after that town hall.)

GEO of course, came before the administration and Pennsylvania legislators a few years ago in an unsuccessful effort to privatize the forensic units of state prisons.

Compared to Pennsylvania, which has had limited experience with privatization of prisons and subcontracting of services, other states and municipalities, and even the federal government, that have indulged in these initiatives, for reasons of intended but unrealized thrift, corruption or poor judgment, have largely fallen victim to their own motives. Most particularly, these calamities have occurred thanks to chronic failures of oversight.

Expert, professional analysis of the industry long ago warned of the danger of writing inadequate contracts that did not include enforceable indemnification of liquidated damages. Such omissions essentially gave the operators and contractors a license to steal, and often, steal they did. Dozens of corporate and elected and appointed executives from around the nation and many other officials, both public and private, have been caught and convicted in criminal justice nets, despite the difficulties presented in bringing such criminal prosecutions.

With few exceptions, contract monitors have been almost entirely been next to useless. I have seen situation after glaring situation where monitors have overlooked the most obvious operator or subcontractor deficiencies. In my opinion, having gotten records via Freedom of Information and Open Records Act requests, I am appalled at the inadequacy of such oversight.

Governments become trapped by their reliance on industry. Monitors, "go along to get along," in state after state. National accreditation bodies such as the American Correctional Association have little value as well, in policing the industry upon which its finances so heavily depends.

I have tried to warn monitors and their supervisors of what I felt were instances of impending doom, to little avail. I predicted a massive riot in Colorado, for instance, two months before it occurred, down to what group of prisoners would touch it off, why they would do so, what they would use for weapons and how they would get away with it. The state showed no interest in my warnings and now, almost eight years later, the cases of hundreds of victims remain before the courts. The state spent over \$700,000 suppressing the riot but was only able to get a bit more than \$300,000 in compensation, thanks to revenue restrictions in the Taxpayers Bill of Rights.

A similar riot in Kentucky, where the later indicted governor had appointed a high ranking official from a for-profit operator as Commissioner at a tiny fraction of his corporate compensation, may have cost as much. Unfortunately no accounting of damages was ever made and a nominal fine of \$10,000 was assessed by the retread against his former employer.

In Kentucky as well, a food subcontractor at a state prison supplied such insufficient and inedible fare, that inmates had no reasonable alternative to turn to for sustenance, save for buying from the canteen that was operated by the same contractor and which charged outrageous prices. The resulting chronic tension was said to be the precipitant of a riot which burned down much of the institution and cost the state millions to repair.

In Kingman, Arizona, an escape on July 30, 2010 revealed that the presence of four monitors at the for-profit prison site did nothing to stop the operator from running a manifestly unsafe facility. I had information long before the escapees fled that turnover had gone well beyond unacceptable limits and the state was unwilling to do anything to correct the situation. It took hours before the escapes of three killers with decades remaining to serve were noticed despite a huge hole in the fence, longer still before outside law enforcement authorities were notified.

Ironically, the white supremacist ringleader had done 15 years in Pennsylvania for a string of armed robberies and had a parole hold from this state. Still, the Department of Corrections sent him and hundreds of other murderers, plus rapists and kidnappers, to what was essentially a minimum security facility. Because of the hold and his membership in a security threat group, he should have been ineligible for a transfer to such an ill-secured prison with ill-trained staff.

Once outside the wall, one escapee stole the intended getaway vehicle from his accomplices, fleeing alone. He was captured the next day after a shootout with a deputy and police officers in Colorado. His companions wandered outside the prison for well over four hours, eventually hijacking a semi, robbing and kidnapping its drivers, though they were dropped in Flagstaff, 160 miles east. The two remaining fugitives, along with their accomplice, got a car and proceeded to drive toward Arkansas. Upon hearing on the radio that the other escapee had been captured and was cooperating with police, they reversed direction in Texas, and hijacked a pickup and camper, kidnapping and eventually murdering the owners, a retired couple.

