

Title: Cashing in the Clink: How Correctional Privatization Hinders Inmate Rehabilitation
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The American privatized prison industry, a correctional offshoot which operates beyond governmental purview, has managed to scale unprecedented heights of monetary success; however, this hegemony is as every bit fallacious as it is adamant. Initially conceived to buttress the federal prison system as it grappled with growing recidivism rates and an ailing national infrastructure, this modality of incarceration has, unfortunately, proven woefully impotent in accomplishing such an objective; a 2018 account of prisoner recidivism conducted by the U.S. Department of Justice reveals, “An estimated 68% of released prisoners were arrested within 3 years, 79% within 6 years, and 83% within 9 years.” (Alper et al. 1).

Yet, despite betraying the very purpose of its inception, the privatized prison industry has managed to retain remunerative preeminence; a look at the 2019 annual report for the GEO Group, a privatized prison conglomerate, discloses, “...2019 total revenues increased to \$2.48 billion from \$2.33 billion a year ago...”(March 3). Ultimately, the continuation of the privatized prison industry could only be explained by one simple affirmation: the wrong criteria for determining competence is being employed.

As a privatized prison primarily serves to satisfy shareholders, the amount of revenue it generates is looked at as a confirmation of its efficacy, rather than its proficiency in rehabilitating housed inmates from their felonious behavior. Thus, the privatized prison system engenders an industrial landscape wherein inmates are looked at as dividends and stewardship is considered an overhead expense, obscuring the innately remedial utility of the institution as it’s now cast more as a franchise than as a bastion of the public’s safety. Consequently, crime will only continue to proliferate as long as it’s perceived as a fiscal boon, rather than a societal blight.

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