

**CAMPAIGN TO STOP THE ILLINOIS SUPERMAX PRISON:  
A Response to Governor Edgar's  
Illinois Task Force on Crime and Corrections**

September 1993

Created by the Committee to End the Marion Lockdown and signed in agreement by the following organizations:

**ADAPT**

AFSCME, Local 3315  
Action Coalition of Englewood (ACE)  
American Friends Service Committee (AFSC)  
Center for Inner City Studies, Northeastern Illinois University  
Chicago Coalition for the Homeless  
Chicago Conference of Black Lawyers  
Chicago Co-Conspirators  
Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES)  
HICA  
Homeless on the Move for Equality (HOME)  
Eighth Day Center for Peace and Justice  
Erie Neighborhood House, La Casa Comunal De Erie  
Illinois Coalition Against the Death Penalty  
Illinois Coalition for the Homeless  
Methodist Foundation for Social Action, Northern Illinois  
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National Assembly of Religious Women  
National Lawyers' Guild, Chicago Board  
Operation PUSH, Prison Outpost  
Parents United for Responsible Education (PURE)  
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Churches of Christ, USA  
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## Executive Summary

This Response has been prepared to oppose many of the recommendations of Governor Edgar's Task Force on Crime and Corrections as well as the governor's own bankrupt prison policies. It is the finding of this Response that:

1. Illinois is in the midst of an enormous building spree of prisons and cells. Although Governor Edgar is trying to hide this fact, he has constructed or plans to construct almost 5,000 new cells, for a 15% increase over the existing number of cells (pages 2 and 3).
2. This construction has cost and will cost the taxpayers of Illinois \$336 million. The cost to run these prisons for one year will be \$88 million. Thus, these cells will cost the taxpayers of Illinois over 1.2 billion dollars in the next ten years (pages 11 and 12). Governor Edgar and his Task Force are desperately trying to obscure these facts.
3. It is fully established and admitted to by the governor's Task Force that more cells will neither decrease crime, protect the public, nor allow the public to feel safer (pages 2 and 3 and the four-page analysis in Appendix).
4. The center of the governor's Task Force's proposals is a plan to build a "super-max" or control unit prison. Such prisons are enormously expensive, always fail, and have been criticized by dozens of national and international human rights organizations, including Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch, for violating the United Nations' Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners. Such a prison, like all such control unit prisons before it, will bring decades of expensive and embarrassing litigation in the state of Illinois (pages 6 - 10 and Nat Hentoff article in Appendix).
5. Imprisonment in the United States and Illinois is racist. The imprisonment rate for Black people in the United States is five times higher than it is in South Africa. The imprisonment rate for Black people in the United States is 7.4 times higher than for White people. The imprisonment rate for Black people in Illinois is 14.1 times higher for Black people than for White people. Thus, imprisonment in Illinois

is a warehousing phenomenon for Black (and Latino) people (pages 3 - 5 and Appendix).

6. Illinois is not providing for the basic needs of its people. Health care, housing, education, and even nutrition go unattended while Governor Edgar builds more and more prisons. Illinois' human service profile is one of the worst in the country (page 11).

7. Governor Jim Edgar's Task Force on Crime and Corrections was not an independent voice but a rubber stamp for his own proposals for building more prisons in Illinois (page 13).

8. Not one more cent should be spent for one more cell. Money should go instead for meeting human needs. Such funding will do far more to prevent crime than additional cells (page 14 and Appendix).

Furthermore, a recent poll in the Chicago Sun-Times showed that 87% of respondents did not want tax money spent for more prisons (Appendix). Why can't Gov. Edgar, his Task Force, and the state legislature understand this?

## 1. Introduction

In his first executive order of 1992 Governor Jim Edgar appointed the Illinois Task Force on Crime and Corrections (Task Force). The purpose of the Task Force, as set forward in Governor Edgar's charge, was to find solutions to the problem of overcrowding in the Illinois prison system "that, first, protect public safety, and, second, do so in a manner that the taxpayers of Illinois can afford."

The Task Force met regularly until March of 1993 when it issued its Final Report, containing 26 recommendations. We agree with some of the recommendations of the Task Force. For example, we agree that more good time be allocated, that there be more work and education programs, that there be drug treatment programs, that mandatory minimum sentences be reduced or even eliminated, etc.