They fled first to Albuquerque, then to Billings, Montana. One escapee was captured in Wyoming but the triggerman and his first cousin/girl friend who had helped them escape first robbed a beauty shop in Gentry, Arkansas, and then drove all the way to Pennsylvania before returning to Arizona where they were finally captured. There had been a nationwide search for the three, including helicopter patrols of the Canadian border with Montana.

The last three were returned to Kingman, where they were prosecuted for the escapes and kidnappings, then were extradited to New Mexico to face federal death penalty charges. Two pleaded guilty to charges that will earn five life terms for a killer who was already doing life when he escaped, and the accomplice is facing life as well, at federal taxpayers' expense. The ringleader will be tried on the murder charges next March.

I estimate that the searches, apprehensions and trials will cost the taxpayers many millions for which the derelict contractor got off virtually scot free. Their fellow escapee has been sentenced to 60 years in Colorado, though he still owed 32 years on his Arizona sentence.

What had been seen to be negligent, preventable deaths at different, lower security Texas prisons with different operators was the stated cause of a number of intentional fires that did extreme damage to those facilities. The inmates were, in effect, "voting with their matches."

The anticipated main bidder to replace the nurses is Corizon, the product of a merger between Prison Health Services/Armor Services Group and Correctional Medical Service/Valitas.

Ironically, there has been a long history of governments originally contracting with either PHS or CMS and subsequently trading one for the other (see examples below), in desperate attempts to rectify untenable situations. Though it never seemed to resolve the problems, the option has disappeared for the foreseeable future. References are from our archives at: www.privateci.org

Because the merger combined a publicly traded corporation, ASG, with CMS, the relative transparency previously available with PHS disappeared. If the experience of the main publicly traded prison operators, GEO Group and Corrections Corporation of America are any guide, top executives may well be making over a million a month in salary, stock options and awards.

Here's a very brief sampling of the problems they encountered, the first dealing with the basic issue of corporate honesty. Many ASG executives were retained in the merger with CMS:

July 15, 2009 PR Inside

A lawsuit on behalf of purchasers of America Service Group, Inc. (NASDAQ:ASGR) stock between September 24, 2003 to March 16, 2006, alleging America Service violated Federal Securities Laws is pending at the US District Court for the Middle District of Tennessee. According to the complaint the plaintiff alleges that that America Service Group and its top executive officers engaged in accounting fraud and violated the federal securities laws by misleading investors and failing to disclose between September 24, 2003 to March 16, 2006 that " (1) America Service was not charging its customers in accordance with their contracts; (2) America Service failed to properly credit customers with discounts, rebates, and price concessions; (3) America Service failed to provide customers with appropriate credits for returned pharmaceutical products; and (4) America Service inappropriately established and utilized reserves to help it more closely meet budgeted results". The complaint further alleges that after the markets closed, on March 15, 2006, America Service Group announced that as a result of the findings of an internal investigation, it would restate earnings for the years ended December 31, 2001 through December 31, 2004 and for the first six months of 2005 and issue refunds of \$3.6 million, plus interest, to customers for instances in which it failed to credit them with discounts, rebates or price savings to which they were entitled.

A Spotty Record of Health Care at Juvenile Sites in New York: NY Times 3/1/05

The only independent audit of the company's medical care, commissioned by the Juvenile Justice Department in 2003, six months after Prison Health had left, found patient records had been in disarray, and that no doctor had appeared to consult them. Many children with serious illnesses received no follow-up care. Most teenagers were not tested for sexually transmitted diseases. The audit was never made public. "The work was poor and put young people at risk," the city comptroller, William C. Thompson Jr., said in an interview. "I'd almost say deplorable."

