

PRISONERS' CONSULTATION ON PRIVATISATION

The NSW Parliament is holding an Inquiry into plans to privatise Cessnock and Parklea Prisons. The Chair of the Inquiry told Justice Action that prisoners "should be encouraged to make a written submission to the Inquiry". You need to respond urgently.

Justice Action spoke against the privatisation on the first day of the Inquiry, as did the Public Service Association for the prison officers.

Commissioner Woodham, with three of his staff spoke for privatisation, The Commissioner said that the multinational corporations could run prisons cheaper. It would be easier to manage. But in fact the new jails like Kempsey are a similar cost.

Almost 500 submissions are against it including from every major community organisation. Only the corporations and the Department are for it. We need your voices now! We want to "draw the line" against privatisation. No sale no slavery!

Points to consider:

- * In a democracy only the state, if anyone, should totally control a citizen and their family. It is the ultimate, non-transferable state power. Prison isn't like a hospital responsive to consumers.
- * Increased profits require more fear of crime, more crime, more prisoners and longer sentences. Rehabilitation reduces profits. Thus privatisation makes everyone less safe.
- * Prisoners are part of the community – not slaves to offload onto a multinationals' balance sheet
- * It is immoral to profit from the pain of others.
- * Overseas experience is clear. Ten out of the eleven private prisons in the UK are in the bottom quarter of the performance register.
- * Cutting costs means even less services. Teachers and health would come from the cheapest outside providers, not linking properly to the rest of the system.
- * More secrecy – the corporation reports what protects their profit.

We suggest that you meet as a wing or pod at 10am Friday April 3.

Take the time to discuss the issues and tell us what your area or you as an individual want. You can respond through us or directly to the Inquiry.

Questions: How do you feel about privatisation? Why? Do you want us to represent you outside? What strategies do you suggest? We ask you to observe the act of solidarity – the minute of silence at midday every Monday – called the Offer of Hope.

Justice Action works to defend the prisoner community interests. We have cell experience and include lawyers, victims and others. We defended the Australian prisoners Right to Vote in 1997 and 2006 and won the transfer of forensic patients into the Dept of Health conditions last year. We are defending prisoners' right to choose to smoke. We work with everyone and link internationally. We fund ourselves from the profits of Breakout DesignPrintWeb.

Send submissions, resolutions and messages

either to: Justice Action, P.O. Box 386, Broadway, NSW 2007

Or Inquiry into the privatisation of prisons, Parliament House, Sydney NSW 2000

Your families can contact us by phone 9283 0123. email: ja@justiceaction.org.au and find more information on our website www.justiceaction.org.au