However, we strongly disagree with others of the recommendations. The recommended policies and actions with which we disagree are of the utmost importance. If these recommendations are pursued, they will lead Illinois further along the road to fiscal ruin and spiritual bankruptcy.

In the wake of the release of the report, the media leaped with full energy to cover the event, and one could hardly turn on the radio or pick up a newspaper without finding coverage of the Task Force. Yet, to our knowledge, few dissenting voices were heard. A typical media report would contain words from the Final Report and quotes from Governor Edgar and selected members of the Task Force. Not surprisingly, the 29 members of the Task Force were overwhelmingly white (26 of them) and male (26 of them). Since meetings were generally held during work days, those able to attend the meetings were even more overwhelmingly white and male. Naturally, these were the people who wound up speaking to the media.

Never questioned by the media, as far as we know, were experts on corrections who were not on the Task Force or homeless people or health care activists or educators or parents seeking a meaningful education for their children. These are the very same people whose work will be competing for funds with Task Force recommendations for more cells and a "super-max" prison. Finally, not one report contained an interview with a prisoner.

The purpose of our report is to present an alternative perspective to that presented by the governor's Task Force. The outline of this report is as follows. In Section 2 we begin with an overview of crime and corrections in Illinois. Although many of the facts that we use are the same ones available to Governor Edgar's Task Force, we reach very different conclusions. In Section 3 we examine the Task Force proposal for a "super-max" prison. In Section 4 we discuss matters of cost and budget. In Section 5 we present evidence of collusion between the governor and his allegedly independent Task Force. Finally, in Section 6, we present our conclusions. In order to keep this report brief, supporting documents are included in the Appendix.

## 2. Crime and Imprisonment in Illinois

The Interim Report issued in June of 1992 by the governor's Task Force presented a damning summary of the nature of crime and its relationship to imprisonment in Illinois. Perhaps because the Committee to End the Marion Lockdown caught them at their own internal inconsistencies at that time or perhaps for other reasons, this recitation of relevant information is omitted from the Final Report. We therefore start with facts quoted directly in that Interim Report.

"Illinois opened 14 new prisons in 14 years between 1978 and 1991. But even that unprecedented – and expensive – building program did not keep pace with the surging inmate prison population. . . . But citizens [of Illinois] grow frustrated and impatient when they see crime continue to rise -- the 680,000 index offenses reported in 1990 was a record for Illinois -- at the same time that more offenders are being locked up, many for longer periods of time, and at a dramatically higher cost to taxpayers. Even with record numbers of criminals behind bars in Illinois, most citizens do not feel any safer -- and a majority probably feel less safe -- than they did a decade ago." (page 1)

In the Final Report (on page 5) we learn that violent crime went up twenty percent between 1989 and 1991 and that recidivism rates in Illinois are 46% in three years [and would of course be much higher for five or ten years].

So, crime is spiraling, imprisonment is surging out of control, and people in Illinois feel less safe than when it all started. So, what does the governor's Task Force recommend? Why, the construction of still more cells, at even greater expense.

Recommendation 8 on page 63 calls for turning a high school in virtually all-Black East St. Louis into a prison (for 600 more cells). This despite the fact that education in East St. Louis is among the worst in the United States and, in fact, won the dubious distinction of being featured in chapter one of Jonathan Kozol's award winning critique of U.S. education, Savage Inequalities. We wonder if the Task Force ever thought of turning the high school into a model for true education? It must be clear that such an institution would prevent more crime than a prison.

Since this is not enough, the governor's Task Force continues and on page 64 recommends (#9) that three new cell houses be added onto already existing prisons (for 1,344 more cells). Also part of the Task Force reasoning is support for another new prison at Rend Lake and five new work camps (for a combined total of 1,902 more cells). These don't need to be made into formal recommendations, since they are already in the process of being opened. But support is nonetheless presented.

This is still not enough. So now the Task Force recommends (#16 on page 79) that a special prison for older prisoners be built (350 more cells). Note that the

recommendation is not to turn existing cells into cells for older prisoners nor is it to let older prisoners out. Rather it is to construct more cells.

But wait, there's still more. Now, according to the Task Force (#19 on page 87), we also need a "super-max" prison (500 more cells).