6/20/05 Baltimore Sun

Prison Health Services Inc. of Brentwood, Tenn., did not win any piece of the state's business in the latest round of bidding. PHS, which provided health care services to more than 20 state correctional facilities, had been criticized by inmate advocacy groups for skimping on services, particularly in Baltimore's jails. **CMS has been the target of inmate advocacy groups and unfavorable media coverage over quality of care in the past, including an investigative series in the St. Louis Post-Dispatch in 1998.** The newspaper reported incidents of alleged medical negligence that, in some cases, led to inmate deaths in Missouri and elsewhere. "Correctional Medical Services' history of cutting corners to maintain profits jeopardizes the lives of thousands of incarcerated people across the country," said Elizabeth Alexander, director of the American Civil Liberties Union's National Prison Project, in a statement opposing CMS' selection as Maryland's inmate medical provider. "Many states have already learned a painful lesson from their dealings with Correctional Medical Services," she said.

February 10, 2009 AP

Michigan has awarded a three-year, \$326 million contract to a Tennessee company to treat prisoners with medical problems. **Prison Health Services will take over for St. Louis-based Correctional Medical Services.** CMS has hired doctors and others to see Michigan prisoners for about a decade. But a year ago, an independent review found that most doctors, nurse practitioners and physician assistants were seeing too few prisoners a day. The review was ordered by Gov. Jennifer Granholm in 2006 after reports of inmates dying because of inadequate care.

September 22, 2005 Palm Beach Post

It took 20 months, \$15.6 million, the deaths of several inmates after receiving questionable care and an epidemic staph infection for former Sheriff Ed Bieluch finally to replace the private medical provider at the Palm Beach County Jail. Sheriff Ric Bradshaw is not as indifferent or incompetent with the new company. Just 10 months into its two-year, \$20 million contract, Correctional Medical Services Inc. has been warned that Sheriff Bradshaw will not tolerate cost overruns and poor service. **CMS, low bidder last summer to replace Prison Health Services,** contracted to spend \$900,000 for care of inmates needing treatment at a hospital or clinic. Already, that cost has reached \$3.3 million. Prescription-drug costs also are over CMS' budget. **Not surprisingly, CMS blamed its predecessor for higher-than-budgeted expenses. "Quite frankly," a CMS spokesman said, "there were a number of cases left by the previous provider that needed to be addressed."** There are other remnants of PHS poor performance. A circuit judge ruled that Rosanne Bilello could sue Prison Health Services, a former jail doctor employed by the company and the sheriff's office for punitive damages in the 2003 death of her husband.

January 12, 2009 Arizona Republic

Maricopa County has lost accreditation of its jails after a months-long attempt by county administrators to remain accredited. County officials were notified that the National Commission on Correctional Health Care is pulling its accreditation. Accreditation is state mandated and helps the county defend itself against lawsuits brought against the system by inmates. Accreditation provides criteria that employees of Correctional Health Services, which provides health care to the county's 10,000 inmates, can use to guarantee they are providing quality care. The commission sent a letter to the county to inform administrators that jail accreditation was being denied **It alleged that Correctional Health Services employees provided false or misleading information that allowed the agency to give the county's jails full accreditation.**

July 2, 2008 Arizona Daily Star

Citing poor quality of care and lack of contract compliance, Pima County will drop Correctional Medical Services as its medical-care provider at the Pima County jail. Correctional Medical Services is the largest provider of detention medical services in the country. The Board of Supervisors approved a two-year, \$18.5 million contract with the St. Louis-based company in 2006. The contract represented an 18.6 percent increase over the previous contract with Tucson-based First Correctional Medical, which had served the jail since 2002. At the time, Supervisor Richard Elías said he was concerned about cost-cutting measures in the contract and complaints made against the company in other states, but County Administrator Chuck Huckelberry said he was satisfied with the company's answers. However, two years later, Pima County officials say the company has failed to meet basic expectations laid out in its contract, including meeting staffing levels and providing care in a timely manner. "Our feeling is they have not met our requirements for quality care at the jail," said Dr. Fred Miller, Pima County's chief medical officer. In a memo to the supervisors, Huckelberry said CMS had five administrators and four corporate liaisons in the 26 months of the contract, leading to inconsistent leadership. The company failed to collect \$1.3 million from the contract because it didn't meet staffing requirements. And court officials recently expressed concern about the quality of psychiatric care provided in the jail, including psychological evaluations done by a nurse practitioner. The qualifications of those doing evaluations at the jail came up during a recent hearing involving a murder suspect. In a bench conference in Pima County Superior Court, **Judge Nanette Warner said she had big problems with the company. "I have huge issues with the quality of the staff, the quality of the care. It has been a frustration for the court," she said. "Their whole goal is how not to do any work," she said at a later point in the conference.**

