

**PRIVATE PRISONS** are hundreds of facilities in the U.S. In Tennessee. Today there are hundreds of private prisons in the U.S.

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 1998, the first modern private prison opened.

## HISTORY OF PRIVATE PRISONS

Coven Print

**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?"

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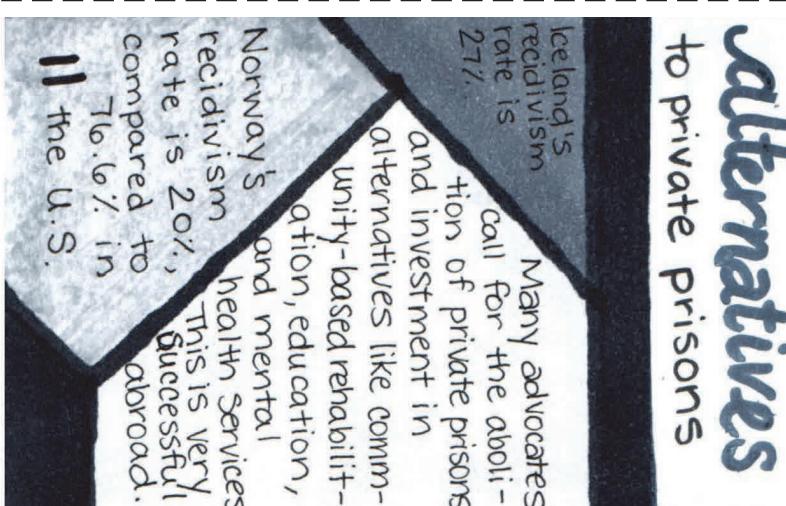
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**LOCKED IN: about PRIVATE PRISONS in the United States**  
by LMF

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.

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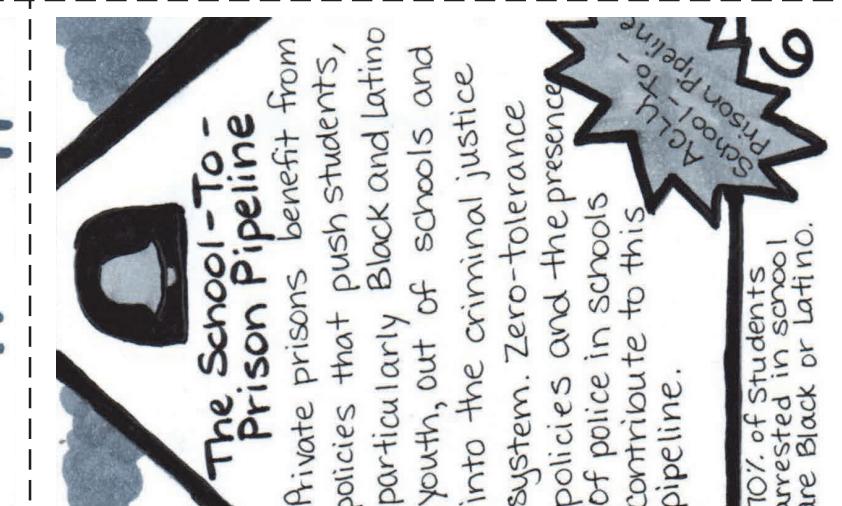


**Alternatives to private Prisons**

Iceland's recidivism rate is 27%

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.

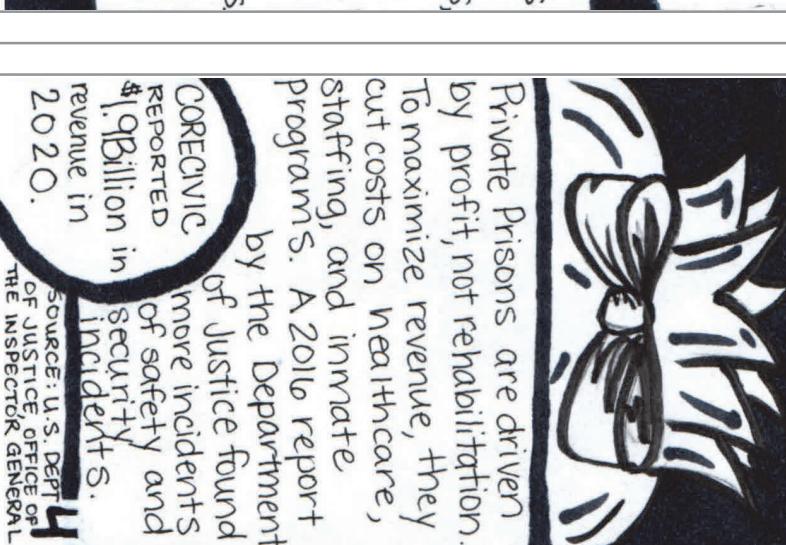
Norway's recidivism rate is 20%, compared to 76.6% in the U.S.



**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.

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Reports of abuse and neglect are common in private prisons. Inmates often face violence, inadequate healthcare, and unsanitary conditions. A 2020 report by the Marshall Project found that private prisons had higher rates of assaults and contract labor than public ones. 21% of inmates report being assault victims. 5

**Conditions on the INSIDE**

70% of Students arrested in schools are Black or Latino.

Prison staff by 2020 reported 6

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 \$1.9Billion 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. IN 2000, THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE IN PRIVATE PRISONS INCREASED 5%.

Cover 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 United 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.

## IMMIGRATION DETENTION

PRIVATE PRISONS PLAY A SIGNIFICANT ROLE IN DETAINING IMMIGRANTS. COMPANIES LIKE GEO GROUP AND CORECIVIC OPERATE ICE DETENTION CENTERS, WHERE CONDITIONS ARE OFTEN CRIMINALIZED AS INHUMANE. DETAINES WERE HELD IN PRIVATE PRISONS IN 2019, 70% OF ICE DETAINES WERE HELD IN PRIVATE PRISONS.

REPORT OVERCROWDING, POOR MEDICAL CARE, AND ABUSE. ICE FACILITIES WERE RESPONSIBLE FOR MORE THAN 245,000 COVID-19 CASES IN COMMUNITIES. LASALLE CORRECTIONS HAS BEEN ACCUSED OF FORCED STERILIZATION OF DETAINEES.

## HUMAN COST

In 2012, an uprising at a Core Civic prison in Mississippi exposed severe under-staffing and management. Behind the statistics are real people. Families are torn apart and individuals are subject to dehumanizing conditions of abuse, neglect, & death. Highlight the human costs.

# 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.

**BLACK AMERICANS ARE INCARCERATED AT 5X THE RATE OF WHITE PEOPLE.**

SOURCE: NAACP CRIMINAL JUSTICE FACT SHEET

# QZH-YBBOF

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. In 2023-2024, they spent \$1.7 million directly to campaigns, mostly to Republicans. 8