So here is the full picture. The Task Force fully supports the construction of 4,596 more cells. This amounts to an astounding 15% increase over and above the 30,000 cells that are now, according to the Task Force itself, ineffective in preventing crime and, also according to the Task Force, whose cost is staggering.

We know, given all the hype, that the public generally seems to believe that imprisonment will deter crime. *It turns out that study after study has proven that this is not the case.* In fact, even the director of the Illinois Department of Corrections has stated publicly: "No state has shown that locking up record amounts of people adds benefit to the society." The Appendix contains several documents, most published by very respectable sources, that demonstrate why added imprisonment has not lowered the crime rate and why it can't be expected to do this. Documents contained in the Appendix come from the Chicago Tribune, the New York Times, the Rand Corporation, and the Committee to End the Marion Lockdown.

One more further observation needs to be made before we move on. The nature of imprisonment in Illinois and the United States is staggeringly racist. This fact is supported in every way by the Interim Report, which contains details of the shocking racial disparity in the Illinois prison population. It is remarkable that a document that labels young Black and Hispanic men as the most "crime prone" group fails to even mention the issue of racism. Additionally, the 127-page Final Report does not even contain the word "racism" nor allude to it in any way. So, to fill the void, we note the following.

It is very curious that the Task Force never presents imprisonment rates for different racial or ethnic groups. It is crucial here to point out that the Task Force has the full support of the state-funded Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority at its disposal. No doubt these numbers could be easily obtained and are not presented for an obvious reason.

Thus we have made some calculations based upon 1990 census data and prison reports for that year when the Illinois prison population was 27,516. In that year, and things have only gotten worse since then, the Black imprisonment rate (the number of people in prison per 100,000 population) was 1026, the Hispanic rate was 396, and the White rate was 73. (Recall that these are *imprisonment* rates. The Sentencing Project, quoted below, employed *incarceration* rates that included jails as well as prisons and compared Black men and not all Black people.) This means that in 1990, a Black person in Illinois was 14.1 times more likely to go to prison than was a White person.

In the United States as a whole, as indicated above, a Black person was 7.4 times more likely to go to prison than a White person.

What does it cost to incarcerate these 30,000 people, about 19,000 of whom are Black, and perhaps another 4,000 or so are Hispanic? Different aspects of cost are provided by the Interim Report so we won't belabor the issue except to note a few observations. First, the cost of incarceration, already grotesque as presented by the Task Force, is almost certainly understated. We do not know how the cost figures have been computed, but we wonder, for example, about the \$18,499 that it costs to keep one person for one year in a maximum security prison. Does this include the costs of interest on bonds and other state loans used to construct prisons? Does this include employee pensions and the like, most of which we would expect not to be present in the prison budget but to be located elsewhere in the state's budget. In fact, the American Bar Association, in a 1992 report, states that a more realistic figure is \$30,000 a year.

When all is added together to obtain an accurate image of the cost of imprisoning one person for a year, we estimate that this dollar amount will be larger than it costs to send that person to any university in the state, or even in the United States. So, to improve society should we send prisoners to Stateville or the University of Chicago?

Or look at it another way. The \$18,499 that is cited is certainly enough to support, in a humble way, a family. What if, instead of imprisoning a person, you gave him or her a full-time job building or rehabilitating houses. Which use of the \$18,499 would prevent more crime and be more beneficial to society? Why is it that the Task Force, which was to find solutions to the problems of overcrowded prisons, never made any proposal even remotely like this one?

How do these racial disparities in Illinois fit into the experience of the United States and even the international picture? Only too well. In 1990 the Sentencing Project, an independent organization in Washington, D.C., published a report entitled "Americans Behind Bars: A Comparison of International Rates of Incarceration." The report found that the United States had the highest incarceration rate in the world (426 per 100,000 population), higher even than South Africa (333) and the Soviet Union (268). The incarceration rate for Black men in the United States was an incredible 3,109 -- more than four times as high as the incarceration rate for Black men in apartheid South Africa. When the Sentencing Project updated its report the following year, the incarceration rate for Black people in the United States had increased by 8.4% (to 3,370) while the rate for Black people in South Africa had decreased by 6.6%. The ratio of the rates is now 4.9 to 1, compared to the 4.3 to 1 that it was a year earlier.