The Tulsa World January 9, 2005

"At least 17 Tulsa Jail inmates have died since CCA took over operations, four times the number who died in the jail the previous five years." Sheriff Stanley Glanz said private companies have an incentive to keep medical costs low, which can lead to poor care for inmates. "There are times for cost situations that they will take short cuts," Glanz said. "It's not just CCA; it's all these medical providers. The ideal situation is to have your own medical staff." (Tulsa County had dumped its contract with CCA in the wake of years of astronomical contract cost increases, a long series of escapes, sexual assaults by staff, suicides and murders. It found it could do the job better, at a much lower cost, by reversing the privatization. Florida's Bay and Hernando counties in had similar experiences. One considered rehiring of all CCA's personnel but found that only a very small minority qualified for the positions they'd held.)

September 5, 2007 Huntsville Times

The state corrections commissioner was questioned by legislators Wednesday over a \$233.73 million contract for health care for Alabama's nearly 26,000 inmates. Commissioner Richard Allen is seeking approval of a three-year contract with St. Louis-based Correctional Medical Services Inc. CMS would take over a contract now held by Prison Health Services Inc., of Brentwood, Tenn. Sen. Parker Griffith, D-Huntsville, a retired physician, endorsed the CMS contract, which would have two potential one-year renewals. "I have a keen interest in (prisons), particularly the health care," Griffith told the committee. Some members of the Joint Legislative Contract Review Committee questioned Allen about members of his staff who formerly worked for the two private companies and were involved in the selection process for CMS. A third company that submitted a proposal, Pittsburgh-based Wexford Health Sources, was represented by an attorney. He said he will ask for an explanation of the grading process when the committee meets again today. Allen acknowledged that Wexford's bid was about \$6 million lower than CMS

I don't mean to single out Corizon as being somehow unusual. I was intimately familiar, for instance with the shortcomings and conflicts of Pittsburgh provider Wexford Medical Services with respect to its New Mexico and other contracts. Like the for-profit prison operators themselves, the medical contractors' performance seems to be virtually indistinguishable, one from another. I am not aware of any which subordinate profits to professional performance. None, to the best of my knowledge, provide efficacious services.

December 17, 2009 *The Skanner News*

In the wake of a required 60-day background investigation by local officials, the racial discrimination tort claim by three law enforcement employees against Clark County (Washington) Corrections has expanded into a full-on lawsuit seeking millions in damages. The lawsuit, detailing more than a dozen instances of racist harassment that allegedly took place throughout the past 20 years, has been brought against the county by former Clark County Sheriffs Department Commander Clifford B. Evelyn, 58; former corrections officer Britt Easterly, 39, now with the U.S. Secret Service in Washington D.C.; and Elzy P. Edwards, 46, an unsuccessful applicant for Clark County Corrections who is now working with the Washington Department of Corrections. A 20-year veteran of the corrections department who had recently been honored for his efforts to promote diversity in its ranks, Evelyn was fired in June after an Internal Affairs investigation found he had violated general orders regarding "harassment," "courtesy" and "competency." Evelyn had for the past two years reported on Wexford Health Sources' failure to meet the terms of their operations contract, including submitting a detailed report in writing delivered to his supervisors at Clark County more than a year before the county's own performance audit confirmed his allegations.