Thus, the United States has the highest incarceration rate in the world. Black people in the United States are incarcerated five times more often than Black people even in South Africa, and these staggering comparisons grew even more divergent between

1990 and 1991. What does all of this suggest for the lives of Black people? Permutations and rearrangements of Black imprisonment facts are enlightening. For example:

- \*\*\* A Black person in the United States is about 7.4 times more likely to go to prison than a White person;
- \*\*\* One out of every four Black men in the United States is under control of the criminal justice system;
- \*\*\* There are more Black men aged 20-29 under control of the criminal justice system than there are Black men of all ages in college;
- \*\*\* It is estimated that one out of every two Black men will be arrested in his lifetime;
- \*\*\* It is estimated that one out of every four Black men will go to prison in his lifetime;
- \*\*\* In Baltimore in 1991, 56% of Black men between the ages of 18 and 35 were either under the control of the criminal justice system or being sought on warrants. Presumably the situation is similar in many major U.S. cities including Chicago.



### 3. The Super-Max Prison

It is the recommendation (#19 on page 87) of the governor's Task Force that the state build a "super-max" prison. Such prisons are generally called control unit prisons and so we will use that terminology. We imagine that the Task Force does not use the term to avoid calling the public's attention to all the evil that has been attached to the concept and the phrase. Most likely they believe that by changing the name of the prison they can rid it of its horror.

(Interestingly enough, this was the recommendation most contested among Task Force members. From meetings we attended and conversations we held with Task Force members, fully 10 or more of them oppose this concept of a control unit prison. Unfortunately, these people have not found the energy to publicly voice their opposition, nor even to write a note to Governor Edgar telling him what they believe.)

The justification for this very special prison is as a solution to the problem of violence in Illinois prisons. Control units are as effective in controlling violence as prisons are in combatting crime: that is to say, not at all. There have been major disturbances and massive lawsuits associated with such prisons that have been opened in other states. In fact, even the Task Force is forced to admit "There has been no formal evaluation of these units" (page 88). However, this does not stop it from recommending that Illinois create such an expensive, destructive and futile prison.

Consider the following. In the section of its Interim Report entitled "Staffing and Security" and on pages 5 and 6 of the Final Report the Task Force very convincingly identifies the true cause of rising violence in prison: increased crowding and double-celling of prisoners. Thus, the Task Force catches itself in an internal inconsistency: To solve a problem caused by higher and higher rates of incarceration and the resulting overcrowding, the Task Force recommends that Illinois should create a control unit prison that will have a destructive effect on those imprisoned within it.

The foolishness of this proposal can be seen in many ways. But let us just consider an example, selected by the Task Force, to illustrate its case -- the Pontiac Prison uprising in 1978. During that uprising well over 1000 prisoners rebelled, killed three guards, and burned down a wing of the prison. The state charged 17 prisoners (all of them Black) with killing the three guards. After one of the longest and most expensive trials in the history of Illinois, lasting several months, the jury came back in one hour and found all the men not guilty on all the charges. It was agreed by most familiar with the proceedings that the finding was a result of the fact that the uprising was caused by the barbaric conditions at the prison and that if anyone was to blame it was then-governor Jim Thompson for allowing such barbaric conditions to prevail.

Now, what would sensible people learn from this? First, that to prevent violence in prison we must eliminate some of the barbaric conditions that generally create this violence. Second, the recommended control unit will hold 500 people. How would

that have helped in Pontiac since well over 1000 men were involved? Furthermore, the Task Force notes (page 84) that in one year "there were 45,839 disciplinary reports written" in Illinois prisons; that "More than 5,100 prisoners were transferred" for disciplinary reasons, and that "On any given day more than 900 inmates are in segregation. . . ." Does the Task Force really want two control unit prisons? And if 2000 people rebel, then will the Task Force want four control unit prisons? Third, psychologists who have investigated control unit prisons have found that what these prisons do, in fact, is to increase the rage in the people they cage, leaving them far more violent and dangerous than when they entered. Given that virtually all of these people will eventually be released from prison, this is a matter that even the Task Force might have considered. But, in their eagerness to build more fortresses, they "overlooked" this issue.

We believe that the main purpose of this control unit prison will be twofold. First, it will try to destroy human beings disliked by the Department of Corrections. Some will be violent individuals. Others will be people who stand up for their human rights, people who insist on their legal rights, people who are in prison for political actions, etc. Second, it will try to fool the people of Illinois into thinking that an endemic problem like violence in prison, which of course is a reflection of the violence that is endemic in society, can be cured by isolating a few people, in this case 500 out of 40,000 (the estimated Illinois prison population by the time the control unit prison would be completed). It must be obvious that such a strategy -- on its face -- just cannot work.

The former Illinois Director of Corrections (1979-1981), Gayle Franzen, a self-described "hard-liner," understood this very well and opposed the building of a control unit in Illinois, arguing that long-term lockdown conditions "create more frustration, more tension and more desire to do violence by people who wouldn't necessarily participate in violent acts." He described the US federal penitentiary at Marion in southern Illinois, which has been the model for control units, as "solving one problem with the creation of a much larger one."

Of course, Gayle Franzen is not the only person to have spoken out against control units. Since the first control unit opened at Marion in 1972, they have been the focus of sustained criticism. The following is a list of some of the reports and studies that have condemned the methods of the Marion model of isolation.

\*The 1984 report of the Congressional oversight hearing about USP Marion includes testimony from congressional consultants who recommended that a mental health unit should be created for the prisoners, to treat the "negative health consequences" which may flow from lockdown confinement, conditions so adverse that even staff operate under "combat mentality"; that 80% of the prisoners at Marion did not have a security rating appropriate for Marion -- that they were there for reasons other than security; and that the lockdown should not be permitted to endure indefinitely.

\*The 1985 report of the American Friends Service Committee observes that Marion represents choosing "a course that favors the continual escalation of repression as a means of control, even though it has never been demonstrated that repression brings its desired results."

\*The 1987 John Howard Association report concludes that Marion "is not a normal maximum security prison on lockdown status, but rather a firmly established, fully functioning behavior modification program . . . ;" that "the Marion program seems to be designed to break the defiant spirit and behavior . . . through a year or more of sensory and psychological deprivation [in which] prisoners are stripped of their individual identities . . ."

\*The 1987 report of Amnesty International states that "[w]ithin Marion, violations of the [United Nations] Standard Minimum Rules [for the Treatment of Prisoners] is common . . . There is hardly a rule in the Standard Minimum Rules that is not infringed in some way or other.

\*The 1990 report of the National Interreligious Task Force on Criminal Justice concludes that "[t]he absence of balance in the procedures at Marion prison, where security measures override the individual need for human contact, spiritual fulfillment, and fellowship, becomes an excuse for the constant show of sheer force. The conditions of Marion prison . . . constitute, in our estimation, psychological pain and agony tantamount to torture."

\*The 1990 report of the United States House of Representatives Subcommittee on Courts, Intellectual Property and the Administration of Justice expresses "concern [. . . ] about the amount of time inmates spend in their cells in relative isolation and the limited opportunity for productive and recreational activity that is available in the highly controlled environment" and the need to "continue to develop a more humane approach to the incarceration of the maximum security prison population," particularly in light of Marion's function as a model for prisons in the United States and in other countries.

\* The 1991 Human Rights Watch report, Prison Conditions in the United States, concludes that "the most troubling aspect of the human rights situation in United States prisons could be labeled 'Marionization,' " and "deplores the fact that 36 states have followed the example of the maximum security prison in Marion, Illinois, to create super maximum security institutions." The Human Rights Watch report concludes that Marionization "leads to numerous human rights abuses and frequent violations of the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners."

It is not only human rights group that have resisted control units. As Gayle Franzen's example shows, officials within the criminal justice system itself have spoken to the futility of expecting control units to reduce violence. Judge Panner, commenting on a

suit brought against the control unit called the Disciplinary Segregation Unit (DSU) in Oregon State Penitentiary by a prisoner who had not been outside for six months, said:

From society's longterm perspective, there are sound reasons for prohibiting cruel and unusual punishment. People who are abused and treated with violence are those most likely to treat others abusively and violently. Under the Oregon corrections system, many DSU inmates will be on the streets. Confining people under conditions of extreme violence, fear and hostility, and releasing them into society is like throwing a ticking time-bomb into a crowd.