Elsewhere around the nation, in July of this year million-dollar lawsuits were filed against Wexford corporation and New Mexico state corrections officials by incarcerated men and women alleging similar problems – even deaths -- at Wexford-managed health programs in the state's prison system. Also in New Mexico, a Black dentist won a racial discrimination case against Wexford in November of 2008 when the company was found guilty by a federal jury of paying him a smaller wage on the basis of his race. **Clark County contracted with Pennsylvania-based Wexford Health Solutions in 2006 after problems cropped up with their former jailhouse health care provider, Prison Health Services.** Clark County officials signed a three-year, \$9 million contract with Wexford set to expire in 2010. Its May, 2009 report, prepared by the Institute for Law and Policy Planning, was intended as a performance audit. Several documents show that reports Evelyn had filed with superiors in 2008 about Wexford's failure to meet the demands of its contract were validated by Clark County's performance audit. In a series of memos to his superiors dated before the release of Clark County's own report on Wexford's performance this past June, Evelyn had outlined specific examples of the corporation's failure to follow the terms of its contract with Clark County, from lack of a written operations manual to untrained staff, lack of medical supplies onsite and a tendency to "short" the jails' medical services that forced Clark County to pay out more in resources to cover the gaps. The chief finding of Clark County's own investigation into Wexford was that "the company has systematically failed to comply with the many complex undertakings included in its contract with the county."

November 21, 2006 *Tallahassee Democrat*

After making a dramatic decision not to award a \$707 million contract for prison health care, the Florida Department of Corrections spent its first day Monday managing the job itself. "We are very confident that we can do this," said DOC Secretary Jim McDonough. "I have been tracking it hour by hour and it appears that the transition is going very well." McDonough stunned the private prison-health-care industry late last week when he announced that the department was rejecting Tennessee-based Prison Health Services' latest bid to continue the work. The company's existing contract expired at just after midnight on Sunday. **PHS has a troubled history with the department, one that began earlier this year when it announced it was pulling out of a 10-year contract it originally signed in 2005 because its \$645 million bid did not anticipate the cost of hospitalizing sick inmates.** The department recently announced that it was fining PHS \$696,000 for failing to meet a series of benchmarks, including keeping legible medical records and missing deadlines to assign caseworkers and perform medical evaluations. Regardless, PHS was the department's choice again last month, after it was allowed to compete in a new round of bidding. That changed again after Pennsylvania-based rival Wexford Health Sources Inc. challenged the PHS award, saying that its lowest bid of \$689 million should have made it the winner. **McDonough said Monday that a new evaluation by outside experts showed that none of the contractors had the financial qualifications to complete the contract.** "Therefore, there were no responsive and responsible bidders," McDonough said. PHS spokesman John Van Mol said the company would have no comment. Wexford executives could not be reached for comment.

July 20, 2007 *Sun Times*

The former director of the Illinois Department of Corrections was indicted Thursday for allegedly taking \$50,000 in illegal kickbacks to hand out state contracts to favored companies, including \$20,000 in bribes from the former undersheriff of Cook County. The former undersheriff, John Robinson, who left his job under a cloud, had a side job as a lobbyist for companies such as Addus Health Care of Palatine, trying to get them state business. He succeeded in getting Addus a contract providing health-care services in Illinois prisons in part because he bribed then-state Corrections Director Donald Snyder with \$20,000, according to the indictment. \$30,000 in alleged bribes - "Addus Health Care has not had a relationship with Robinson for several years, is not accused of any wrongdoing, didn't know the alleged activity was taking place, and is assisting authorities every step of the way," said Dave Bayless, a company spokesman. Addus is referred to as "Company A" in the indictment. **Also indicted Thursday was Larry Sims, a lobbyist who allegedly gave Snyder \$30,000 in bribes so state business could go to an unnamed Pennsylvania health-care company.**