Understandably, the most committed opposition to control units has come from the prisoners themselves, who have demonstrated that they will resist the abuses inherent in control unit operations. Class action lawsuits and individual's civil rights suits have repeatedly been filed against conditions at Marion and at state control units such as the Security Housing Unit (SHU) at Pelican Bay in California, the Maximum Control Complex (MCC) at Westville in Indiana and at Southport in New York. One can be sure that were a control unit to be built in Illinois, the courts would be flooded with costly suits challenging its conditions.

We agree with the analyses cited above of the inhumanity of control units and believe that they are to be opposed on those grounds alone. However, we are just as concerned about the repressive function of control units within the prison system. As shocking as the statistics on the racist nature of imprisonment are, they are surpassed when one examines who is incarcerated in control units: 75% of the prisoners in Marion are Black or Latino; at Westville MCC over 90% are Black; at Southport and the Ionia "Super Max" in Michigan, for example, the vast majority are also Black or Latino.

Throughout the history of the control unit at Marion, it has been used to try to isolate, punish, and demoralize prisoners who challenge brutality in the prison system. In fact, the opening of the first control unit at Marion in 1972 was in order to break a prisoner work stoppage that was taking place to protest a guard's beating of a Mexican prisoner. The latest such incident occurred in July of this year (1992) when prisoners at Lewisburg Federal Penitentiary held a work stoppage as the culmination of two years of peaceful protests against oppressive work conditions. Prison officials acted to end the strike by transferring twenty-two prisoners who were perceived to be the leaders to Marion. In the aftermath of a rebellion at Southport in May 1991, in which prisoners' main demands were to be able to tell reporters about the brutal conditions of their confinement, control units came under a lot of criticism. Robert Gangi of the Correctional Association of New York said that his concern was that prisoners would be sent to control units merely because they were outspoken about grievances.

In summary, we demand that Illinois not build a control unit prison for the following reasons.

- A. Control Units are inhumane. Existing control units violate the United Nations' Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners.
- B. Control Units do not control violence, but instead cause frustration, rage, and mental and physical deterioration in prisoners.
- C. Control Units are used by prison officials to silence and suppress prisoners who constructively challenge the prison system.
- D. Illinois has had a record of opposition to control units at the highest levels.
- E. Control unit prisons are very expensive to build and to run -- far more expensive even than other prisons. In addition, as at Westville, Pelican Bay, and other control units, prisoners will protest and challenge control unit conditions with lengthy and costly legal actions.
- F. Control Unit prisons are racist. They incarcerate people of color at even more disproportionate rates than other prisons.

#### 4. Cost Considerations

The discussion that most often surrounds the state budget is whether or not it is balanced. Whatever one thinks of that method of analysis, it seems strange not to ask what the budget is buying for the people of Illinois, whether or not it is balanced. When one asks this question, Governor Edgar and his budget fail everywhere. In fact, the profile of Illinois in meeting the needs of its people looks more and more like one of the worst states in the country. Consider just a few of the more recent headlines:

**"Social program cuts in Ill. among the sharpest: survey"** (Craines Chicago Business, February 15, 1993). "Last year's budget cuts in Illinois welfare programs ranked among the most severe in the nation . . ."

**"Illinois Rapped for Cuts in Aid to Poor"** (Chicago Sun-Times, February 10, 1993). "For the second consecutive year, Illinois was singled out on Monday for its harsh treatment of poor people."

**Illinois is found to have the 46th worst infant mortality rate in the US and is 35 worst in overall child health** (Center for the Study of Social Policy)

It is in this context that we should understand the state prison budget. Because of the collusion between the governor and his Task Force, it is impossible to know which are his proposals and which are the Task Force's proposals. Thus, on the following page we list all the new openings of cells (numbering 4,596 as noted above) that are planned or called for by the governor and his Task Force, with the associated costs.

What we find from this table is that the recent spate of construction, including that which is already implemented but not yet opened, and that which is proposed, amounts to a cost of \$336 million. The cost to imprison these 4,596 people for one year is \$87.7 million. The cost of the construction plus caging these people for ten years is well over 1.2 billion dollars, not counting inflation.

The list of humane things we could do with such funds is almost unlimited. Think of how many teachers could be hired; how many affordable homes could be built; how many hungry people could be fed; how many cases of AIDS, tuberculosis and breast cancer could be prevented. Think of why Edgar can't find money to fund DCFS but can build all these prisons, including the control unit.

| (in millions of dollars) |        |              |               |
|--------------------------|--------|--------------|---------------|
| Site                     | # beds | Construction | One Year Cost |
| Big Muddy                | 952    | 47.8         | 19.7          |
| E. St. Louis             | 600    | 16.8         | 14.5          |
| Control Unit             | 500    | 60.0         | 22.0 *        |
| Old Folks Prison         | 350    | 8.0**        | 10.5**        |
| 3 New Cell Houses        | 1,344  | 18.0         | 2.1***        |
| 5 Work Camps             | 850    | 17.6         | 18.9          |
| Totals                   | 4,596  | 168.2****    | 87.7          |

\* The Task Force says that operating costs would be \$11 million per year. This amounts to \$22,000 per prisoner, which is less than a usual maximum security prison. All previous estimates have said that it costs twice as much per prisoner to run a control unit prison. We have thus used the more reasonable figure of \$44,000 per prisoner.

\*\* No estimates are provided by either the Task Force or the FY 94 budget so we used an average of \$30,000 per prisoner per year to run, which is still too low for older prisoners, and \$23,000 per bed to build.

\*\*\* This estimate, provided by the Task Force, is of course very low. Apparently the Task Force reasons that because these wings are being generated as part of other prisons, they bear none of those prisons operating costs. We believe that this is an inappropriate assumption, but we will use this figure.

\*\*\*\* All prison construction in Illinois is paid for with bonds. Thus, the people of Illinois have to pay interest on these bonds. According to a recent study (cited above) by the American Bar Association, this doubles the cost of the construction. Edgar and the Task Force are being deliberately deceitful in not presenting this information. Thus, the true cost for this construction is \$336.4 million.

## 5. Collusion Between Governor Edgar and His Task Force

When Governor Edgar appointed his Task Force, much was made about how this panel of experts would come up with solutions for Governor Edgar, as if these were people who would be working as an independent body. If, for example, these people were simply Governor Edgar's "go-fers," there would be no reason to announce them and make a big deal out of what they said and did. If, on the other hand, they were independent, then their proposals would not be Governor Edgar's proposals but rather an independent voice providing wisdom. Consider the following.

First, every prison proposal of Governor Edgar's in the past year has been endorsed by the Task Force, and every proposal of the Task Force has been endorsed by Governor Edgar, although due to financial constraints he has not yet moved to implement them all. There is not one disagreement with any Edgar proposal in the hundreds of pages produced by the Task Force nor did any of us who attended the meetings ever hear any such formulations. **Voltaire once said that if two people agree, one of them is unnecessary.**

Second, the exact recommendation of the Task Force to build "add-ons" at three prisons is included in Governor Edgar's FY94 proposal. Now, this would not be surprising except for the fact that the budget was constructed about six months before the Task Force presented its Final Report, and this recommendation of the Task Force did not even appear in its Interim Report. So, who's been getting whom to do who's dirty work?

We do not think this is all much of a big deal, but since no one else has noted the collusion, we point it out here.



## 6. Conclusion

There is much more that we would like to say, but we know that this document is already too long. For those readers who would like to know more, we would be pleased to speak with you or to provide you with more literature.

We think that the bottom line is this: Although the state of Illinois is failing to provide even the most basic needs of housing, health care, education, and even food, the governor, with his go-fer Task Force in tow, is proceeding with an insane prison construction campaign that will add almost 5,000 new prison beds in Illinois. This, while every expert in the United States and the world is noting that more prisons won't prevent crime and won't make us safe.

In addition, these planners of our safety want one of the new prisons to be a control unit, the type of which has been condemned all across the world for its brutality and violation of human rights, which is enormously expensive, and which generates violence and rage rather than preventing it.

Our position is correct and obvious. We say not one more cell for Illinois. We say use the money instead to provide food, housing, health care, and education for the people of Illinois. If anything will prevent crime in our already destructive and violent society, it is these measures, not still more cells. **WE DEMAND THAT THIS INSANITY BE STOPPED NOW.**