October 26, 2006 Sun Times

Gov. Blagojevich remembers political insider Stuart Levine spilling a cup of coffee on him during a New York fund-raising trip that is under federal scrutiny, but insists Levine spilled nothing about any illegal scheme to trade government business for campaign cash. "That's ridiculous," Blagojevich said Wednesday. "Absolutely not. Of course not." The Democratic governor spoke for the first time in detail about the 2003 trip as supporters of his GOP rival, state Treasurer Judy Baar Topinka, said an itinerary shows **Blagojevich illegally mixed government and political fund-raising. The itinerary lists meetings at New York's Harvard Club between Deputy Gov. Bradley Tusk, top Blagojevich fund-raiser Christopher G. Kelly and representatives of two companies. Those firms, Maximus Inc. and Wexford Health Sources, do millions of dollars in state business each year. Each also has contributed five-figure sums to Blagojevich.** The Chicago Sun-Times last month reported that the Oct. 29, 2003, trip -- plus another to the East Coast -- are focuses of a federal pay-to-play probe of state government. "The chief fund-raiser is meeting with people who are interested in government contracts along with a high-ranking member of the governor's staff," said Joe Birkett, GOP candidate for lieutenant governor. "You're setting the table to exchange your governmental decision-making in exchange for a political benefit."

May 31, 2006 New Mexican

A state prison contractor involved in the investigation of a relationship between Corrections Secretary Joe Williams and a lobbyist contributed \$10,000 to Gov. Bill Richardson's re-election campaign. The political-action committee for Aramark -- a Philadelphia-based company that makes millions of dollars a year to feed New Mexico inmates -- contributed to Richardson's campaign in May 2005, according to Richardson's most recent campaign-finance report. That was about a year after Aramark renewed its contract with the state Corrections Department. Aramark also has been generous to the state Democratic Party, contributing \$10,000 in 2004, and the Democratic Governors Association, which Richardson chairs. The company contributed a total of \$15,000 to the DGA in 2004 and another \$15,000 in 2005, according to reports filed with the IRS. Aramark provides food service to more than 475 correctional institutions. Richardson spokesman Pahl Shipley referred questions about the campaign donation to Richardson's campaign manager, Amanda Cooper. **The Governor's Office announced this week that Williams is being put on administrative leave while the state Personnel Office investigates his relationship with Ann E. Casey, who registered as a lobbyist for Aramark and Wexford Health Services, which provides health care to New Mexico inmates.** Casey is an assistant warden at an Illinois prison. A copyrighted story in the Albuquerque Journal said Williams' state-issued cell-phone records show 644 calls between Williams and Casey between Sept. 24, 2005, and Feb. 23. According to that report, Casey was hired as a consultant by Aramark in 2005, but that contract has since been terminated. Aramark's \$5.4 million contract ends in July. The Secretary of State Office's Lobbyist Index lists Casey as a lobbyist for Wexford, though the Journal report quotes a Wexford official saying the company never hired her. In 2004, a \$10,000 contribution to a Richardson political committee from Wexford's parent company caused a stir and later was returned to the Pittsburgh company. The Bantry Group made the contribution to Richardson's Moving America Forward PAC in April 2004, during a bidding process just a month after the Corrections Department requested proposals for a contract to provide health care and psychiatric services to inmates. That contract potentially is worth more than \$100 million, The AP reported. In August 2004, a Richardson spokesman said the money would be returned "to avoid even the appearance of impropriety."

December 2, 2008 Clarion Ledger By James Ridgeway and Jean Casella

Mississippi's per-capita death rate for prisoners has spiked in recent years. In 2001, the state's death rate was at the national average, but in 2006 Mississippi's inmate death rate was the second highest in the nation. In 2007, inmate deaths rose again. (Corrections Commissioner Chris) Epps blames the higher death rate on several factors, including an increasingly aged prison population and generally unhealthy lifestyles. Epps expressed confidence in MDOC's medical contractor, Pittsburgh, Pa.-based Wexford Health Sources, but **the Legislative Joint Committee on Performance Evaluation and Expenditure Review last year released a report criticizing the prison system's response to chronic-care issues. PEER also found that Wexford's medical staffing was not in compliance with the terms of its contract** with the state. The report found 13 percent staffing shortages at the MDOC prisons in Pearl, Parchman and Leakesville. Officials at MDOC referred questions about current Wexford staffing levels to the contractor. Wexford did not return a telephone call Monday but last week referred questions to MDOC.